

MEDIEVAL FANTASY MECHS POWERED BY STEAM, MAGIC, OR THE LABOR OF A THOUSAND SLAVES

# DRAGONMECH

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Age of WALKERS



SWORD & SORCERY

20  
system



# DRAGONMECH™

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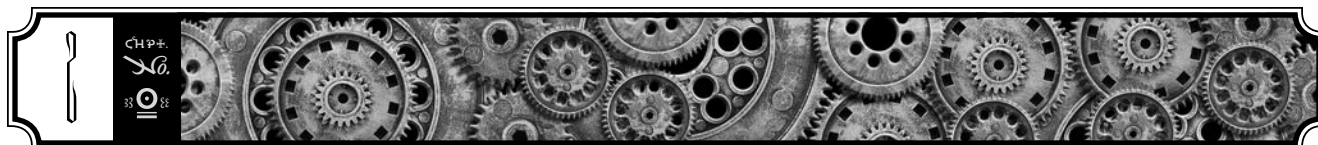
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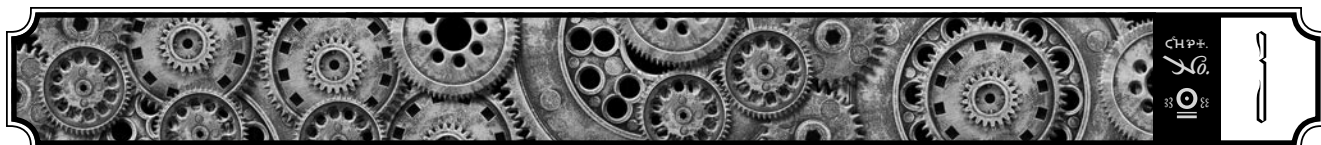
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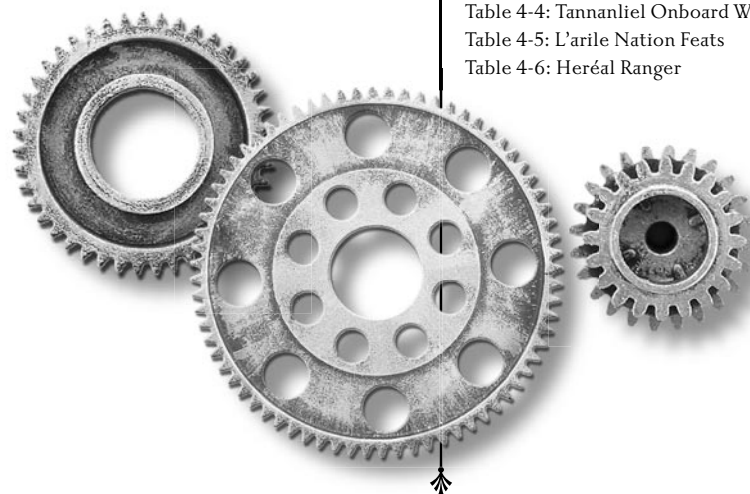




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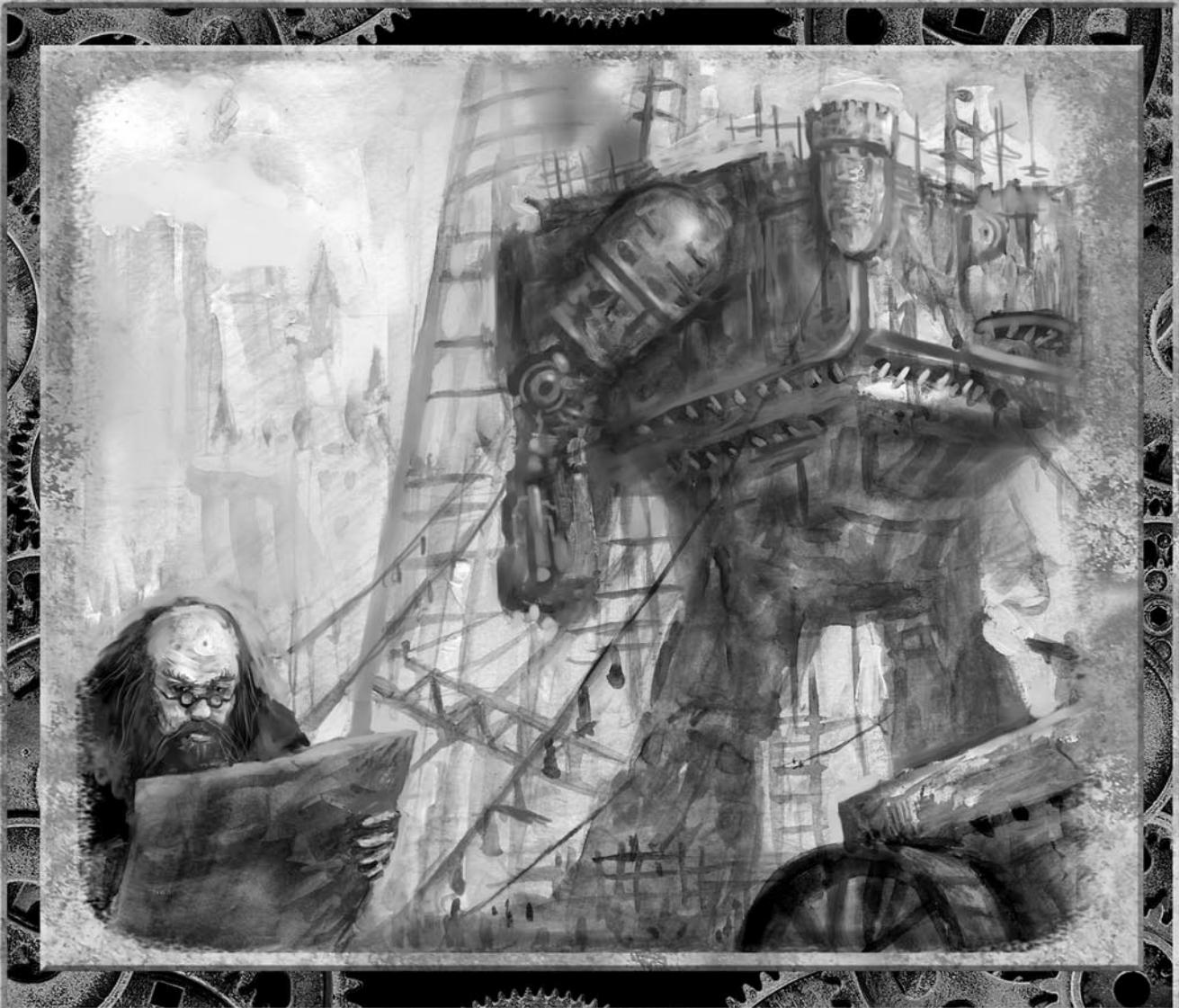
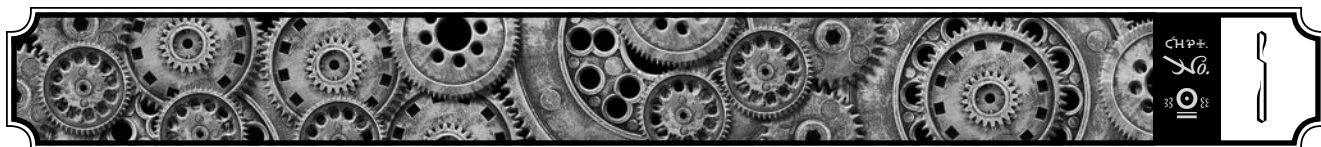


PLATE 1 *Parilus, one of three Master Gearwrights. The strength of his vision changed the world.*





# THE SECOND AGE OF WALKERS

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO, THE LUNAR RAINS BEGAN. METEORS SCORCHED THE EARTH, LUNAR DRAGONS DEVoured SURFACE DWELLERS, AND CENTURIES OF CIVILIZATION CRUMBLed. YET ONE VOICE MADE ITSELF HEARD IN THIS TIME OF CHAOS, AND THAT VOICE BROUGHT FORTH THE IDEA OF THE MECH. THE VOICE WAS THAT OF PARILUS, ONE OF THREE MASTER GEARWRIGHTS, AND THE STRENGTH OF HIS VISION CHANGED THE WORLD. NOW MECHS WALK THE LAND, AND THE AGE OF WALKERS IS AT HAND.

Yet this is not the first Age of Walkers. The ancient library of the Gearwrights, known as the Master Repository, speaks of an earlier age. Before the lunar rain, before the dawn of the elves, before even the age of magic, mechs walked the land. This first age of walkers ended abruptly, sending the Gearwrights into seclusion, but no one knows for sure what happened.

Now a new age has dawned on Highpoint, and the Gearwrights are active once more. The Second Age of Walkers is at hand! Mechs walk the land, sheltering refugees and battling monsters. The dwarven steam-mechs belch black smoke from charred smokestacks, thundering across their rocky domain at a furious pace. The human nomads of the Legion strive to catch up, uniting for the first time in centuries to build their own mechs. The chaotic Irontooth Clans raid where they can and trade where they can't, "acquiring" mechs of all kinds through means both legitimate and not. And the elves of the northern forests watch the antics of the short-lived races and learn from them, developing magically animated walkers whose arcane capabilities make them seemingly unstoppable.

This book is an indispensable guide to the new face of the DragonMech world. For the first time, it takes a detailed look at the four major mechdoms: the ordered Stenian Confederacy, the expansionist Legion, the unpredictable Irontooth Clans, and the arcane L'arile Nation.

The Stenian Confederacy is marked primarily by law, order, and a strong military. Some see its imposition of martial law as too much order; others welcome the security it brings. Every citizen of the Stenian Confederacy is effectively an extension of the armed forces, and no examination of the Confederacy could be complete without a thorough look at its military. The five city-mechs of the Confederacy are also described, including a detailed look at Durgan-lok, the world's first city-mech. Also important is the Gearwrights Guild, which

is so strongly affiliated with the Stenian Confederacy that many consider it a second branch of the government.

The Legion is inseparable from its charismatic leader Shar Thizdic, whose exploits against the lunar dragons are legendary. Shar has managed to unite the disparate human tribes of the endless plains for the first time in memory. Now this growing nation is a virtual extension of his will, its populace worshipping him as a god and obeying his every whim. The old human nomads have seen their cultures reshaped, their values altered, and their gods replaced — and they accept it voluntarily thanks to Shar's wiles. His ambitions to rule Highpoint are no secret, and the other powers fear his growing military might. He has two city-mechs finished already, and shows no sign of stopping. But not all is right within the Legion; at least one of the tribes now united under the Legion has a sinister agenda of its own.

The Irontooth Clans are a motley collection of barbarian-monks who have grown out of the oddest of alliances. Bader Irontooth, a dwarven monk who thought he could do a better job than the Stenian Confederacy, inadvertently founded the Clans a century ago when his efforts attracted the loyalty of scofflaws and criminals. Now the Irontooth Clans have expanded to become a force in their own right. Individually, the Clan members are the most capable mech pilots on the planet. They are also the most varied, as the Irontooth Clans range from bloodthirsty raiders to zenlike protectors. They are wild and free in an era marked by increasingly oppressive governments, and many a Stenian or Legion citizen longs for the freedom of the Irontooth — although if they knew the agenda of the mysterious Lost Clan of the Irontooth, they might scuttle back to their secure autocracies.

L'arile Nation, the largest concentration of elves, is a magical society that has finally embraced mechs — and with a vengeance. After the elven archmage Tannan witnessed

the city-mechs of the dwarves and saw their potential, he led a similar project for the elves. Now rising from the smoking ruins of their once-great forest is Tannanliel, the world's first magically powered city-mech. More than 2,000 feet tall and quite probably the single most powerful force on the planet, it has reclaimed wide swaths of the northern forests from the lunar menace. But Tannan's efforts have come with a price, which will soon become only too obvious.

Each of these four powerful forces has already shaped the world of DragonMech and will continue to do so. They are described in the pages that follow according to what format best suits each faction. The Stenian Confederacy is defined by its military, so the military is the focus of its chapter. The military is also important in the Legion, but primarily from the perspective of its relationship to Shar Thizdic and the wild nomad tribes he's managed to unite, so they receive the bulk of attention in the Legion chapter. The Irontooth Clans, on the other hand, are wild and varied. There are more than 50 clans, all of them different, each of them unique. Ten of the most intriguing clans are presented, along with stats for a wide variety of the unusual NPCs who lead them. Finally, the L'arile Nation is presented through the lenses of its wizards, who are its defining characteristic.

The Stenian Confederacy, the Legion, and the L'arile Nation each have one or more completed city-mechs, which make excellent opportunities for adventure. Each of their chapters includes details on, respectively, Durgan-lok, the very first city-mech; Haven, Shar Thizdic's second city-mech and a clear signal of his expansionist intentions; and Tannanliel, the first magically animated city-mech and indisputably the most powerful in the world. The Irontooth Clans lack a city-mech (though one of their clans is pursuing such a project), so their chapter instead focuses on details of the clans themselves, which present a nearly limitless potential for adventure.

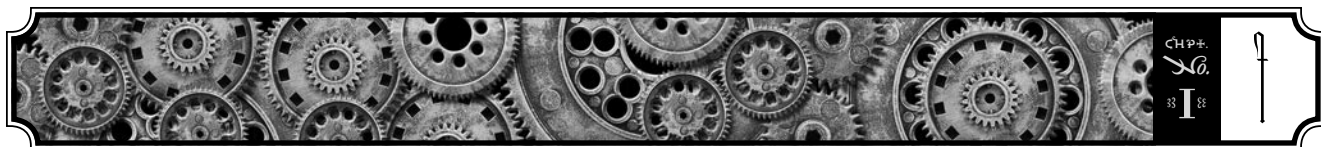
You'll find mechs in these pages, of course, along with characters and spells and feats of every kind. This book will also show you how people live in each mechdom. Highpoint is not your typical fantasy world. If you want to live among the natives, it helps to know their ways.

The Second Age of Walkers is a time of unparalleled adventure. Players will find all the material they need to experience it here. GMs will learn the secrets of each mechdom and statistics for important NPCs like Shar Thizdic and Tannan. So stoke the boiler, weave the runes, and start your mech. It's time to explore!





PLATE 2 *The Stenian Confederacy is  
defined by its military.*



# THE STENIAN CONFEDERACY

## EVERYBODY KNOWS...

IN A WORLD OF CHAOS, SURVIVAL IS ONLY ENSURED BY ORDER. ORDER PROVIDES SOLIDITY, PREDICTABILITY, AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY, STRENGTH: THE RAW, UNADULTERATED STRENGTH THAT COMES FROM FOCUSING MASSIVE AMOUNTS OF OTHERWISE DISCORDANT FORCE. FIVE MIGHTY CITY-MECHS HAVE CONCENTRATED THE STRENGTH OF THOUSANDS UPON THOUSANDS OF DWARVEN WARRIORS INTO A SINGLE, UNIFIED FORCE THAT IS WITHOUT A DOUBT THE MOST POWERFUL POLITICAL ENTITY ON HIGHPOINT TODAY. THAT FORCE IS THE STENIAN CONFEDERACY.

The Stenian Confederacy is one of the most ordered institutions still functioning in an era marked primarily by chaos and disaster. Born from the lawful dwarven stronghold of Duerok but united by the structure of the Gearwrights Guild, the Stenian Confederacy is a loose alliance of city-mechs that patrol nearly 200,000 square miles of surface territory. It is the only dwarven institution on Highpoint to break with the traditional clan model of rulership, and this fact combined with longstanding behaviors ingrained in the minds of its many dwarven members have created tensions since its earliest days. Nonetheless, these tensions are usually resolved in an orderly fashion, and the result has been a reshaping of Highpoint's surface world.

Before the lunar rains began, the ancient dwarven stronghold of Duerok had a population of more than 600,000 dwarves, housed not only in the halls of Duerok itself but in a sprawling arrangement of protectorates, alliances, and clan territories that extended all across the subsurface of the flatlands and roughlands. The whole arrangement was run fairly efficiently by a hierarchical network of clan relationships, with the most ancient clan elders governing vast swaths of territory while their progeny controlled day-to-day details in progressively smaller zones of the pyramidal government structure.

This system had worked fine for untold generations, but it was not suited to the once-in-a-lifetime stresses exposed by the lunar rain. The best solution to the endless waves of refugees engendered by the lunar rain would have been

for all the dwarves of Duerok to mobilize to its borders, defending the state along its many entry points. But mustering that sort of defense required organizing a huge number of warriors over a vast area. Instead of warriors flowing in an orderly fashion to where they were needed most, the clan system resulted in warriors flowing in a rather disorderly fashion to where their relatives were concentrated most. Some of Duerok's entry points were well defended, while others were left wide open. Moreover, the dwarven love of hearth and home promoted a tendency to defend one's own stronghold first, then that of allies. Far too many dwarf warriors were left defending the centermost territories while the outer borders were woefully undermanned.

All this could have been avoided had a central administrator orchestrated the defense of Duerok, but there was no such person. Instead, there were more than four dozen senior clan elders, whose own descendants had intermarried in a web of allegiances. Some clans were led by multiple elders; other elders singly led multiple clans. When it came down to a crisis situation, they decided to protect their relatives rather than strategize for the good of the whole.

The Stenian Confederacy was founded with fresh memories of the resulting disaster. Duerok was ransacked by successive waves of refugees seeking shelter from the lunar rain. Its population was nearly halved over the course of several decades, and the territory it controlled shrunk by a similar margin. To the Confederacy, this all could have been prevented with order. A

strong, ordered government ruled by objective decision-making, defined authority, and clear lines of communication could have prevented the fate that befell Duerok. And that's what the Stenian Confederacy aims to do.

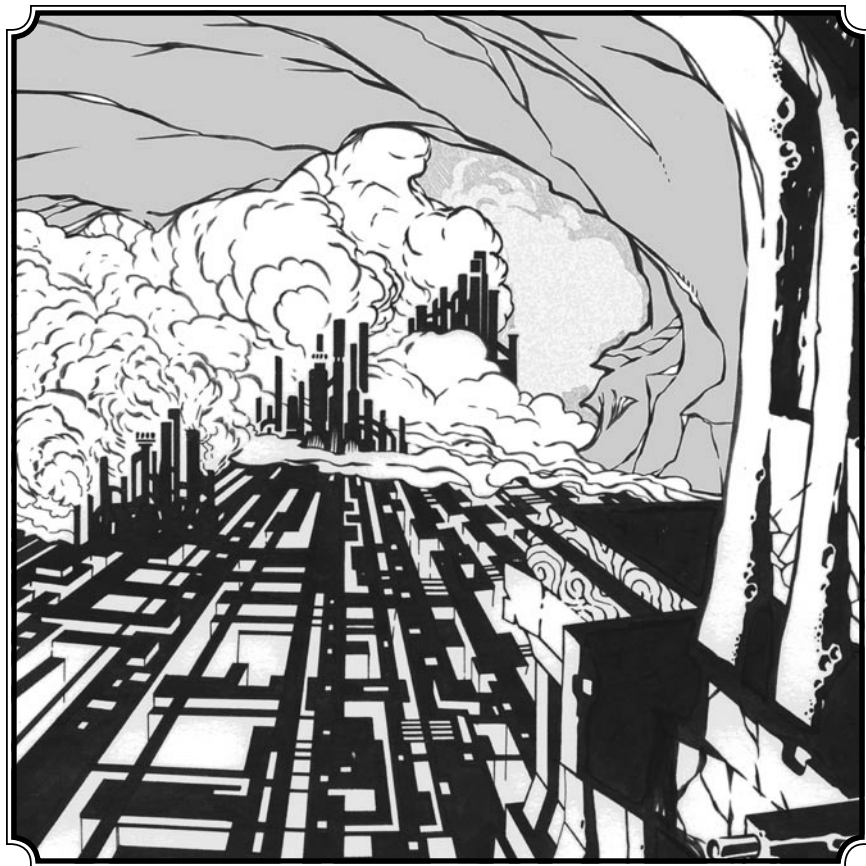
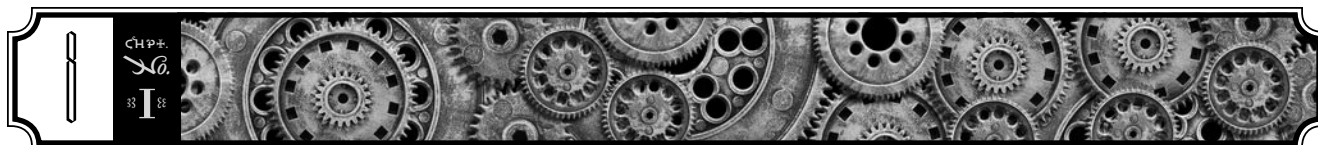
The Stenian Confederacy is an alliance of five city-mechs, each of which has absolute dominion over its own territory. The city-mechs coordinate their activities in a continuing bid to bring ordered rulership to the surface world. Each city-mech has a clearly defined government, a strict chain of command, and a set territory. They patrol their domains with iron fists, strictly enforcing a body of law necessary to preserve the whole.

At least, they do so in theory. Despite its noble ideas, the Stenian Confederacy has some weaknesses. Most of its dwarven members have lived for a hundred or more years, and still remember the authority of the old clans. The new rule of the abstract governing councils of the Stenians does not yet have a firm legitimacy in the mind of these older dwarves. Furthermore, the politics of the Stenian Confederacy are complicated by the Gearwrights Guild, which owns one of the city-mechs, controls many mechs on its own, and exists as a wild card faction within the Stenians' own government but outside its formal chain of command. Finally, the Stenian Confederacy remains a *confederacy*, not an autocracy, so for all its talk of firm order and clear lines of command, it still has to contend with the fact that it has no ultimate authority, only five allied city-mechs which make up its highest echelon of power.

These five city-mechs are the core of the Stenian Confederacy. They are Durgan-lok, Nedderpik, Lokag, Thuron, and Gorla. Although Durgan-lok was the first city-mech to be constructed, the Confederacy was really born with the construction of Nedderpik. Durgan-lok retains strong ties to the clan leadership model of Duerok, which oversaw its construction. Nedderpik was built by the Gearwrights Guild with the express intent from the beginning that it be outside the control of Duerok. Echoes of the old clan model are strongest on Durgan-lok, but on Nedderpik and subsequent city-mechs, the main loyalty is to the Stenian Confederacy.

The Stenian Confederacy is firmly dedicated to establishing stability in an otherwise chaotic world. It stands as the symbol of order and might to a world that for decades has seen nothing but chaos and destruction. The Stenians believe firmly that order extends outward from within, and the only way to reestablish peace and tranquility is to be stalwart defenders of law. Nebulous concerns of good and evil are





secondary to the virtues of order and stability; to the Stenians, good is a natural consequence of order, and all of Highpoint shall one day reap the benefits.

The Confederacy establishes this order by strict military discipline. Each member has a rank and a place, and clearly knows who is in charge. Orders are not questioned; they are simply obeyed. Rules are the backbone of Stenian command, and without them the whole of the system falls into chaos. Members of the Confederacy have dedicated themselves to not only the philosophy of law, but to its application in everyday life.

Strict militarism bordering on martial law is everyday practice among the Stenian Confederacy. Members must simply adhere to their laws. Almost no other requirements exist. While this sometimes leads to extremes of all sorts, it has also led to a remarkably open society. The old clan model of Duerok was extremely insular, focused almost solely on dwarves as the center of all civilization. The Stenian Confederacy, on the other hand, has quickly recognized the technical talents of gnomes, the magical prowess of elves, and the ambition and wide-ranging minds of humans. The Stenians accept all comers, regardless of

race or background, provided they can prove their worth. In practice, of course, some of the more traditional dwarves grumble about the newcomers, and the physical constraints of older city-mechs like Durgan-lok limit the ability of humans to traverse their pitch-black five-foot-tall corridors, but compared to most other societies on Highpoint, the Stenian Confederacy is open-minded.

Life is hard aboard Stenian mechs — and in their surface-patrolled “safe zones.” There are very few slackers among the Stenians; the hard-working survivors of the halls of Duerok have very little patience for those not willing to fight for their own survival. They maintain the calendar of Duerok, in which there are only six holidays in a 252-day year, and these days there’s so much work that those six holidays are never celebrated. Every citizen must prove his worth and be willing to work constantly. Some city-mechs, such as Nedderpik, were actually built by their crew; others accept petitioners for available crew space, but only if they have useful skills or needed abilities. Still, in recent years the standards have declined as the crisis mentality of the early years has receded. Now it is possible to get a short stay on a Stenian mech if your coin purse is heavy enough to meet the

heavy tax burden (or heavy enough to sway the immigration official, but woe betide that official if he’s caught — or the immigrant, for that matter). Despite the occasional exception, the majority of the Stenian hierarchy is lawful to the core, and theirs is the kind of law enforced with swift, unquestioning justice.

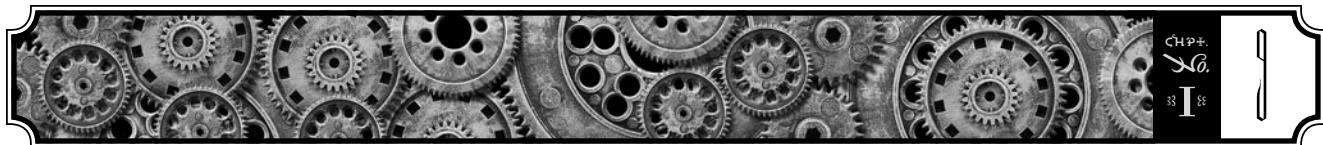
Most of the Stenian government is in fact military in origin. Mech crews are almost always formally commissioned in the military, and they are judge, jury, and executioner when in the field. But the military discipline of the Confederacy extends even beyond those on active duty. In a sense, there is no division between the military and the citizens of the Stenian Confederacy. Pilots’ wives help to maintain their mechs, just as dwarven matrons of old sharpened their husbands’ axes between battles. Children learn to recognize rank insignias at a young age. Every able-bodied youth is trained for war, even if he never actively enlists in the military.

Members of the Confederacy have no tolerance for individuals that live their lives without order. The chaos of the rust riders, the free riding of the Irontooth Clans, the unstructured nature of life in the city of Edge: These are dangerous, even terrifying concepts to the Confederacy. The philosophy of discipline is so firmly entrenched in the minds of Stenian citizens that it ranks alongside such truisms as “a dwarf needs ale to survive.” To the Stenians, order is a prerequisite for survival. Those who do not live with structure, order, and discipline are destined only for death, the same kind of death many Stenians remember witnessing in the bloody halls of Duerok.

## HISTORY

Before the lunar rain, the Stenian Confederacy did not exist. Its antecedent, the dwarven stronghold called Duerok, was a powerful force in the subsurface world below the roughlands. Only after the lunar rain created a chain of events that would shatter Duerok, and only after that in turn led to the creation of Durgan-lok, the first city-mech, would the Stenian Confederacy come into existence.

But Duerok did exist before the lunar rain, and had existed for many, many centuries. Duerok is an ancient stronghold with strong ties to dozens of dwarven clans. Strongest of them all is Clan Duerok, of course, but the namesake clan is only one of many. The word Duerok is identified first and foremost with



the physical stronghold that bears its name, not the clan from which it originated hundreds of years ago.

Duerok was (and still is) a major factor in trade through the underdeep. The Endless River, which carries trade goods from one end of Highpoint to the other, flows under the great cliffs and mountains at the center of the continent. As the Endless River flows eastward under the Boundary Peaks, the roughlands, and the flatlands, its major currents drive straight through the heart of Duerok. For centuries, this proximity to such a major trade route has made Duerok a vital stopping point for underdark trading. Merchants would pick up goods all along the western reaches of the Endless River, then bring them to Duerok for exchange. Duerok in turn maintained a strong presence in Edge, where it would bring its goods out to trade with the surface world. For years, Duerok strove to control Edge and thus dominate trade along the Endless River, but each of its attempts to do so inevitably failed.

The best-known of the Duerok clans was not Duerok itself, but Clan Fralief. Fralief was responsible for ferrying goods from Duerok to Edge, and handled many trading transactions in Edge itself. As a result, Fralief was known to outsiders as “the face of Duerok.” Many surface-dwellers still to this day don’t realize that Duerok is also the name of a clan; they think of Fralief as the dominant clan of the stronghold.

The clan system of Duerok was ruled by the elder members of each clan. Each clan had its own system for rulership, but usually the eldest male warrior acted as chancellor of a council of elders. In some cases, matriarchal councils dominated. Regardless of the details, the elder system formed a natural pyramidal structure over what was a vast domain. More than 600,000 dwarves were ruled by a system of progressively younger and more localized representatives of the elders of a few dominant families. Marriages intertwined the families and complicated the relationships at many places, but in a lawful society with strictly obeyed values of family, clan, and tradition, these complications never reached a crisis point.

Until the coming of the lunar rain. The effects were devastating, and led directly to the formation of the Stenian Confederacy. Buried forever in the early period of strife and disaster, now forgotten to many, are the names of the clans that fell, and the names of their leaders who have no one left alive to remember them. But these names are not forgotten by all. Many dwarves in the Stenian Confederacy maintain to this day a personal shrine dedicated to

the warriors who fell defending Duerok. The Stenian rulership is split on the value of these shrines: Obviously, no one objects to venerating fallen warriors, but some worry that the chosen method only perpetuates the legacy of the old clan system. When the administration of city-mech Lokag built a centralized shrine on its main level dedicated to all the fallen warriors of Duerok, the city-mech populace supported its decision. But when Lokag’s rulers subsequently tried to quietly “integrate” personal shrines into the central location — in other words, remove individual loyalties to old, dead clans and replace them with a Stenian-controlled edifice — the backlash was extreme by dwarven standards.

Despite the best efforts of the Stenian Confederacy, historical clan loyalties remain. Dwarves born on the modern city-mechs consider such loyalties anachronistic. Unfortunately for the Stenians, the dwarven lifespan of up to 450 years means there are far more living dwarves to appreciate the clan system than there are to disdain it. Loyalty to the Confederacy is slowly taking hold, particularly among coglayers, mech jockeys, technicians, engineers, and the rest of the technical population, but it is a very slow transition.

The history of the Stenian Confederacy was most shaped by the following clans, who retain the greatest loyalties among its citizens.

### CLAN FRALIEF

Fralief still survives as an active clan, though its numbers are greatly reduced from what they once were. Due to its regular contact with the surface world through trading in Edge, its members were most comfortable with leaving their dwarven halls to live on the surface world in a city-mech — so when Durgan-lok first trod on the flatlands, it was with a crew comprised largely of Fralief dwarves. More than a third of Durgan-lok’s population has strong ties to Fralief. Should there ever be a conflict between Stenian and Fralief rulership, it is unclear how this portion of the crew would react.

### CLAN KUDEAH

One of the smallest of all the clans, Kudeah had fewer than 3,000 members, almost all of whom were concentrated in a single stronghold on the fringes of the main Duerok-controlled areas. The Kudeah stronghold was

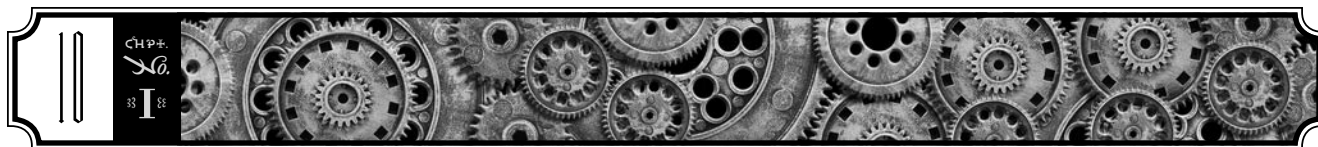
wiped out in a single day during the earliest influxes of refugees, and the few Kudeah dwarves to survive were splintered as they retreated. Nonetheless, the Kudeah were able to find shelter due to one of the greatest assets of their tribe: They were jewelers and gemcrafters, considered some of the most gifted of all dwarven artists, and without a doubt one of the wealthiest of all dwarven tribes. For the same reason, they were also considered effete and weak, and many dwarven warriors thought it no surprise that a clan of artists would fall to invading refugees in a single day.

For several decades, what remained of the Kudeah dwarves was scattered throughout the besieged, decaying halls of Duerok, until the role of mechs began to grow. The Kudeah dwarves, it was discovered, had a fine dexterity unmatched among most dwarven clans. They made great mech pilots. Generations of working in minute detail with tiny gems paid off when the world needed fine motor skills. Now many of the top mech jockeys among the Confederacy are from Clan Kudeah. They are still regarded as weak by the old axe-warriors, but the number of times a Kudeah dwarf has saved the life of an axe-warrior has ameliorated this judgment somewhat. Being a Kudeah dwarf is not a prerequisite to becoming a mech jockey in the Stenian Confederacy, but it is certainly a winning point of entry, and many an aspiring pilot has been known to lie about his clan heritage. Because the Kudeah clan has lost its stronghold and most of its numbers, it is effectively destroyed, so clan loyalty is not a big problem for Stenian administrators, except in the abstract sense that many older Kudeah dwarves hope to someday clear an area for a new stronghold.

### CLAN MIGLUD

Miglud was a manufacturing clan, dedicated to refining the earth’s bounty into the finest goods available. Its members were craftsmen trained from their father’s knee in the respected medieval crafts: blacksmithing, weapon forging, leatherworking, fletching, and others. As a result, Miglud dwarves were recruited early on by Parilus for their technical aptitude. Of all the dwarves, they learned mecraft the fastest, and it is they who played the greatest role in building Durgan-lok. It was a Miglud dwarf named Stenius who hammered into place the final bolts on Sereg’s first mech. Clan Miglud mechs have since migrated to all five city-mechs in positions as coglayers and





engineers, and generally show a strong loyalty to the Stenian Confederacy. Nonetheless, they have strong memories of the family forges where many were raised, and maintain personal shrines despite their professed alliance to the Stenians and the god Dotrak.

## DUEROK

The stronghold of Duerok still exists. More than 300,000 dwarves make their home over the hundreds of miles of tunnels that comprise Duerok. This population is comparable to the roughly 300,000 surface-dwellers who are protected by the city-mechs of the Stenian Confederacy, though it's vastly larger than the relatively tiny population of just under 30,000 actually living on mechs.

Duerok's relationship with the Stenian Confederacy is both very strong and very weak. It could be best compared to a terribly strained family relationship. The Stenian Confederacy was born from the halls of Duerok, draws most of its population from Duerok, counts among its citizens primarily former citizens of Duerok, and, in a very literal sense, was actually *built* by Duerok, for it was Duerok that contributed the labor and supplies to build Durgan-lok. Nonetheless, the Stenian Confederacy officially doesn't recognize the clan structure of Duerok, eschews belief in the traditional Duerok gods, and has physically abandoned the territory of Duerok. The medieval feudal structure of the remaining clans of Duerok hasn't helped matters; the lack of a central authority in Duerok is what many Stenians believed caused the lunar disaster in the first place, and to this day the Stenian Confederacy still must deal with each clan of Duerok individually.

Of all the other societies on Highpoint, the Stenian Confederacy is most like that of Duerok. When aid is needed, the Stenians and Duerok are quick to provide assistance to each other. Yet they are forever separated by the issues that divide them, and resentment simmers on both sides.

## RELIGION

The Stenian Confederacy is officially without a religion. The coming of the lunar rain left many dwarves without faith in their gods, even deep in the traditional bastions of Duerok. The coming of Parilus, with his technical diagrams

and life-saving mechs, raised further questions about how a mortal with a wrench could save Duerok while the gods could not. The final straw was the sporadic appearance of trak-traks and whispered rumors of Vessels of Dotrak walking the earth. Something other than the traditional pantheon was reshaping Highpoint, but whether it was mechs, Dotrak, or the lunar gods was not clear.

Due to the dominant position of the technical arts in the Stenian government, a great many senior Stenian officials believe in the quasi-god Dotrak. Given Dotrak's hands-off philosophy ("he just set the universe in motion, then stepped back and let it run") and the succinct union between Dotrak's ostensible teachings and the facts of mechanical physics, a "belief" in Dotrak often means little more than strong faith in the power of the steam engine and no faith in the old dwarven gods. The preponderance of technical classes on the city-mechs means belief in Dotrak is strongest on board the mechs. However, even among the surface societies that the city-mechs protect, the obvious physical protection of mechs — compared to clerics who are still having trouble receiving their spells — makes it a lot easier to believe in Dotrak than the old gods.

Nonetheless, there are always a few holdouts in any mass movement. Particularly on Durgan-lok, the most traditional of the dwarven mechs, worshippers of the old gods remain. They are ridiculed by some of their more progressive brethren, yet still cling to their ways. Korduk, the Soul Father and god of the dwarves, is particularly popular among these traditionalists, as is Morst, god of strength, and Glorius, god of valor. Details on these gods can be found on page 10 of the **Mech Manual**.

Although the Stenian Confederacy is officially without a religion, there is one pervasive belief that could be called a Stenian religion — and often is by outsiders. This is belief in the Law. The Law, with a capital L, is the original term by which the founders of the Confederacy referred to their system of rules and regulations. These laws became known as "the Law," and now the Law is recognized as the highest ideal of Stenian life.

The Law is not written down anywhere, nor is it recorded by an official keeper. It is understood by those within the Confederacy as the rule of authority for the good of the whole. The Law is when a military superior commands his subordinates. The Law is when a blacksmith must work late into the night, whether he wants to or not, to ensure the city-mech is repaired before it sets off in the morning. The Law is when a scofflaw must be executed for a

minor crime in order to maintain order among restless surface-dwellers, and the Law is when a high-ranking Stenian military commander must be permitted leniency on a major crime because his military talents bring more good to the whole than the bad brought by his crime. The Law governs waking times, meal times, even proper intervals of rest; it governs the military hierarchy, punishments for violations of its decrees, and the chain of command. The Law governs everything.

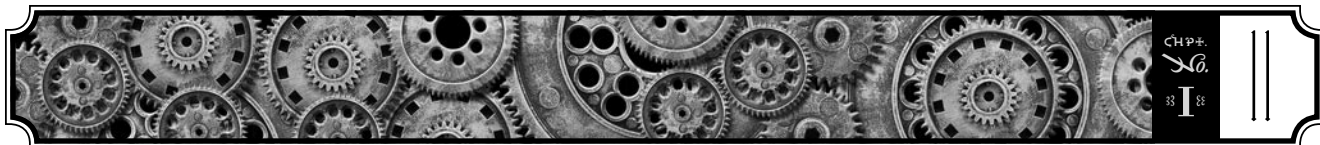
The Law pervades all aspects of Stenian life, but is often missed by visitors, who don't catch the difference between references to "the law" and "the Law." There *are* written laws on board all city-mechs, which constitute the laws of that city-mech, but they are brief and frequently reference "the Law." More than once, a written law has been overruled by a subjective interpretation of the Law when the situation warrants it.

If anything could be called the religion of the Stenian Confederacy, it is the guiding force of the Law. The Law is never promulgated or stated outright. It is simply the will of the authority acting in the interest of all. The unflinching loyalty to order and discipline evinced by the Stenian crew, combined with the overwhelming lawful alignment and obedience to authority that permeates every Stenian vessel, makes every Stenian citizen acutely aware of all aspects of the Law.

## MAGIC

Magic plays a small and regularly diminishing role within the Stenian Confederacy. Arcane magic has never had a strong hold on dwarven culture, but divine magic has been important for generations. Now the gods speak less vocally to their followers, and the steam engine appears to be the solution to the world's problems. Growing faith in Dotrak further erodes the status of clerics and other divine spellcasters. Taken together, these factors have resulted in a steady movement away from magic and toward mechanical solutions.

One exception is the combination of magic and mech. This is an area of intense interest within the Confederacy. Part of the interest lies with coglayers intensely scrutinizing options for using magical or extraplanar elements in steam-powered construction. Another part lies in those who try to cross the boundaries of steam and spell, particularly steam mages and those with similar abilities. Essentially, the



only major research in arcane magic occurring within the boundaries of the Stenian Confederacy concerns its application to mechs.

Members of the spellcasting classes are rare, but they do exist. Even though the cultural zeitgeist is moving toward steam power, there are still holdouts and anachronists. Wizards are less rare than sorcerers, who are now being born with much greater frequency. Many sorcerers subjugate their innate talents to pursue more respected careers as mech jockeys or coglayers, but just as many indulge their abilities. And the churches of the old world, though they have lost many followers, struggle on. New clerics are recruited, although at a drastically reduced rate. Magic-wielding Stenians can still be found, but they're the minority these days.

## DIPLOMACY

The Stenian Confederacy seeks to establish order on the surface world so that it can once again be safely inhabited. Since the inception of the Confederacy, both loyalists and opponents have wondered where this will end. It is quite possible that the martial

law imposed by the Confederacy will not end even if the problems of the lunar rain are overcome. Other threats may take their place. And so, once-temporary settlements are becoming permanent military outposts, long-term infrastructure is being developed, and the Confederacy is increasingly suspicious of groups within its boundaries that don't agree to its rule. Military law is the undeniable absolute.

With this in mind, Stenian diplomacy is a rather simple situation: obey or be punished. Overwhelming military might is the solution to most problems. Actions taken in the name of rebuilding the surface world, protecting the citizens of the Confederacy, or defending the city-mechs generally can have no negative repercussions, as far as the Confederacy is concerned. This attitude obviously doesn't endear the Confederacy to its neighbors. There are as many resentful subjugates of the Confederacy as there are willing citizens.

The Irontooth Clans have long been viewed as criminals and outcasts by the Confederacy. Although certain aspects of their society are lawful and even respectable, given their monastic heritage, they remain difficult to rule — thus the Confederacy views them as a potential threat. The clans' outlaw ways and unprecedented piloting skills make them far more dangerous than helpful in Stenian eyes. Dominating them or assimilating them seems to be impossible, so the Confederacy resorts to what it sees as its only option: eliminating them.

In reality, however, this conclusion may not be so stark. Most of the Irontooth Clans don't have nearly as much enmity for the Stenian Confederacy as one would expect. They regard the Stenians just as they regard everyone else they meet: as individual people, not a single united force. There are friendships between some Stenian surface-dwellers and nearby Irontooth clansmen, just as there are open conflicts. Moreover, the Irontooth Clans are many and varied, and even while some dislike the Stenians, others have no quarrel. Many Irontooth respect talent in all things, especially mech piloting, and this has led them to accept Stenian mech jockeys for training and jousting within a clan. Many such mech jockeys eventually return to the Confederacy illegally, never discussing their time spent with the Irontooth Clans. This informal cross-pollination of ideas slowly binds the two factions, and there is a small minority of well-respected mech jockeys

within the Confederacy that proposes some sort of peaceful solution to "the Irontooth problem."

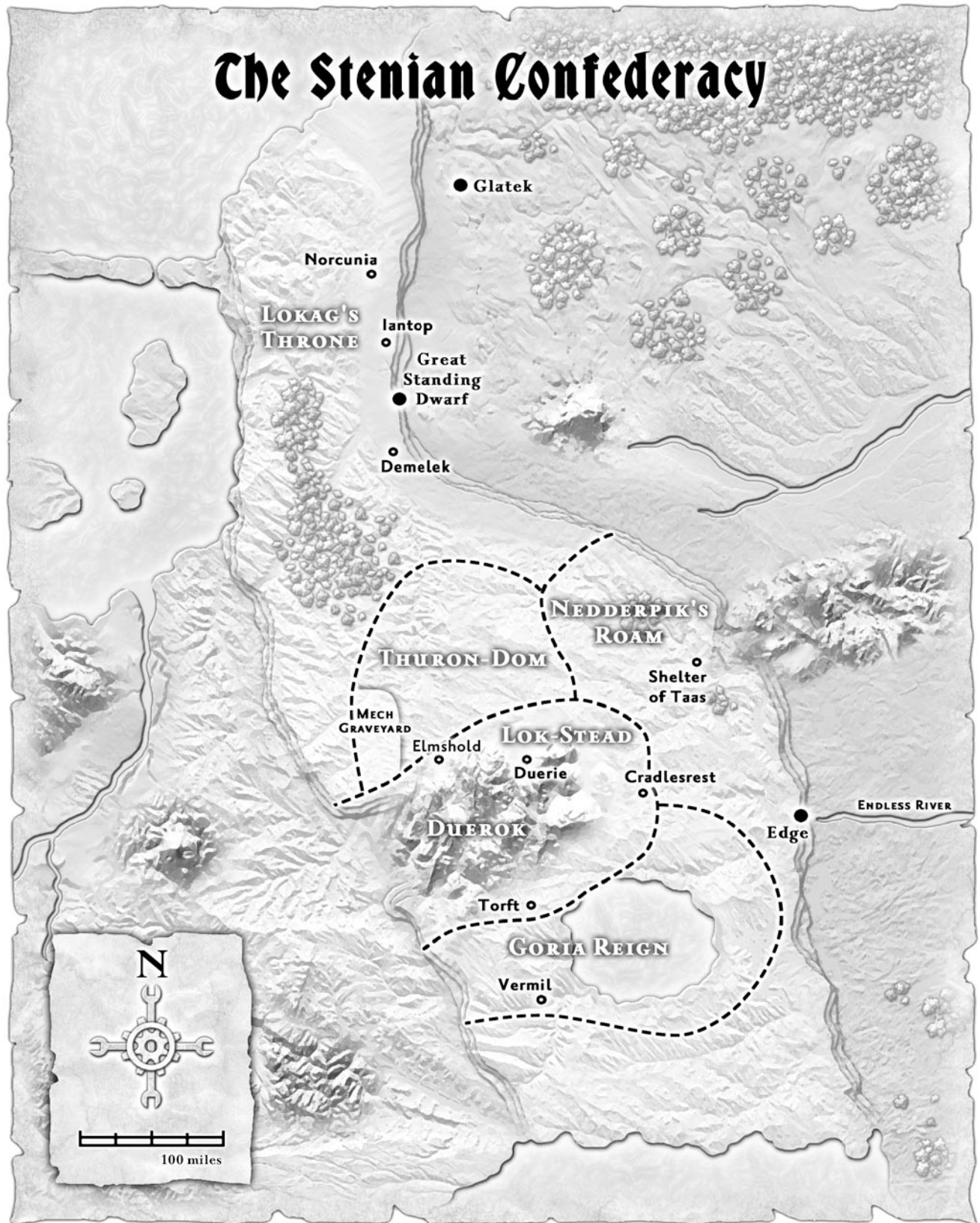
The Stenian Confederacy considers Shar Thizdic's Legion to be an outright threat. Officially, no diplomatic relations exist between the Stenian Confederacy and the Legion. There have been unofficial visitors between both governments, however, as well as some degree of back-channel communication. On the more confrontational side, shots have been fired between the two factions, particularly along the eastern cliffs near the endless plains. Both governments strive to keep these incidents to a minimum, as no one wants a war — yet.

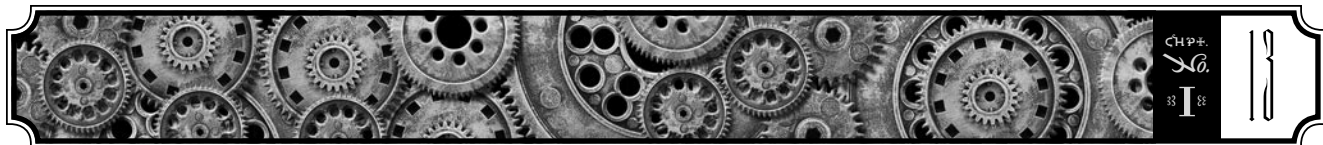
It's clear that the Legion has an expansionist agenda, which worries the leaders of the Confederacy. However, they too eventually wish to extend their ordered view of society to more citizens, and are concerned about Shar Thizdic as much for the fact that he stands in their way as for the fact that his growing base of city-mechs is a threat. From what is publicly known, it seems the Stenian Confederacy is mostly concerned with patrolling its borders against the Legion, while the Legion may be actively sending spies and saboteurs into the Stenian city-mechs.

Some elements within the Stenian Confederacy believe that Shar Thizdic should be attacked now. They view the construction of his City Killer steam cannon (see page 128 of **DragonMech**) as an act of war. Given that the Stenian Confederacy currently has five city-mechs compared to the Legion's two, would it not be better to attack now while the Legion is weak, rather than wait until their forces are matched? These hawks are a vocal minority in Stenian government, and their arguments are seriously considered; no one dismisses them outright. If formalized diplomatic relations between the Confederacy and the Legion ever do occur, they will probably begin with a gun barrel.

The Stenian Confederacy has little contact with the L'arile Nation. Traditionally, both the elves and the dwarves were fairly insular, each content to remain in their locales studying the magic or mining that most interested them. There were some early conflicts as each side was unsure about the interests of the other. But now the Stenian Confederacy recognizes the generally good-aligned interests of the elves, and does not consider them to be an enemy. If anything, they are a loose ally against the Legion. There is occasional contact between the two governments, though not much active cooperation. Some elements within the Confederacy wish to establish a formal alliance with







Tannanliel, if only to oppose Shar Thizdic. The slowly growing non-dwarven minority within the Confederacy has helped advance this interest among the traditionally insular dwarven majority. What will happen remains to be seen.

A few special relationships are worth mentioning. The Confederacy's relationship with Duerok is a longstanding and unusual one, as has already been discussed. The Confederacy's relationship with the Gearwrights Guild is also distinctive. The Gearwrights Guild has existed for millennia, but owes its current incarnation to the direct assistance of both Duerok and the Stenian Confederacy. Moreover, the Gearwrights Guild technically owns city-mech Nedderpik, and takes an active role in the government of most city-mechs. The Gearwrights Guild can almost be thought of as an extra branch of Stenian government, concerned exclusively with the gear-driven arts. There are no known public disputes between the Stenians and Gearwrights, and they have extremely close relations in every regard.

## GEOGRAPHY

The Stenian Confederacy is a mechdom, or a kingdom ruled by city-mechs. In the case of the Stenian Confederacy, there are five ruling city-mechs. Unlike a traditional medieval kingdom, a mechdom is mobile. Its territory is not defined by physical borders unless the mechs cannot traverse those borders, and its territory is not defined by political borders unless the mechs cannot move around these political borders. In short, the territory of a mechdom is not always clean, as the city-mechs can always move.

That said, given the nearly impassable natural boundaries of the Stenian Confederacy (mountains to the west, and cliffs in both sides), its territory is actually well defined for a mechdom. The Stenian Confederacy is the major political power of the flatland — a swath of rocky, barren terrain that is essentially an enormous cliff-top. It is separated from the endless plains of the east by towering cliff faces, some as high as 3,000 feet. To the west is another impressive range of cliffs bordered by a mountainous area (underneath which is Duerok). Most of the Stenian territory is rocky plains, interspersed by some areas of desert and prairie to the south, and the battered remains of an ancient forest to the north.

Each of the Confederacy's five city-mechs patrol and maintain a fixed territory — the "safe

zones" — further reinforcing the mechdom's boundaries. These five areas are each approximately 40,000 square miles in size, sprawled out irregularly across the flatlands. Since city-mechs can travel great distances in a day, these areas are patrolled regularly by the city-mech itself or by patrols of smaller mechs.

It takes a city-mech about one month to cover its patrol area, while smaller patrols frequent settlements and population zones every few days. Note, however, that although a city-mech moves regularly throughout its safe zone, it's quite possible that its regular movements will never bring it within sight of much of its territory. Just as likely is the fact that the city-mech will be within sight of certain areas on a fairly regular basis, but never visit them directly.

Within the Stenian-patrolled safe zones, hundreds of settlements and way stations have sprung up. Population sizes tend to vary greatly among these settlements, since the lunar rain has destroyed many traditional societies. Some settlements spring up, attract a population, and then are devastated by a bad meteor crash or dragon attack; others form from insular communities that don't welcome outsiders, despite their good locations for settlement. Still others follow the nomadic ways popular before the lunar rain, although this is most common near the endless plains, where most of the nomadic tribes originated.

Natural shelters such as caves, canyons, and rock ledges are obvious places for settlements to evolve. These locations are protected from the lunar rain, and have become crowded havens for refugees seeking to avoid the nightly assault. It is nearly impossible for the Confederacy to keep up with every settlement that springs up under their zones. However, any group of individuals living in the safe zone and obeying the Law is considered part of the Confederacy, and governed accordingly.

Some settlements resist the protection of the Confederacy. Usually these are mech tribes or Irontooth clans that practice a lifestyle of raiding and scavenging. But not always. The yoke of martial law imposed by the Stenian Confederacy rubs many a freedom-lover the wrong way. Whether they're traditional tribes, breakaway splinter groups, family bands, or naturally occurring settlements, these independent communities are a thorn in the side of the Confederacy. Many are well-behaved and lawful, but simply refuse to acknowledge the Confederacy as their ruling government. Dealing with rebellious raiders is easy — shoot-and-destroy is a perfectly serviceable approach — but dealing with law-abiding citizens who simply don't adhere to the Law is a much more

delicate problem. In these cases the Confederacy often continues to protect the community, hoping its leaders will come around once they recognize the value of being part of the Confederacy. But not all situations are resolved so peacefully; more than one overzealous mech patrol has done far more damage than it should have to a community that simply wished to be left alone. There are now dozens of underground settlements actively seeking to undermine what they see as the tyrannical rule of the Stenian Confederacy.

Many settlements have seasonal populations that tend to swell with refugees when a city-mech is due to stop by. There is never a shortage of individuals seeking passage or employment on a city-mech. The mechs make regular stops along their route, and refugees tend to follow them from stop to stop in hopes they'll be first in line to replace a disembarking citizen at each stop. The Stenian Confederacy actively discourages these ragtag bands of followers, but only on rare occasions do they have the manpower to focus on the refugees as their first priority. Adventurers often find overwhelming work in these areas, on both sides of the law: policing the refugees, chasing them off, or even smuggling them onto a city-mech.

The mech patrols that keep the safe zones safe are far from stopping trouble entirely. Even though the Stenian-controlled areas are much safer than they would be otherwise, thousands of square miles are still underpatrolled. These are the least-habitable areas where the fewest of the Stenian citizens dwell. In their place are creatures. Monsters living just outside of human boundaries, or smart enough to stay out of sight when a mech patrol sweeps through, have become more of a threat than ever since their natural hunting grounds have been destroyed by years of lunar rain. Ancient crypts and sewers reopened by the lunar rain have become crowded lairs where monsters are forced to share space just as the surface races do above. Tribes of humanoids that have managed to stay together still raid and terrorize when the opportunity arises. Mech patrols often have their hands full, making them more likely to depend on freelance adventurers when unforeseen problems arise.

The five safe zones of the Stenian Confederacy are named after the five city-mechs that patrol them. These are Lok-stead, named for Durgan-lok; Nedderpik's Roam, named for Nedderpik; Thuran-Dom, named for Thuron; Gorla Reign, named for Gorla; and Lokag's Throne, named for Lokag. The southernmost of the zones is Lok-stead, for Durgan-lok was the first city-mech to be built. Lok-stead





encompasses much of the surface world above the underground stronghold of Duerok. South of it is Gorla Reign; north is Nedderpik's Roam, established after the second city-mech was complete. Further north is Lokag's Throne, and west is Thurand-Dom.

## LOK-STEAD

Lok-stead is aptly named for the city-mech that secures it. Durgan-lok has the smallest of the safe zones, with the underground stronghold of Duerok nestled near the center. Durgan-lok is the only city-mech to retain a government closely modeled on the old clan structure, and is never further than a day's travel from the edges of Duerok, where most of the clans are housed. Its patrol zone is small by other city-mech standards, leaving much of its territory enforced only by patrols of smaller mechs, but the area near Duerok is by far the safest region of the flatlands. Rumors of this well-secured area have spread very far, which has perversely led to even more refugees flocking toward Duerok. Luckily, many now choose to journey to the surface of Lok-stead rather than the subsurface zones of Duerok. Long-standing settlements and permanent homes are found in this zone, some even founded by Duerok expatriates, since the area's proximity to Duerok ensures that the Confederacy will protect it.

The Stenians would prefer that most of the population migrate to other safe zones. The Confederacy built the city-mechs to ease the overcrowding of their dwarven cities, after all. But since Lok-stead is so close to Duerok, it seems to many outsiders that the zone is merely an extension of the city. The resulting population swell in and above Duerok has created a self-feeding cycle of more refugees requiring a greater military presence to patrol them, but the improved military presence creates a stronger sense of security, which only attracts more refugees and further strains the military.

There is now a massive concentration of Stenian military forces at the heart of Lok-stead. These forces would be far more useful in threatened areas, rather than quelling peasant disputes and enforcing the Law of the Stenians. But from a long-term perspective, these military forces are grooming the citizens of the future.

The urgent danger of the early days has dissipated, and the Stenian Confederacy will soon have to think about political relationships between other nations, not just the best way to

deal with crisis after crisis. To a select group of ambitious, traditionalist dwarves on Durgan-lok, the military concentrations on the surface world are merely the beginning of what will eventually be a Stenian-led army like nothing the world has seen before. Calling themselves by no name but known to a few other powerful administrators as the Expansionists, these would-be dwarven warlords have their sights set on the city of Edge, only a hundred miles eastward. Edge's many fractured domains have remained outside unified dwarven control for as long as anyone can remember, despite a strong Duerok presence there and repeated attempts by the dwarves to control the city. With an army of potential foot soldiers amassing (and being groomed) in Lok-stead, the Expansionists hope to eventually rout the drow once and for all from their bases on the northern side of High Docks, and eventually control all trade through Edge. This would be an enormous economic victory with huge rewards for the winner — but such an unprovoked invasion would run contrary to the mission of the Stenian Confederacy. As such, the Expansionists have kept their views largely hidden, and use their positions high in the Durgan-lok command chain to slowly twist the political situation toward their goals.

The citizens of Lok-stead readily accept the presence of the Stenians and tend to be very compliant with their laws. However, the steady influx of refugees brings with it criminal elements such as thievery and smuggling. The smuggling isn't limited to goods; getting people inside Lok-stead — or even Duerok — is a profitable vocation, as is the forgery of Durgan-lok citizenship medallions. Although Lok-stead may be less dangerous than other safe zones, it is not without its own problems, which tend to be centered around several criminal organizations. Overt threats are dealt with more quickly than in other zones, but it's the subtle threats that are hard to get rid of.

The best known of the criminal organizations is called the Blank Face. It is primarily organized around smuggling well-paying clients into safe zones. Members of the Blank Face are generally rogues, though a few stalkers also participate, using their abilities to distract mechs with technical problems while the rogues smuggle their clients aboard. All members of the Blank Face wear tightly woven mesh facemasks that obscure their features. They require their human cargo to wear such masks as well. Once the clients are on board a safe mech (or snuck into the halls of Duerok, as the case may be), the Blank Face presents them with a false identity, even going so far as

to use *polymorph* spells to permanently alter the client's appearance. Criminals spending stolen gold to escape capture are just as likely to be clients of the Blank Face as are powerful socialites looking for safety.

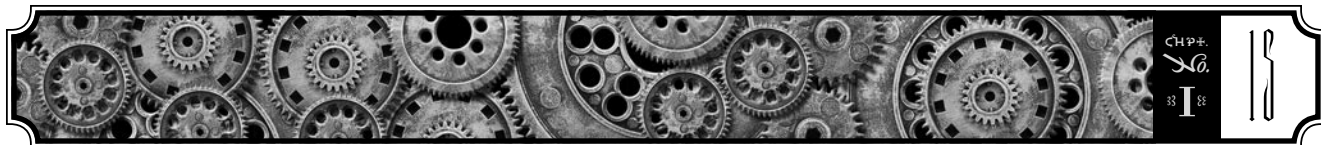
The most notable settlements within Lok-stead are four incipient cities formed from the storm of immigrants: Cradlesrest, Elmshold, Duerie, and Torft. Durgan-lok makes regular stops here, and residents of these areas save their best wares for the city-mech's arrival, which often brings hundreds of paying passengers.

Elmshold lies in the ruins of what was once one of the larger forests in the areas around Duerok, and has evolved into a gathering place for those who wish to rebuild a surface city in a traditional fashion. The residents of Elmshold use scavenged wood to create shelters and buildings.

Duerie rests directly above Duerok in the shadows of a mountain range that provides natural security against the lunar rain. It's become an important point of contact between Duerok and the Stenian Confederacy.

Torft is nothing more than a sea of hovels and squabbling refugees, but due to a confluence of natural terrain, it's a relatively safe place to gather. It's been nothing but trouble for the Stenian Confederacy, which views it as a troublesome shantytown.

Most notable of the four cities is Cradlesrest, a city of sharp-edged rusting steel. Cradlesrest was built from the shattered remains of nearly a dozen enormous Irontooth mechs destroyed here in a huge mech battle only seven years ago. In any other locale, scavengers would have scrapped the mechs and sold them for materials, but in Lok-stead, the Stenian patrols (and widespread stories of the Irontooth loss in the battle) have deterred raiders. The refugees who flocked to shelter amidst the rubble have now reshaped the raw materials into a loose-knit collection of buildings. Cradlesrest is ruled by a permanent encampment of Stenian soldiers assigned to the area, who make sure the restless population doesn't get out of hand. Many Stenians see Cradlesrest as a test site of sorts: The refugees have amply demonstrated how a collection of wrecked mechs can be used as the building blocks of a city. If it can be done here, why not elsewhere? Housing refugees in the burned-out hulks of enemy mechs could be a good strategy for expanding Stenian civilian and military influence simultaneously.



## NEDDERPIK'S ROAM

Nedderpik's Roam covers a vast area of hostile terrain fraught with monsters, rebel tribes, and treacherous ground not suitable for a lesser mech. Although Nedderpik's Roam is located directly north of the relatively safe area of Lok-stead, it is close to the cliffs bordering the orc- and human-infested endless plains; it lacks natural impediments like the mountains above Duerok; and it's close to the remains of the western forests where many Irontooth Clans operate.

In fact, Nedderpik's Roam is one of the points where travel from the endless plains to the flatlands is easiest. The cliffs north of Edge are laced with hidden trails used by generations of merchants and freighters, many of which have since been expanded to the point where a mech can now scale them (see **DragonMech**, page 162). Now these trails are used by raiders, refugees, nomads, and scavengers, most of them hoping to find wealth and fortune at the expense of the Stenian Confederacy. An ongoing mission of Nedderpik's military campaign is to stop the influx from the endless plains. Nedderpik's mech fleets include a growing number of crag striders (see **Mech Manual**, page 7), which are used to patrol the cliffside areas.

Nedderpik's Roam is home to roughly the same population as Lok-stead, but settlements are further apart and the residents are entrenched less densely. Mech patrols are far more frequent, covering a much wider territory, and every one of them has seen its share of action.

Rolling hills, ruined forests, and cliffside terrain provide natural shelters for surface dwellers in Nedderpik's Roam. However, monsters and raiders are just as likely to seek shelter among them as anyone else. Semi-permanent settlements of all races dot the hills of Nedderpik's patrol, but few survive more than a season or two before they are destroyed. Sometimes the destruction is due to alien incursion or the lunar rain, but more often than not it's infighting or invasion that does the trick: Either the denizens bicker over limited space, or passing itinerants try to stake a claim to already-occupied territory. Sometimes one party or the other moves on rather than fight, but other times there are casualties. Hostile encampments of all sorts — mech tribes, rust riders, Irontooth clans, even orcs or rebellious humans on occasion — are constantly being repelled by the military. However, it is nearly impossible to discourage their resurgence

once the mech patrols move on.

The largest settlement within the zone is the Shelter of Taas, constructed in a shallow cave network found under what appears to be a mundane hill. Taas is named after the explorer who found that the "hill" was actually sediment piled on a natural rock shelf, buried deep enough to be impervious to the lunar rain. He dug a small camp under the rock shelf, and over the years it grew into a bustling settlement. Permanent homes and buildings have since been erected under the shelf of rock that gives the Shelter its name. These structures are built from scraps of wood, metal, stone, and other raw materials that the residents have managed to salvage from the surface. Nedderpik stops at the Shelter of Taas on a semi-monthly basis, and stations a reserve regiment there. The soldiers have been steadily expanding the cave network with the goal of eventually digging out a hangar big enough for several patrol mechs. The Shelter of Taas is a common destination for merchants, travelers, and adventurers alike.

Within the hundred-odd miles of cliffside patrolled by Nedderpik, there is rumored to be a tribe of giants that worships the lunar gods. It has long been surmised that a lunar god once descended from the heavens and converted the giants into believers. No one has actual proof that the giants even exist, but rumors abound of deadly confrontations with giant clerics bearing the holy symbols of the lunar gods. Adventurers who have set out to find them have not returned. Most adventurers conclude that the giants are most likely stone giants, but lunar scholars believe they may actually be the elusive lunar giants (see **Mech Manual**, page 7). Some storytellers even claim that a lunar temple has been constructed somewhere within the cliffs where the giants reside.

## THURON-DOM

Thuron-Dom is the patrolled safe zone of the city-mech Thuron. Thuron commands a large area to the north of Duerok and west of Nedderpik's Roam that is home to a great number of surface dwellers. Settlements exist throughout the zone, though nearly every one of them is nomadic. The residents of Thuron-Dom tend to move with the seasons and the

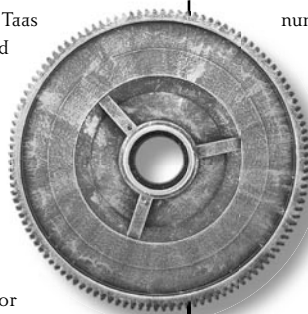
severity of the lunar rain, so their outposts change locations several times each year. More than with any other safe zone, these settlements follow mech patrols, where they are able to rely on the presence of the military for safety.

Humans are relatively rare on the flatlands, but the area now patrolled by Thuron was once their greatest point of concentration there. Some of the nomadic tribes of the endless plains had migrated to this area over years of natural transition, possibly attracted by the strange sight of the Great Standing Dwarf, which lies on the fringes of Thuron-Dom. With the coming of the lunar rain, these nomadic tribes largely retreated to the endless plains or were destroyed, but there remain a large number of them relative to the traditional populations of dwarves and gnomes.

Thuron-Dom is now marked by the fact that there are more Irontooth Clans active in its area than anywhere else in the Stenian Confederacy. Many of the Clans have assimilated the remains of the human tribes that once walked this area. The Clans range from passive and isolationist to actively opposing the Confederacy. While the military of Lok-stead deals mostly with refugees and disobedient settlements, and patrols from Nedderpik's Roam spend more time chasing down small bands of invaders or solitary monsters than anything else, mech pilots of Thuron-Dom start battling other mechs from the very beginnings of their careers. Being stationed on Thuron is considered a good start to a mech jockey's career, but also a perilous one; mech jockeys of Thuron origin have a lower survival rate than many others, but they advance more quickly and are inevitably better pilots than their counterparts with similar tenure on other city-mechs. Month after month of steady clashes with the Irontooth Clans will do that to you.

The western reaches of Thuron-Dom, where mech skirmishes are most common, and are referred to as "the mech graveyard." Burnt-out mech hulks dot the landscape here, testament to years of constant battles. There's a fortune waiting to be made in salvaged metal parts, but given the regular incursions of the Irontooth Clans, most salvagers would prefer to ply their trade in safer areas. An even more direct threat is the groups of "mech-rats," bands of humanoid barbarians who live in the most broken remnants of the mech graveyard.

It is no secret that the mech-rats despise the Stenian Confederacy, though they lack



the numbers or organization to be a threat. The mech-rats are the worst sort of rabble. The Irontooth Clans generally ignore them. Stenian mech patrols are occasionally attacked by roving bands of mech-rats, but rarely with any success. On the other hand, salvage crews brave enough to risk the Irontooth Clans and attempt to collect parts within the graveyard are sometimes killed by the mech-rats, who fight hard to protect their homes.

The military is rarely concerned with these minor attacks. Disbanding the mech-rats seems nearly impossible. No sooner is a mech-rat tribe destroyed than other squatters move in. Luckily, the mech-rats seem content to live among the mechs rather than repair them and use them for battle. Mech-rat societies are usually made up of outcasts and fugitives from all over the Confederacy, who travel to the western reaches of Thuron-Dom specifically because it's rumored to be one of the weakest areas of Stenian control.

Thuron itself is a fairly modern city-mech. Though not up to the secretive Gearwright

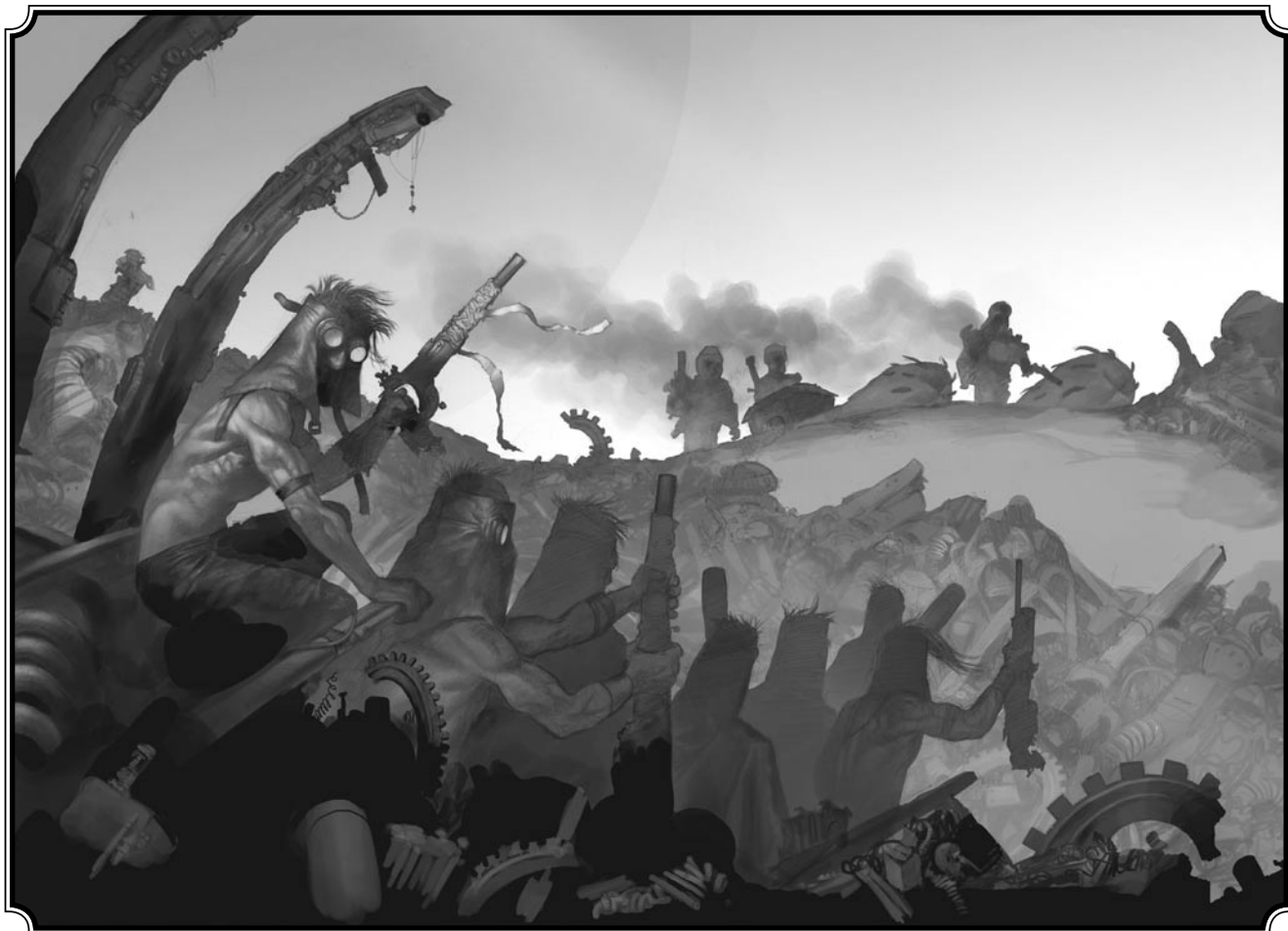
standards of Nedderpik or Durgan-lok, it is solidly designed and well constructed. Since it was built after the Stenian Confederacy had formally come into existence and severed ties to Duerok, it is comfortably loyal to the Stenians.

Adventurers find constant work in Thuron-Dom. The city-mech is the only one to have a formally established adventurers guild, chartered by the Stenian Confederacy, which assists adventurers in finding sponsors and lucrative opportunities, as long as their efforts further the greater goals of the Stenian Confederacy. In general, any task that opposes lunar creatures or the Irontooth Clans falls squarely within the charter of the adventurers guild. The guild charges a nominal membership fee of 10 gp per annum, for which it provides placement with sponsors or leads on prospective adventures. Most of its sponsors are in fact Stenian military commanders who need additional assistance outside the available manpower of their military forces; much of the gold channeled through the adventurers guild is actually

Stenian gold under another name.

The adventurers guild also sells salvage permits, which can only be acquired in other zones through dealing with layers of bureaucracy or having good connections. A salvage permit costs 200 gp per year, plus a tax of 10% of all proceeds from salvaged materials, and entitles the bearer to salvage any non-Stenian mechs destroyed by a Stenian patrol. Salvaging occurs on a first-come, first-serve basis, with available materials split between all those on site possessing salvage permits. It is legal for someone with a salvage permit to use force to limit the access of those without salvage permits. Technically, salvage permits also entitle the bearer to salvage *anything* destroyed by a Stenian patrol, including the body parts of lunar creatures, but this latter category is rarely exercised.

The once-high concentration of nomadic human tribes, and the now-high concentration of marauding Irontooth bands, has led most of the settlements in Thuron-Dom to adopt a migratory lifestyle. Some move with the sea-







sons, others move daily, but almost all move at least several times a year.

The largest such “mobile city” is Taulger, a motley collection of half-wrecked mechs, wagons, and “worm buggies” towed by giant worms trained to stay near the surface. Most of the time, Taulger looks like a disheveled tent city, but every so often the entire city picks up and moves. The “leaders” of Taulger are the five barely functional juggernaut mechs that provide most of its day-to-day security. These are older models rendered obsolete and scrapped by the Stenians, but retrofitted and rebuilt by some enterprising coglayers with more technical skill than supplies.

Now the juggernauts keep the rest of the settlement safe, in more ways than one. When the lunar rain gets bad, they erect a makeshift “roof” of iron planks and stout timbers hung from the arms of the five mechs, which can shelter nearly 500 humans and dwarves in the very, very cramped space below it. Taulger, named for the most popular of the five coglayers who pilot these five juggernauts, moves whenever the city-mech Thuron grows small on the horizon. The city of Taulger always tries to keep the city-mech in sight, providing a measure of security most other cities can’t claim.

Other settlements in Thuron-Dom are similar to Taulger, usually no more than nomadic bands that set up shop wherever the safest place for the night can be found. These roaming bands rarely stay in place more than a few days. Structures are usually armored wagons or an occasional mech surrounded by tents. Some bands actually avoid the military patrols so their black market wares can be sold more openly. Contraband is easy to procure in these places.

## GORIA REIGN

Goria Reign is the southernmost patrol zone of the Confederacy. The Reign is home to very few settlements and is largely an unpopulated wasteland. Lacking mountains to provide any protection against the lunar rain, Goria Reign was hit hard. It also had the misfortune of being chosen as home by numerous lunar dragons, which ravaged everything living in the area. It is the only “safe zone” where lunar dragons are still seen with any regularity, for they were concentrated here in such numbers that they have yet to be completely eliminated.

The remaining Stenian civilians still walking Goria Reign are sparse bands of nomadic

surface dwellers. There are almost no surface settlements of any size. Refugees in Goria Reign live from hand to mouth and are rarely more than roaming bands of beggars.

That said, there are several large settlements in Goria Reign, but they’re all underground and outside the domain of the Stenian Confederacy. Most notably, Goria Reign is home to Vermil, the worm city, and the Confederacy has had trouble dealing with this strange place since the very beginning.

Vermil is an underground city carved from the bedrock by giant worms and occupied by the farmers who tend these worms. Worm farmers have become progressively more common over the decades as surface life has been forced to adapt to the lunar rain. Vermil came about as something of a strange coincidence, with no real planning or forethought; whether it was due to the worms or the farmers is unknown, but somehow it became a point of concentration for worm-based life in the flatlands.

Vermil is a strange place filled with strange people adapted to life with their annelid charges. In regards to the Stenian Confederacy and city-mech Goria, it is notable primarily for its developing military strength. No Stenian commander ever foresaw a day when his mech would be threatened by something so lowly as a worm farmer, but that day has come. A mech that steps into a subsurface worm tunnel usually falls through up to its knee or even hip; getting out of such a predicament can take hours or days, or even longer if the mech is damaged in the process. The myriad inhabitants of Vermil have found they can strand a mech by digging tunnels around or under it, and the mech has almost no recourse other than to send foot soldiers into the tunnels — but the worms are often long gone by the time a mech steps into their burrow.

The goals of Vermil and its worm farmers are open to dispute, as the city appears to have no central organization and no real government to speak of. But the worm farmers have been claiming territory with growing audacity. They dig visible worm tunnels at the

“borders” of the areas they claim, as a warning to any mech that stepping past the visible tunnels brings the risk of plunging through hidden subsurface burrows.

The Stenian Confederacy initially viewed Vermil as another eccentric settlement that for some strange reason rejected its offers of safety and security, but now considers the worm city an outright enemy. The worm farmers are actively seeking to reduce the territory available to Goria patrols while doing nothing whatsoever to protect the area themselves. This further amplifies the problems caused by the lunar dragons, who are able to live relatively unmolested above the areas demarcated by worm tunnels.

Goria has recently instituted a program of active engagement of the worm farmers. Every attempted expansion of worm farmer territory over the past year has been met with a counter-attack. Goria sends tunnel wardens underground to block the escape of the farmers, then follows up with earth breaker mechs supported by infantry and crag striders, plus lancers and juggernauts when they can fit through the tunnels. Any worm farmer foolish enough to make





a stand is slaughtered by the invading forces, though on a few occasions the rare shaker worms have done significant damage to invading forces with repeated sonic blasts.

The lunar dragons flocking to Gorla Reign are another problem entirely. No one is sure why they're attracted to the area, but they are. Most have been eliminated or run off, but not all, and the expansion of Vermil is only making the problem more difficult. The most notable remaining inhabitant is a lunar dragon nicknamed "Moon Claw" by those who have faced it. It is the single largest lunar dragon ever encountered on Highpoint. (In fact, it is a great wyrm lunar dragon, the only one known to exist on the continent.) It has won every encounter with the Confederacy to date, having single-handedly wrecked eleven mechs and killed dozens upon dozens of soldiers.

The biggest question raised by Gorla Reign is, why? Why are the lunar dragons attracted there, despite the fact that there are almost no surface settlements and thus little prey? Why are the worm farmers expanding, despite the fact that they have no apparent agenda and no known quarrel with the Stenians? And why has Moon Claw remained in the area when it could attempt to expand its territory with relative ease?

Patrols in the Gorla Reign encounter denizens unlike those found anywhere else: demons, elementals, and other extraplanar creatures are found far more frequently than they should be. The first sighting of a hellborg occurred in Gorla Reign. Generals surmise this is due to the presence of an as-yet undiscovered extraplanar portal somewhere in the zone, which may explain the other oddities in the area. Could it be that the lunar dragons are somehow trafficking with extraplanar forces? Or does the portal provide easier access to their gods? Are the worm farmers under the influence of a lunar cult?

No one knows for sure.

## LOKAG'S THRONE

The city-mech Lokag patrols the northernmost safe zone of the Confederacy. Lokag's Throne is largely a borderland where dangers from outside the safe zones occasionally wander. The endless plains and remains of the elven forests are only a few miles to the east, and the seaside coastal zones are due west. Settlements within the zone are rare and are usually made up of hardy individuals that can hold their own against invading monsters. The zone is so

named because the mech literally rules over the inhabitants in true military fashion. Nearly every resident of the zone is considered part of the militia. It is very common for the patrols to commandeer local equipment and conscript citizens on the spot to fight against invaders.

Lokag's Throne is the only Stenian zone to have regular contact with the slathem (*DragonMech*, page 198). Its eastern border is only twenty miles from Glatek, where many slathem shelter. And the northern and western borders of Lokag's Throne are directly adjacent to the seaside areas where slathem live. The slathem are organized into local bands so relations range the gamut; some have allied with the Confederacy and accept its rule, while others chafe at the yoke of martial law. Most slathem are neutral, however, so outright conflict is rare. Slathem find it easy enough to swim away and wait out the departure of a troublesome mech patrol.

Lokag's Throne is seen as the most probable entry point for an invasion from the Legion. It's also a hotbed of activity for Irontooth Clans selling bootleg mech parts to coastal traders, who ferry them around the North Coast to the Legion. Encounters with Legion mechs are fairly common along the eastern cliffs, but thankfully few result in combat.

More than in any other zone, Lokag military mechs are likely to run down and search any vessel that passes within sight. They don't hesitate to bombard mechs that attempt to run away from them. Even adventurers within the Throne are considered suspect until the military has worked with them long enough to establish a trusted relationship.

There are three permanent settlements in Lokag's Throne: Norcunia, Demelek, and Iantop. Each is within a few miles of the eastern border and patrolled regularly by mechs from Lokag. These settlements are essentially military bases established and maintained by Lokag, which considers the eastern front of Lokag's Throne to be a potentially dangerous entry point for subversive elements. Farmers, peasants, adventurers, caravans, and travelers are welcome to take refuge within these settlements, but troublemakers are warned to be on their best behavior by the extensive military presence within each town.

Each of the three permanent settlements is loosely constructed from salvaged mech parts harvested throughout the zone. Casualties of Stenian patrol mechs are fairly common, and their remnants can be claimed and sold for profit by those possessing salvage permits. Early on, Lokag offered top-dollar rates for salvagers who brought materials to the sites where

Norcunia, Demelek, and Iantop were eventually constructed. Now these state-sponsored cities are constructed of solid steel — in some cases, buildings are basically dismembered mech hulls simply transplanted and hollowed out — where the residents are well protected from the lunar rain.

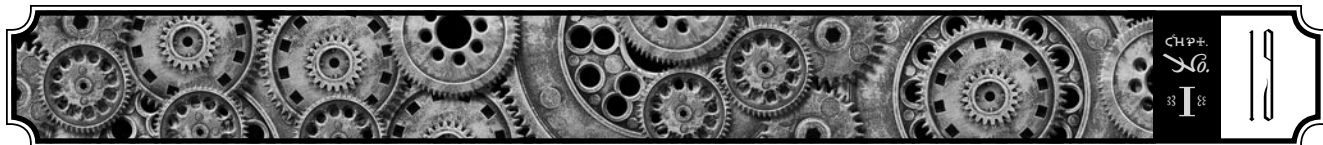
Salvaging without a permit is a capital offense in Lokag's Throne, and usually results in the immediate execution of the salvager and all crew members. Enforcement of this statute is much more strict than in the other zones, as the administrators of Lokag consider salvaged materials to be necessary for the continued growth of their three military cities. Salvaged mechs are often used for the construction of settlements in the zone, and some are even refurbished for personal use. It's generally illegal to salvage Stenian mechs, and anyone with a salvage load that looks like it came from a juggernaut or lancer is going to have some explaining to do.

## FACIONS

The Stenian Confederacy is a new organization forged from the remains of a badly wounded culture. Although lawful to the core, it is a conglomerate whose constituents retain individual loyalties to a dizzying array of other institutions: clans formed from blood relationships; ancient loyalties to the stronghold of Duerok; religious ties to gods now largely abandoned, or new gods rising to the fore; professional relationships to the Gearwrights Guild; and citizenship to individual city-mechs as well as the larger Stenian Confederacy.

Although each individual member of the Stenian Confederacy is influenced by his relationships to all of these elements, a single powerful force helps keep them in check: the military. Military doctrine and structure form the core of the Law which all Stenians obey. A review of factions within the Stenian Confederacy must focus first and foremost on the military, for although it is not a "faction" in the sense that it divides the Confederacy (*every* member of the Confederacy is involved in the military), it is a faction in that it is an individual's relationship to the military that fundamentally determines how closely connected he is to the Confederacy as a whole.

After examining the military and its role within Stenian life, this section will move on to discuss some prominent organizations within the military, the Stenian Council, and the



Gearwrights Guild. Outside organizations with no formal role in the government — such as the ancient clans of Duerok, or its old religions — are not discussed here. While these groups have influence over individual Stenians, they are not factions within the Confederacy per se.

## THE MILITARY

The military dominates life within the Stenian Confederacy. The Gearwrights Guild is powerful politically, but most Stenians have minimal direct interaction with it at best. The influence of Duerok is widely felt, but it's slowly fading. It is the military that orders the life of almost every Stenian citizen.

The military's most dramatic point of contact with the average Stenian is through enforcement of the Law. The Stenian Confederacy operates under a system of martial law, which has diminished in recent years, but there is nonetheless little to no separation between the political and military sides of the government. There are no police; there are only soldiers, and it is up to them to enforce the Law. And they do, in all aspects of life, whether in a city-mech or on the surface.

Surface-dwelling Stenians have the military to serve as judge, jury, and executioner. Roving mech patrols mete out justice as they see fit, ostensibly according to the dictates of higher Stenian interests, policies, and principles — but, out in the field far from a higher authority, justice isn't always blind. Most surface-dwellers live in fear of the mech patrols, even as they're simultaneously thankful for their presence; the Stenian military presence keeps away dangers, but brings along more subtle dangers of its own.

### Military Ranks

On the city-mechs, the military dictates even the most minute aspects of life. To understand the situation on a city-mech, one must recognize that the city-mechs were founded in a state of siege, and have remained in such a state more or less ever since. In the early days, all personnel had to serve an essential purpose even to get on a city-mech. Their lives were regulated with security as the first priority. Surviving in this state of military siege required martial law, so the military governed all aspects of life. A rigorous schedule for when to wake, eat, and sleep was established early on, to ensure that everyone was working hard enough to survive. Punishments for crimes

were strict and harsh, and generally enforced on the spot by military law. Civilian jobs even acquired a military hierarchy of sorts, which is still widely used today; titles like apprentice craftsmen, journeymen, and master artist were replaced by military ranks.

This military hierarchy still governs not only the military, but civilian life within the city-mechs as well. Members of the Confederacy are titled by their rank. The terms for the ranks themselves originated in the traditions of the various clans of Duerok, where the names varied from clan to clan. The terms are generally named after a prominent dwarven hero that once brought glory to their station. The Stenians built their rank system to include a variety of the old clan terms, establishing a connection between the traditions of the old world and the order of the new world.

A rank is a symbol of pride among the Confederacy and earning a new rank is a right of passage. All Stenians are proud to display badges of authority, and symbols of rank are part of that practice.

Note that even though non-combat professions have military ranks, they are not considered part of the military. City-mech Lokag, for example, has an established tradition of calling blacksmiths by military terms. Apprentices are parbles (privates), journeymen are regins (corporals), and the smiths themselves are ohdums (sergeants). Some of the most accomplished smiths are called mareks (lieutenants) as recognition of their ability. But a lieutenant-rank blacksmith could not expect to have his orders obeyed by a corporal in the military. The rank indicates status, but the authority that comes with it is limited to one realm.

The reverse, however, is not true. The military can (and does) enforce its orders over civilians on a regular basis. In the early days, soldiers would frequently commandeer supplies — and sometimes even conscript civilians on the spot when labor was needed quickly. Today, the crisis mentality is not as strong, yet such events still occur on occasion.

Within the military, attaining a rank is a matter of deed. Soldiers do not become officers simply by "putting in their time." Performing a heroic task, or establishing a successful track record, is essential. It's no longer required to have a blood relationship with the clan elder, but some claim to a respected relative, preferably a great warrior, never hurts. In game terms, a character who advances in level acquires the skills necessary to advance within the military, but there's no hard and fast rule that a certain rank equates to a certain level. A soldier who advances through steady, solid performance

may have a lower rank than another soldier of the same level whose flashy, daring escapades attracted the attention of higher-ups.

Here is a list of the Stenian military ranks and their traditional equivalents. The vast majority of the Stenian military is dwarves, but some other races are present.

**Parble (private):** These are the foot soldiers of the Stenian Confederacy and make up the majority of the military. They are the "grunts" of the army and the labor force. The term comes from Parble Crackstone, a legendary soldier who unerringly obeyed the orders of his commanding officer and sacrificed himself by entering single combat against a dragon, despite the fact that the order was utter suicide. He recognized his duty and obeyed, regardless of the consequences, and his name is forever remembered for his dedication, discipline, loyalty, and obedience.

Parbles carry this same pride with them on the battlefield. They obey orders without hesitation and do not question the motives or judgment of their superiors. In both labor and warfare, the parble does what he is told and takes pride in doing so.

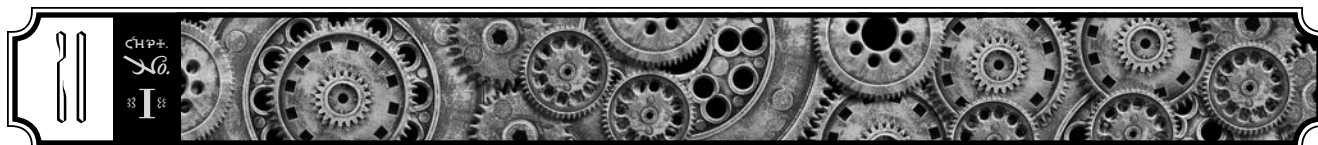
Typically, parbles are low-level warriors, fighters, and commoners. The rank of parble is earned when a youth completes training as a soldier (or in a trade) and is able to demonstrate his abilities before officers of higher rank.

**Regin (corporal):** Originally, regins were officers on the battlefield who handled communications with the body of the army, primarily through sounding horns or manipulating banners or flags. Now the regin has taken a similar role in mech warfare. Regins are communications officers who coordinate actions within a mech and even between mechs of the same fleet. This ranges from shouting commands in simple mechs, to operating *magic mouth* devices, *message* relays, sound cables, and signal flags on more advanced mechs.

The rank of regin is attained by showing exceptional initiative in combat or stressful situations. Being able to anticipate the enemy's actions and react accordingly is the hallmark of a good regin. Such displays of ingenuity (whether on the battlefield or in a trade) are awarded this rank.

Regins get their name from Regin Axesmith. During a fierce battle with invading goblins, Regin's unit was horribly outnumbered and facing certain defeat. The commander of the unit signaled Regin to sound the retreat. Being relatively new to his position, Regin blew the sound to charge instead. The dwarven unit rallied at the order to charge and broke through





the goblin lines. Never before had such a small number of dwarves defeated so many goblins. Regin was initially reprimanded for disobeying orders, but when the size of the victory was realized, he was instead honored for his deed. Of course, Regin's descendants claim he blew the charge intentionally, because he could see the latent heroism in his dwarven unit, but the most common version of the story holds that it was a fortunate mistake on his part.

**Ohdum (sergeant):** It has been said that the very voice of Ohdum Fosgrim was enough to command a landshark out of its shell. He was known for his unique method of motivating his troops into deeds that were previously considered impossible. His technique of insult, followed by order, followed by threat, has survived to this day to be the model of troop training and command. "All that is required to perform any task is the proper motivation," he would often say. Such motivation would often involve a firm kick to the rear or a tirade of insults barked in a gravelly voice. Whatever "motivation" he used, troops responded to him. Most of all, they feared him enough to do whatever he said.

Ohdum's legacy has become the standard method of troop command. Officers that command units of troops are given his name as a rank. Ohdums command military operations on the battlefield and bark orders to regins and parbles alike. They are allowed to discipline subordinates however they see fit, be it physical labor, corporal punishment, restriction of rations, or something else.

The rank of ohdum is attained by showing a distinct presence on the battlefield and by being able to motivate the actions of others. Although it is not an official requirement, the ability to insult someone to tears is often enough to commend a soldier to this rank.

**Marek (Lieutenant):** Mareks are the elite soldiers of the dwarven army. They are often capable of defeating many foes singlehandedly and are viewed as heroes among the lesser ranks. Seeing a marek wade into battle ahead of a unit is an awe-inspiring sight that has led many a dwarven army to victory.

Although they outrank ohdums, mareks usually do not command troops on the battlefield. Instead they are often part of an elite unit that acts on their own. Marek units are 10-12 soldiers in number and are often sent to perform tasks that a larger unit could not. This might include a stealth mission to overtake an enemy mech, defense of a particular area, or delivery of important messages across hostile borders. They are usually called in when a job needs to be done and done well.

On the labor force, mareks are often trou-

bleshooters or technicians that specialize in certain areas such as engine repair or weapons maintenance. They are called to duty when special attention is required and required fast.

Attaining the rank of marek is very difficult. Doing so requires an act far beyond the call of duty. This very act often follows the soldier wherever he goes. "That there is Sturmblow, the marek who defeated that lunar dragon singlehandedly before it could kill the mech commander." Mareks are highly respected officers, and soldiers often breathe a sigh of relief when one arrives on the field.

Their name is derived from a dwarven warrior named Marek Forger. When his unit fell in battle against an invading giant force, he was the lone survivor. Instead of returning home to nurse his wounds, he followed the victorious giants to their lair and slew them in their sleep. He returned home dragging the heads of the giants from a chain. He then demanded that he be allowed to die with the rest of his unit. Such valor was unprecedented. His request to die with his unit was not honored and instead he was elevated to the status of a hero and assured that it would honor his brethren more if he lived on to carry their memory. The proud rank of marek is prized by all members of the Stenian Confederacy, and it is likewise recognized by dwarves everywhere.

**Vardoc (captain):** Vardoc command and coordinate several units on the battlefield. Ohdums take orders directly from a vardoc, who take orders from a plygen, who in turn takes orders from the andvar. When a battle ensues, the vardoc is in command of two or more units and directs them accordingly. On mechs, vardoc are the "middle management" for military and non-military operations alike. Vardoc are often put in charge of smaller mechs or command certain labor operations within, such as weapons or engine repair.

To become a vardoc, an individual must prove his ability to command on the battlefield (or on the labor force) and be recommended to the rank by a higher-level officer. This is often a very subjective process and some vardoc have been elected to their rank over other officers who may be more qualified.

The rank of vardoc gains its name from a dwarven hero named Vardoc Silverfist. Vardoc was known for very inspirational speeches that could rally his troops into combative fervors that could only be sated by the blood of their enemies. Vardoc are trained to inspire and motivate their soldiers since they firmly believe that a battle is won in a warrior's heart long before his axe falls on an opponent.

**Tenned (medical officer):** Tenned are

medical officers who oversee military and labor operations equally. They even outrank officers of higher level when it comes to matters of health. This is in part due to the origin of their rank, which was historically held by battle-priests in the old clans. The battle-priests fought with their units but were accorded a special respect, particularly when it came to healing, and this tradition has carried on.

On crowded, filthy mechs, the medical officer has final say on any matter that involves the health of the crew. This may include quarantine areas, boarding restrictions, and certification for soldiers returning from sick leave. Tenned may also assume command over other matters that threaten the health or safety of the mech. City-mechs will typically have several Tenned officers to oversee health matters.

Tenned were once exclusively clerics, but the ebb of religious faith has opened the doors for this title to be held by non-clerics as well. These officers are usually experts who specialize in mundane cures such as herbal ointments, tonics, and potions. Generally a Tenned is a cleric of mid to high level, but can also be any mid- to high-level character with a specialty in healing.

Tenned gain their name from a famous dwarven cleric named Tenned Honeblade. He was known for curing thousands of dwarven brothers during a great plague that threatened to wipe out his entire stronghold. It was Tenned's great faith and perseverance through prayer that led to the cure of the disease. Unfortunately, Tenned worked himself to exhaustion tending to the sick, and eventually fell to the disease himself. He is remembered forever by the rank that bears his name.

**Plygen (major):** Plygen generally act as strategists and planners. They are superior to the vardoc, but in general do not see much battlefield action; they assume roles in areas such as tactics, planning, and logistics. When they do see battlefield action, plygen command groups of mechs headed by vardocs. The senior-most plygen is the first officer to the andvar and assumes command if the andvar is incapacitated.

On board a city-mech, the plygen are responsible for interpreting and applying the Law. They are as close as the Stenian Confederacy comes to both a legislative and judicial branch. In the rare cases where a Stenian soldier's actions are questioned, the plygen act as a court of appeals. A special class of plygen called the Justicar is in charge of the interpretation of the Law, as described below.

The rank of plygen is attained through numerous deeds that demonstrate the officer's



ability to command. More importantly, the individual is judged on his interpretation of the Law and its application for duties and operations throughout the mech. Plygen are appointed to the rank by other plygen. Although not as formal as the nomination for andvar, a plygen must undergo a similar trial to determine if he is worthy of the rank. Acting plygen are high-level warriors and are sometimes of higher level than the andvar under whom they serve.

Plygen Dross was a great advisor to three generations of dwarven kings. He lived well into his venerable years, and was reputed to be over 550 years old when he died. He was a great philosopher and political advisor, and was known for mediating longstanding conflicts. His wisdom was often sought not only for military practices, but for laws in general. His name embodies the ability to guide operations that have much longer durations than a mere battle.

**Andvar (admiral or general):** The andvar is the highest-ranking officer in the military. Usually there is a single andvar for each city-mech, and he acts as the mech commander — though Durgan-lok retains an older system where there are three andvars, one for each division of the military. As the highest military rank, andvar take orders only from members of the Stenian council, or from their civilian peers (for example, the Council of Navigators on Nedderpik). When in battle, the andvar acts as commander-in-chief. In rare (or desperate) cases, they may fight alongside their soldiers on the battlefield. Andvar are often old, experienced soldiers who have proven themselves with a long list of enemy defeats. Some andvar are too old to continue physical combat and would have resigned long ago in the older days of axe warfare, but in the new era of mech combat, they can still use their tactical skills to command fleets of mechs.

Attaining the rank of andvar is the culmination of a life's work. It is doubtful that a human will ever hold this rank given their shorter life expectancy; the rank requires at least a century's worth of consistent victories. When an andvar retires, the Stenian council chooses a prominent officer to replace him. Andvar are usually very high-level characters from combat-oriented classes. These days, mech combat experience is a must to achieve this rank.

The andvar rank is named for a great dwarven war commander named Andvari Stoneheel. He was one of the greatest of all dwarven heroes and his deeds were far too many to count. He was known for killing dragons in single combat, slaying giants by the hundreds, and reputedly defeating a demi-god with only an axe and a shield.

TABLE I-1: STENIAN CONFEDERACY MILITARY RANK INSIGNIAS

RANK	MILITARY SYMBOL	CIVILIAN SYMBOL	COLOR
Parble	spear	wrench	brown
Regin	horn & flag	horn	copper
Odhum	axe	gear	bronze
Marek	crossed axes	gear & wrench	silver
Vardoc	hammer & axe	gear & hammer	gold
Tenned	hammer	hammer	red
Plygen	war helmet	labor helmet	blue
Andvar	hammer, axe, & helmet	gear, hammer, & wrench	platinum

## Rank Insignias

Each rank has a special insignia. In olden days, dwarven warriors wore a mark of rank or status clearly etched into the shoulder or helmet of their armor. Since life aboard a mech usually precludes regular use of heavy armor, this custom has since been changed to embossed patches that are worn on the shoulder or right chest area of the uniform, or on the helmet. No Stenian would ever be caught in a uniform that does not clearly display his rank, so nearly every article of clothing that an individual owns bears his insignia.

Table I-1 shows the standard military symbol for each rank. Civilians often adopt a version of the military insignia for their own uniforms, so the table also shows common civilian variants on the military rank symbols. Each rank also has a color associated with it, as shown on Table I-1. In the military, this color appears as highlights or accents on the soldier's uniforms. Some mech pilots adorn their mech with accents in the color of their rank.

## Branches of the Military

The Stenian military has three distinct divisions: the Footman Guard, the Mechanized Assault, and the Mechanized Defense. The Footguard, as they are called, are essentially infantry. In the olden days, these would have been axe-warriors and the most respected of all dwarven heroes, but these days their role is diminished. The Mechanized Assault primarily command assault mechs, and spend most of their time in the field. The Mechanized Defense is responsible for defending the city-mechs, and controls both the city-mechs' defenses and some of the military policies on board the city-mechs.

Even though the city-mechs are essentially separate governments operating with a collective purposes, all of the military is generally assumed to be one large organization. Officers from other city-mechs and from other divisions are treated with equal respect, and there is gen-

erally no friction between the different militaries. Each city-mech has its own direct line of command, so officers from other divisions rarely issue orders to those outside their area of command. But officers are shown the same respect and obedience no matter what division they are from, and battlefield commands routinely cross city-mech political lines.

The three divisions are as follows.

**Footman Guard (Footguard):** The Footguard are the ground troops of the Confederacy. They are responsible for ground warfare, securing areas for mechs, support of mech divisions, and maintaining borders. They clear out monster burrows, hunt down enemies in areas mechs can't venture, and take combat to the man-to-man level when necessary. They're also well trained in infantry tactics versus mechs, including tripping them, entangling their legs, boarding them, setting ambushes, and taking fights to areas where mechs can't follow.

The Footguard is also responsible for civilian relations on board the mech. They act as a local police, solve disputes, and apprehend criminals. Footguard are distinguished by an inverted triangle that surrounds the rank insignia. Most Footguard are fighters or warriors. Many specialist Footguard units feature anklebiters, while clerics are on hand to provide support.

**Mechanized Assault:** Most commonly referred to as M-A's, the Mechanized Assault division is the bread and butter of the Stenian military. Since the larger city-mechs lack maneuverability, mech fleets are necessary to maintain defense and a secure perimeter around the mech itself. They are also responsible for patrolling the safe zones and keeping an area free of danger. The M-A division is in constant patrol around the mech and eliminates any potential threats. They are often deployed to deliver and recover troops, establish mobile rally points for soldiers, escort cargo shipments, and support field troops in battle.

Mechanized Assault officers wear a circle around their rank insignia. Most are mech jockeys or experts with a heavy concentration in mech-based skills. Support squads include



coglayers and a few gearwrights, who help maintain the mechs and provide special equipment.

**Mechanized Defense:** M-D's are the division of the military responsible for the defense of the city-mechs. They are the gunners, the pilots, technicians, and reserves, and take their orders often directly from the andvar in command. M-D's tend to consider themselves separate or above other divisions of the military, and rarely associate with soldiers outside their division.

Mechanized Defense officers wear a pentacle around their rank insignia. Their soldier base features the widest variety. Many fighters and warriors help enforce order on board the city-mechs, but almost all have at least one level of mech jockey. There is also a large group of M-D's who are single-classed mech jockeys, as well as coglayers and gearwrights who provide support.

## DragonMechs

The DragonMech units are a special forces section of the Stenian military designed and trained solely to combat lunar dragons. Each city-mech usually has one or two DragonMech units ready to deploy if



an encounter with a dragon seems likely. DragonMech units, also referred to as "dragon hunters," are almost exclusively comprised of marek officers who have distinguished themselves on the battlefield. In the usual style of marek officers, they generally operate outside the normal chain of command, which is fully acceptable since their duty is integral to the mech's survival. DragonMech pilots report directly to the andvar of each city-mech, and are given wide leeway to pursue anti-dragon operations.

Membership in the DragonMech elite is highly sought after but rarely granted. Mech pilots that combat dragons on a regular basis must be the best of the best, not only as a reassurance of their survival, but for the simple fact that the role of the DragonMechs has a higher calling. The DragonMechs don't just battle raiders or scavengers; they fight the very creatures that created the chaos of the current age, and are the most visible of the Stenian Confederacy's soldiers.

Most dragon hunters are at least 14th-level mech jockeys. They have combat maneuvers in their repertoire not found in any Stenian combat manual. They've developed a wide variety of cooperative battle techniques that are brutally effective against both lunar dragons and other mechs, but only if the participating pilots are all experts.

Training with the Irontooth Clans is an informal prerequisite of the DragonMechs, in complete opposition to stated Stenian policy. This fact is overlooked by Stenian authorities because the DragonMechs are absolutely loyal, and the benefits of Irontooth training are substantial. Highly skilled Irontooth mech jockeys who are captured by the Stenian Confederacy are sometimes "lost" for a period of time, during which they're forced to train DragonMech units, if not serve time assisting on one of their mechs. This is completely illegal, and these under-the-table procedures are always formally punished whenever a troublemaker exposes them, but once the fuss is over, they continue behind the scenes. Even the most conservative Stenian administrator can't doubt the benefits of having mech pilots as skilled as the DragonMechs.

In combat, DragonMech units work with uncanny synchronization. Their mechs are separated into pairs or trios that specialize in team combat tactics. The mech pilots are close-knit teams who work together constantly, developing specialized tactics unique to certain weapons, terrain, or mech designs. Their mechs are often specially modified with the singular purpose of defeating dragons.

To this end, they often have unconventional weapons and tactics.

DragonMech officers are respected and feared. Acceptance into their ranks is very difficult and requires an excellent track record prior to years of training. DragonMech units are considered part of the Mechanized Assault division, though they bypass almost all of the hierarchy of that division. To designate their specialization, a dragon surrounds the border of their rank insignia.

## The Justicars

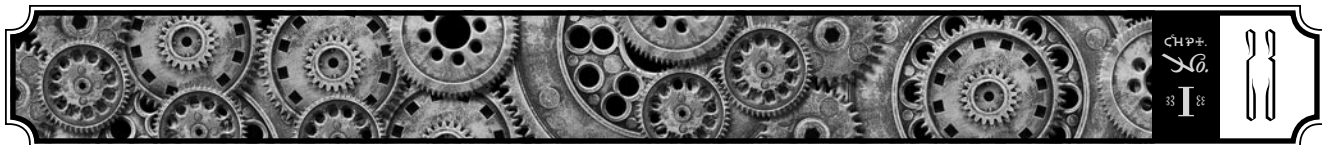
The Justicars are a special branch of the plygen rank. They interpret the Law and apply it to criminal matters. A Stenian who achieves the rank of plygen and who has shown exceptional aptitude, insight, and wisdom in interpreting and applying the Law will be considered for the role of Justicar. Each city-mech has three to five Justicars, who are appointed by the Stenian Council to serve as arbiters of justice aboard the city-mechs and within the Stenian Confederacy itself.

Even though most members of the military have wide latitude to enforce Stenian laws as they see fit, this state of martial law still has some constraints. Any member of the military is always subject to having his decision overruled by a higher-ranking individual. To prevent this system from getting out of hand, and to minimize the potential for corruption, the Justicars are charged with formally interpreting and applying the Law.

The Justicar are the closest thing the Stenian Confederacy has to a conscience, though it's a twisted conscience at that. They are responsible not for maintaining order, but for ensuring that an ordered infrastructure remains in place so that the Stenian ideals, as expressed in the Law, can be fulfilled. A soldier who oversteps his bounds may be called to explain his actions before the Justicar.

Actions that provoke inquiry by the Justicar are not such trivial things as shooting before asking questions, beating a suspect beyond recognition, or destroying an entire surface village in order to bring its leaders under Stenian control. These are all perfectly acceptable actions that further the reach of the Law. What provokes the attention of the Justicar are actions that may weaken the Law. A soldier who accepts a bribe in order to let an Irontooth clansman go unmolested would attract the attention of the Justicar. Equally suspect would be a soldier who has mercy on a lawless raider by looking the other way while a pitiful rust-rider family escapes to scavenge another day.





The goal of the Justicar, stated simply, is to preserve the Law, the Stenian Confederacy, and the system of order that allows both to flourish. They usually focus their time only on the most blatant or difficult violations of the Law, and most Stenian citizens can go their whole life without ever encountering a Justicar. But woe be to those who do. The Justicar are the only members of the Stenian Confederacy whose actions under martial law can *never* be questioned, by anyone, for they are the heart of the law itself.

Justicars are given the authority to decide punishments for the crimes brought before them. In areas patrolled by mechs, it is very rare that a criminal matter is ever brought to trial. Footguard in the field dispense justice quickly and mercilessly, and dead bodies are not considered fit to stand trial. However, some cases require the decisions of a Justicar. These include prominent figures who can't be dispatched without creating political problems, unusual cases in the gray areas of the Law, or cases that involve members of the military. In practice, the hand of the Justicar is felt only in the most sensitive, extreme, or bizarre cases, where common sense or generally accepted interpretation of the Law isn't enough to decide the issue.

A trial before a Justicar is a frightening experience. In most cases, these trials are not held to determine guilt or innocence; it is assumed that the individual is guilty. The trial is merely held to determine the punishment he will receive for his crimes. The evidence for and against the accused is presented, and the Justicar rules on what punishment is appropriate. In rare cases the Justicars may decide that there is not enough evidence to warrant any punishment, or the Law is vague on a specific area, but these cases are truly noteworthy. The majority of the time, if an individual is sent before the Justicars, he will be punished.

Justicars are appointed for initial terms of ten years. If they serve that term faithfully and well, they are given permanent tenure, after which point Stenian law has no allowance for ever revoking their powers. Were it necessary, other Justicars could theoretically police their own, and eliminate a rogue. But so far this has never been necessary.

Each city-mech has three to five Justicars serving on it at any given time. Their tours rotate between city-mechs regularly so that no Justicar gains a particular attachment to a given city-mech. This policy also ensures that the decisions made by Justicars stay balanced throughout the safe zones. When a Justicar is between city-mechs, he often patrols the sur-

face world for a while, investigating the actions of Stenian military on the surface, and making sure civilians away from the city-mechs can see a living, breathing representative of the Law. A Justicar can commandeer military support at will, so while on the surface they are often accompanied by a unit of support mechs.

Each city-mech includes a special room for judgments by the Justicar. This room is soundproofed from the outside. Only the Justicars, the accused, and a few hand-picked guards of the highest caliber are allowed inside. A *zone of truth* spell permanently prevents those within the chamber from telling lies. Witnesses and presenters of evidence are allowed to enter the chamber and present their evidence to the Justicars, but must leave after they've had their say; they do not see the full process. All presentations are subject to the will of the presiding Justicar, who may dismiss some witnesses as irrelevant as he sees fit. After all relevant facts have been presented, the Justicar makes his decision. If necessary, the guards immediately enforce it. One guard always carries an extremely sharp greataxe and a basket in anticipation of the most extreme punishment.

The Justicars strive to make interpretations of the Law fair and consistent. Despite their cruelty and severity, they recognize that a central tenet of order is consistent enforcement. Nonetheless, they are feared universally, even by those who have not committed a crime. They are perceived by the masses as above the law and complete arbitrary. Anyone called to trial by a Justicar says his final goodbyes beforehand, assuming his last day is at hand.

## THE STENIAN COUNCIL

The Stenian Council is the head of all military and labor operations within the Stenian Confederacy. The Council is made up of 45 prominent gearwrights, andvars, Justicars, clan leaders, and assorted officials. There are nine members of the Council on each of the five city-mechs. On each city-mech, they operate under a separate title as the overall commanders of the mech, while also serving a role on the Stenian Council. There may be other members of the Council who aren't involved in the city-mech's management but are still involved in the Stenian Council. On Nedderpik, for example, the three-man Council of Navigators is also the mech's representation on the Stenian Council, along with the Admiral Navigator, two Justicars, two high-ranking members of the Gearwrights Guild, and an

elder clan leader.

As members resign or die, replacements are selected by nomination and vote of the representative factions. Seats on the council are highly sought after. The Council decides nearly all matters that concern the Confederacy and its decisions have a great impact on life in general for all members of the Stenian Confederacy. At the local level, the members of the Council are the most powerful representatives on each city-mech, and ultimately determine all local policy. In a broader sense, the Council's most powerful authority is its role in appointing leaders to all aspects of Confederate life, from normal military rank advancement all the way to the Justicars.

Military officers take their orders from the Council. Although military officers are given a great deal of freedom when in command of their mech and over the territory they patrol, orders from the Stenian Council take precedence. Major military operations are ruled on by the council and delegated to the appropriate mech or commander. Most andvar have unquestionable loyalty to the council. They would have never risen to such a prestigious rank if they questioned or circumvented the desires of the council. Occasionally, an andvar will act on his own, but this is rarely a blatant defiance of Council orders, and usually is a preemptive act before the andvar is actually given his orders.

Each city-mech has some representation of the Stenian Council on board at all times. The council rarely meets with all 45 members at once. This prevents a catastrophe of treason or sabotage that would destroy the Council and allow chaos to prevail. A yearly summit of the entire Council meets only once a year aboard a randomly chosen mech in a randomly chosen location. Otherwise, small portions of the Council serve on board a given city-mech and decide all local matters that require the attention of the Council.

In the heat of battle, the andvar in charge of a city-mech is almost always given complete control over the battle. But once the battle's over, the Council is the ultimate authority. If an andvar is ever derelict in his duties, the Council assumes command until a replacement can be found.

In day-to-day situations, the Council serves as a reference point for Stenian law that the andvar or the plygen may rely on to decide matters of a non-military nature. This may include setting policies on board the mech, establishing new regulations for trade, extending borders for patrol, dealing with citizens of the safe zones, or establishing peace talks with enemies. Members of the Council serve a wide

variety of official roles as mediators, diplomats, councilors, advisors, and administrators.

Council members are sometimes looked upon unfavorably by members of the military. The Council makes a great many military decisions, yet the soldiers are the ones who pay for those decisions with their lives. Even though most Council members once served in the military and have a deep understanding of combat and its consequences, they still are not the ones forced to clean the blood from their blades at the end of a battle.

## THE GEARWRIGHTS GUILD

To outsiders, especially Duerok traditionalists, the Gearwrights Guild and the Stenian Confederacy are the same organization. Even laborers on the Stenian city-mechs can have trouble telling the difference between Gearwrights monitoring the welfare of the mech and generals checking on military readiness. The Gearwrights are insulted by this, because their traditions are much older than the city-mechs and their skills go beyond clearing lunar vermin off the surface.

Looking closer, it is clear that there are great differences between the government of the Stenian Confederacy and the Guild. The root of the Gearwright Guild is the Master Repository far from the surface world. The Gearwrights' greatest creations are purely conceptual, not strutting across the landscape for all to see.

Still, the Stenians have been marked by the Guild and they by it. While the Gearwrights designed the mobile metal cities with humanitarian intentions, they feel pride in the respect and significance their craft has received in this new order. The relentless pursuit of order and hierarchy in city-mech culture is taken from the Guild's ancient traditions, though they claim to distance themselves from surface politics.

In truth, the Gearwrights Guild guides the fate of the Stenians from one of the highest political positions. Through direct control of Nedderpik and representatives on other city-mechs, the Gearwrights Guild can direct the activities of the entire Confederacy. The Stenians dominate the flatlands thanks to the Guild's ongoing technological innovation, and no faction within the Confederacy would oppose them and risk losing that support. If the Stenian Confederacy is the strongest and best hope for the return of civilization to the surface world, the Gearwrights Guild is the engine of that hope and the symbol of all the awe-inspir-

## MECHANICAL SCULPTURES

Note that nowhere does the aesthetic require a mechanism to accomplish a useful purpose. One mechanism highly valued among collectors places colored mosaic tiles into random patterns.

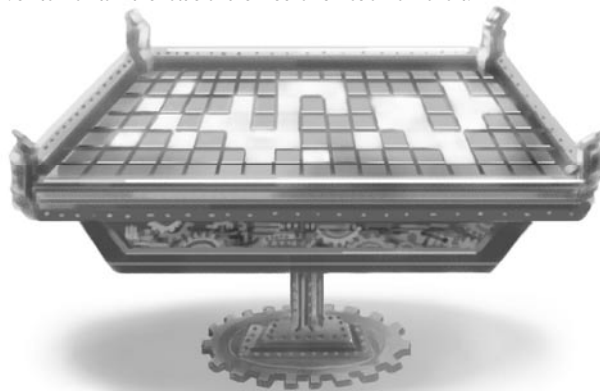
These mechanical sculptures have no value among cultures that do not share the Guild aesthetic, but in the Stenian Confederacy the right buyer would pay a great sum for such a treasure. Some small mechanisms could be collected by characters and sold, but they tend to be very delicate and can be hard to transport. Characters who are interested in building these for profit will find them difficult and time consuming to produce, but a well-crafted mechanism meeting the aesthetic requirements of the Guild can help the character advance in rank within the Gearwright prestige class.

Only characters with the Craft Steam Gear feat can build a mechanical sculpture. They must buy a minimum of 100 gp worth of materials and attempt a DC 20 Craft (mechcraft) check to produce a Tiny mechanical sculpture. Failure on the Craft check may mean that an item was produced that functions as designed but does not meet the proper aesthetic standards. The DC rises by +4, and the cost doubles, for every size above Tiny. Therefore, a Large mechanical sculpture would be DC 32 and cost 800 gp in materials to build. Because of the great care that must be taken to keep the appearance of the mechanism perfect, it takes 1 day per 100 gp to build a mechanical sculpture — ten times the duration of a normal project. Many Gearwrights use far more than the minimum amount of materials, building their sculptures of copper, brass, or silver, and enameling it, encrusting it with gems, adding colorful tiles, or otherwise ornamenting it.

Mechanical sculptures can be sold for their cost of materials to anyone interested in the metal. However, to get the real value, characters should use a Gather Information check to see if there are any mechanical sculpture connoisseurs in the area: DC 15 on a Stenian city-mech, 20 elsewhere in the Confederacy, and 30 in all other areas. If they find an interested party, they can get anywhere from nothing to ten times the base cost, depending on the buyer's aesthetic interest. If the PC meets all the requirements for starting or advancing in the Gearwright prestige class, giving a mechanical sculpture as a present to an important officer of the Guild is a good way to be noticed. This can backfire, too, as a poorly made example will earn dishonor within the Guild.

The value of a character's sculptures will rise as he advances in rank and reputation, so many commercial sculpture buyers pay careful attention to a character's career plans when making a purchase. Of course, art always goes up in value when the artist dies, so life as a daring adventurer has its commercial appeal, as well.

Because mechanical sculptures are so delicate, any time a character carrying one fails a Reflex save she must make a second Reflex save to see if the mechanism is damaged. A damaged mechanical sculpture is only repairable with a Craft (mechcraft) check at the original building DC +2 — the fix must be perfectly hidden to maintain the value of the mechanism as a work of art.

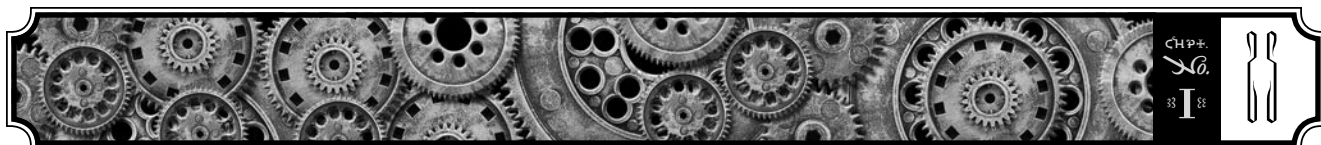


ing power and oppression it presages.

## The Gear-Driven Arts

If the Gearwright records and traditions can be trusted, the organization was founded during the First Age of Walkers. The original

purpose of the Guild was to record and advance the gear-driven arts, technologies that deal with generating and transferring kinetic energy. They call the objects they create to manipulate this energy "mechanisms." Most coglayers outside of the Guild see this activity as a matter of science or engineering, but Gearwrights



approach it as an art form.

The tenets of the Gearwright aesthetic were defined in the book *Appreciating Gearwork: A Critical Guide*, written in the First Age by a Gearwright remembered only as Taminik. It is rumored that three original copies still exist, each stored in a section of the Master Repository under the personal control of each of the Master Gearwrights. When a new person assumes this title, the original copy of his predecessor is passed on to him. Lesser Gearwrights know the book only by the many copies that have been distributed by the Guild. This is the synopsis:

1. A mechanism should have at least one moving part discrete and removable from the rest of the mechanism.
2. As the mechanism moves, the composition of the entire piece should be balanced and graceful at any position during normal operation.
3. A mechanism should accomplish its purpose as simply and efficiently as possible.
4. Mechanisms should be firmly connected to all parts required for its operation.
5. Magic threatens the Age of Walkers. It should not taint our work. (The modern reproductions of Taminik's book contain footnotes indicating the historical context of this premise: The reference is to the first Age of Walkers during which Taminik wrote, which was later ended by the advent of magic.)
6. A mechanism should not be blemished with obvious grease, oil, or scratches. No matter how long it runs, it should remain clean and smooth. A mechanism should not smoke or have a bad smell after extended operation.
7. A mechanism should make no noise that is not pleasant and musical.

As with all such artistic manifestos, the rules are proved by the exceptions. Most controversial are the Gearwrights who combine magical constructs with clockwork or steam technology. Subtler examples of rebellion include mechanisms physically disconnected but which interact through a pair of wavemakers. These break the strict rules, but are they art? These debates rage through the Guild.

## Guild Structure

Every Gearwright has proved his or her worth. Even the newest apprentice is a master of the gear-driven arts, and the elite of any profession want to exchange ideas with their peers. Although the focus of the Guild is the advancement and preservation of technique and knowledge, the social aspects of the

organization are undeniable.

Coglayers are hailed as the saviors of the surface world, but they are still strange to the refugees they saved. They spend hours obsessed with complex projects and speak a jargon few of their countrymen understand. The Gearwrights Guild is a place where those coglayers can find like-minded companionship.

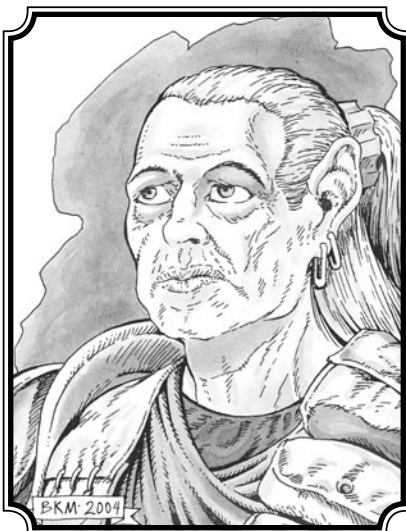
Fierce loyalty, cliques, and personal politics shape relationships within the Guild. Even as factions within the Gearwrights struggle for dominance, they acknowledge the importance of their traditions and will band together in the face of external threats. Rank within the Guild is highly structured; the officers might take small disagreements personally, but once the Master Gearwright has made his decision, it stands unquestioned.

The Masters do not involve themselves in every decision for the Guild. They wield their influence on a larger scale, stopping their research only to give high-level direction. They spend most of their time deep in the Master Repository's stacks. Although they have personal interests, they are usually working on many projects simultaneously.

**Master Pilaston:** Pilaston is the Master Repositor. He is the newest and most passionate Master, and was the personal assistant to Parilus, the previous Master Repositor, before he retired. He is continuing the work of his mentor, attempting to collect records of the largest mechs of all time to extrapolate a possible maximum mech size based on the properties of steam and metal. The work is controversial because many Gearwrights maintain there is no maximum mech size — in theory, they say, you could build a mech to touch the moon. Pilaston and his predecessor found this idea so ridiculous that they began a huge project to prove the theory wrong.

**Master Theckne:** The Master Regular, Theckne, pushes the art of clockwork mechs to a new level. She continues to work on mechs that can go without winding for longer and longer times. One of her current theories is that it might be possible to create a mech that winds itself when struck by enemies in battle. Theckne is a skilled orator and often speaks on behalf of the Masters.

**Master Rhorka:** As the Master Cogulator, Rhorka looks into opportunities offered by the lunar rain. Earlier in his life, he focused on alloying lunar minerals into terrestrial metals with some interesting results. He is attempting to document a reproducible process for using lunar minerals to create flammable, translucent, and regenerative metals without using magic. Rhorka prefers dealing with his







subordinates individually in confidential conversations.

There is a myth that the Masters have a secret book with a plan for conquering the world. The same legends say that within this book is a design for a machine to pull pieces of the moon down to the earth, implying that the Guild created the lunar rain to increase their influence.

If such a machine exists, not even the senior officials know of it. It is true, however, that the Masters have a text called the Great Design. Master Gearwrights through the eons have recorded their plans, thoughts, and decisions on its pages. By documenting their goals, the Guild has managed to maintain consistency across many generations of Masters. The Great Design is not a guidebook to world conquest or a constitution, but a collection of the individual wisdom and leadership of the Masters since the First Age. Many of the earliest entries have lost all context, and even the Master Gearwrights are unsure what to make of cryptic entries such as, "The solar batteries from clockwork trees should be available to all Guild members, not just those who tend the orchard" and "Our mountain brothers offered a treaty in exchange for their freedom, but we can never allow their monstrosities to walk the world again."

Despite the size of the books containing the Great Design, it is clear from the writings that most Masters make only three or four major decisions during their term. Only the Masters are allowed to read these books, although they have been known cite passages in speeches and letters, so some information has become common wisdom over time.

The senior officers work hard to coordinate operations so the Master Gearwrights can continue drafting their advanced designs. They are among the least productive of the gearwrights because they must deal with administrative issues. Still, even they spend at least half their time hammering in a workshop, sifting through the knowledge of the Master Repository, or drafting a design theory. They seldom come to the surface, preferring to administrate from the underground stronghold itself. There are thirty senior officers managing the affairs of the Guild.

It is primarily the junior officers who run things on the surface. They are given domain over specific areas — for example, Gearwright Trigius is the junior officer who represents the Guild on the Nedderpik Council of Navigators. It is the responsibility of these officers to handle the day-to-day decisions necessary to keep mechs and workshops in working order. They also meet with the Stenian military to ensure

their holdings are protected from outsiders. There are sixty junior officers on the surface and in guildhalls.

The gearwrights, journeymen, and apprentices do not have specific assignments unless they have volunteered for duty in Nedderpik or a guildhouse. These assignments can give the Gearwright respect and material rewards, but more importantly they are generally the best way to ensure promotion within the Guild. Usually lower-level members simply pay their dues and come to events sponsored by the Guild — after all, the average Gearwright would rather be working on his personal project than playing head mechanic on a Stenian mech.

This may sound straightforward, but in fact the situation is made more complicated by the factions that comprise the Guild. These groups create a complex web of internal politics that overlays this hierarchy.

## Specializations

The three branches of the Gearwrights Guild are roughly equal in number. Apprentices and journeymen have no formal membership in any of the three, but once they rise to Gearwright status they must pick their focus.

**Repositors:** This is the academic branch of the Gearwrights. They are responsible for the libraries of the organization. Repositors often teach apprentices and journeymen the traditions of the Guild. Junior Repositors are usually found maintaining guildhalls in strongholds and city-mechs, while senior Repositors spend most of their time protecting and updating the books in the Master Repository.

The Repositors are focused on the past and they strengthen the Guild's ties to history, especially the First Age of Walkers. They often fall into conflict with the Cogulors' attempts to bring new concepts into the Guild. They oppose the worship of Dotrak and any attempt to combine magic and the gear-driven arts.

**Regulors:** As the applied branch of the Guild structure, Regulors are usually found in the field testing or repairing their creations. They prefer to get their work tested and ready for use as soon as possible. Junior Regulors are the most common Guild officials in the Stenian Confederacy, as they take responsibility for maintaining the mech fleet. The Senior Regulors try to continue their work in the Master Repository, building clockwork puppets through the underdeep tunnels to protect the area from intruders.

In general, the Regulors are in favor of the status quo or, more often, whatever works. They dislike long debates over abstract ideals.

When they have the patience to sit through a long debate, the Regulors are good at arbitrating conflicts between the other two branches of the Guild. Just as often, however, they frustrate their colleagues by demanding that they stop talking about issues and take action to fix the problem.

**Cogulors:** This branch is focused on pushing the envelope of the gear-driven arts. They like to try new materials, attempt new techniques, and incorporate elements from different disciplines in their work. Their goal is not to create something that is useful or appropriate, but to pursue what is interesting. Cogulors tend to run their own workshops, where they can take extreme risks without naysayers getting in the way. The Senior Cogulors tend to be somewhat calmer, but their time is usually occupied demonstrating and documenting the bizarre new technique or material they developed in their younger days.

Most Cogulors are extremely impulsive and don't mind a discussion that generates new ideas. They were the first to try combining the elven animated mechs with steam and clockwork technology — this work was eventually forbidden by the Senior Repositors because they feared the elves would take this technology for themselves. This reprimand didn't help the ongoing struggle between the Cogulors and the Repositors over implementing new technology.

## Followers of Dotrak and the Guild

Worship of the pseudo-god Dotrak is growing among all segments of Stenian society, especially among coglayers. But formally joining the Gearwrights Guild presents a coglayer with a quandry: The Guild requires an oath of loyalty, and many senior Guild officials consider a strong religious affiliation to indicate a divided loyalty. Even though many gearwrights find Dotrak's teachings appealing, he has few acknowledged adherents among their formal ranks.

The Guild is particularly suspicious of the divine nature of the pseudo-clerics called Vessels of Dotrak. Their abilities seem more like magic than craftsmanship, even though they have a natural skill with engines. Nonetheless, Dotrak's influence grows, especially since a high-ranking Cogulor was transformed into a Vessel.

Bracta (Cog7/Grt10/VoD2) was a Junior Cogulor before becoming a Vessel. Now she attracts others to the worship of Dotrak. Since Gearwrights are atheists for the most part, her



cult has not attracted many Guild members, but she has gathered a number of non-members to her fold. The Guild is careful to distance itself from the religious phenomenon without ostracizing Bracta or her developing flock. Technically, Bracta's calling violates her oath of loyalty to the Guild, but she has argued that since Dotrak is the embodiment of the Gearwrights' values, she is more loyal to Guild principles than she was before her conversion. The Master Gearwrights are in the process of considering whether she should be expelled or promoted — this decision will probably guide the Guild's official position toward Dotrak for centuries to come.

### Guildhalls and Workshops

On most of the city-mechs and in many cities, the Gearwrights Guild maintains guildhalls. These are areas where members can get access to special supplies and tools to help them craft their mechanisms. Depending on the area and the importance of the shop, it may be defended by clockwork puppets, or living guards may have been hired to keep out intruders.

The reason for the guards is that the tools, supplies, and designs kept within the guildhall can be quite valuable. Guildhalls can be

interesting locations, and adventurers might go there for designs, records, or construction materials. (Perhaps a PC is a member or, more likely, he has come to buy the services of the Guild for some project. If he is quite bold, perhaps he has been hired to break into a Guild workshop and steal something.)

The ground floor and any floors above it are usually the more public areas. There may be a few offices, but nothing of value is kept on the ground floor. There is usually a hall for meetings, a banquet room for celebrations such as the promoting of journeymen to Gearwrights, and a formal hall for meetings with government officials. Traveling Guild members may find quarters here where they can sleep. The most likely treasure in these rooms is art — especially mechanical sculptures, although a character unfamiliar with them must make a DC 20 Appraise check to know that they are valuable at all. (Characters native to the Stenian Confederacy gain a +4 bonus to this check.)

A secret door somewhere on the ground floor leads to the lower levels, where most of the important work is done. There will be a library with records of what was built, purchased, and sold from the guildhall. It will also have designs of mechs, both new and old. Studying a good design for a lengthy period (generally at least a month) gives a +2

circumstance bonus to a Craft (mechcraft) check when building that model or something similar.

The storage room will have tools and supplies. There will be 5d10 pounds of mithral, steel, or adamantite stored here, as well as mech parts that can be used for repairs. For purposes of salvaging parts with the Craft (mechcraft) skill, treat the supply room as a downed mech of a size class comparable to the room's size. It is easier to gather usable pieces from a closet than a shattered mech, but many of these parts are so advanced that it's hard to see what they might be used for. The Guild may also sell these parts for a nominal price, if the characters approach them directly.

The workshop itself is a cavernous room, at least thirty feet high and fifty feet across. Sometimes double- or triple-sized workshops can be found with forges scattered throughout.

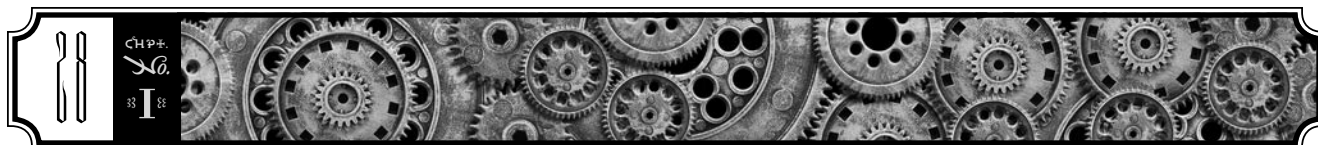
The secret door is too small for a full-sized mech to fit through. The intention is for portions of the mech to be assembled here, and then be taken outside and assembled. There are a variety of block and tackle, forges, and large tools around the room. Many larger workshops will also have clockwork puppets to assist, which reduces the number of non-Guild workmen they need to allow into the workshop.

Other rooms in the guildhall are probably empty at night, but there is almost always someone in the workroom toiling regardless of the hour. However, the furnaces and the noise of the work itself can conceal an attempted entrance into this area. During the day, these rooms are full of Gearwrights and hard-working laborers hard.

### Mech-Building Philosophy

The Gearwrights personally train all the coglayers and blacksmiths who work for the Stenians, often to the annoyance of an already skilled workforce. This has imprinted their philosophy and aesthetic on the Confederacy. Even so, the ideals of the Guild are more focused on the work of a single craftsman following his inspiration than a society attempting to defend itself. Nedderpik, the ultimate expression of the Guild's values, had to make concessions to the limited resources and urgency for its deployment. To have built Nedderpik by the strictest standards of grace and beauty would have taken generations — the final result would have been every inch a work of art, but finished too late to help the dwarves. Further concessions have been required of late, as the Stenian military has begun pushing an agenda of assembly lines and mass manufac-





ture, contrary to the desires of the Guild.

In addition to concessions to their situation, the Gearwrights Guild can't inspect every new mech and every repair job. Still, the Stenians are opposed to relying on a random worker's judgment to maintain their most expensive and important creations. Consequently, they have created standards enforced by periodic inspections of all mechs within their fleet. Sometimes the Gearwrights run these inspections, but more often military mechanics and coglayers perform them.

One of the most important standards the Stenians maintain is the interchangeability of mech components. Although early mechs were customized by the coglayer who build them, officers became frustrated when a mech's steam tank ruptured and none of the intact steam tanks from disabled mechs would fit into models of similar size. Over time, with the number of mechs that needed field repairs, it became obvious that parts and designs had to be standardized. Today, any recently built Stenian mech can get the basic parts it needs from any other recently-built Stenian mech within one size of itself, although this will disable the "donor" mech. In salvaging a downed Stenian mech, a coglayer receives a +4 circumstance bonus to find parts useful in repairing another Stenian mech or steam power.

The other advantage that emerged from this standard was that mechs became more reliable, because spontaneous innovation is restricted. Where such innovation continues, it conforms to existing standards, making new features safer. Overall, however, although they may trade a steam gun for a changler or add armor plating, most Stenian mechs of the same military models have equal attributes and the same squat, solid look.

Aside from aesthetics and practical concerns, the main force that defines how the Stenians build mechs is the presence of the great city-mechs. There are three principal tasks engaged in by coglayers and the mechs they build: repairing or enhancing the city-mechs themselves, defending the city-mech from attackers too small to engage effectively, and running scouting patrols some distance from the city-mech.

This is not to say that other activities are not important — the mech-building Fell Hammer and the digger Earth Breaker are considered useful and ingenious mechs. But until the surface is safe from mech tribes, hostile mechs, and lunar dangers, the three principal tasks are dominant.

The Gearwrights Guild guides all repairs to the city-mechs. New improvements to the

design of these walking fortresses are rarely approved, because the city-mechs are already such impressive structures. There is always a risk that a new feature will affect or even disable other parts of the mech, so an improvement must be obviously useful and low-risk to be approved by the Guild. That said, when it comes to the innovations of their own members, Gearwrights are often more willing to try new things, so if a coglayer can get his idea supported by an member of the Guild, he will be more likely to see it happen.

Defending the city-mech is done by mechs designed to deal with infantry, cavalry, and smaller mechs. Designs in this area focus on improving trampling for mechs of Colossal size or greater, as well as work on area weapons such as steam guns and flame nozzles. Poisonous clouds have been experimented with, but generally the Confederacy wishes to make the land safe for their people after a battle, and airborne poisons have a way of drifting toward towns or lingering in valleys. Swift troop transports and infantry support mechs are also useful for defending the area around the city-mech, as are siege shields and other forms of passive defense.

Scouts tend toward speed, such as the Crag Strider, or distance attacks, such as Janzeter's Mobile Cannon, Mark I. The point of these mechs is to find a threat and either dispatch it or alert the city-mech. Because the Stenians tend to produce well-built mechs in large numbers, many of these small scouting groups are as powerful as the war parties of other mechs. However, due to the expense of these mechs, the Confederacy never considers a scout party expendable, and will always investigate if a group does not meet the city-mech at its scheduled rendezvous.

One result of these philosophies is that the Stenian military has become a sort of faceless leadership. If a commoner doesn't live on a city-mech, they've probably never seen a military mech jockey or coglayer in the flesh. If the government were aware of this problem, they would say that they don't have time to both reassure civilians and keep the region safe. Without personal contact, the people that pilot and work in the mechs can be as feared and misunderstood as the machines in which they work. Still, the Stenian Confederacy controls their population through a combination of gratitude and intimidation. This attitude may be a by-product of their mech-building philosophy, or perhaps their political approach instructs their logistic decisions. Either way, their efficiency and organization comes at the cost of populist heroics.

## MECHS OF THE STENIAN CONFEDERACY

The Stenian Confederacy has the most traditional mechs in existence — and also some of the most advanced. No other mechdom has both the historical constraints imposed by the design standards of the Gearwrights Guild, or the vast pool of knowledge and constantly advancing techniques of that same faction. The result is a wide variety of mechs, serving all purposes. Many have been presented before. Here are a few more.

### ARBITRATOR

**Size:** Gargantuan  
**Power Source:** Steam  
**Payload Units:** 11  
**Height:** 25 ft.  
**Space/Reach:** 10 ft. by 10 ft./10 ft.  
**Crew:** 3 (weapons: 3)  
**Firing Ports:** 5  
**Hit Dice:** 22  
**Hit Points:** 121  
**Critical Thresholds:** Green, Yellow 61, Orange 30, Red 12  
**Base Initiative:** -1  
**Speed:** 40 ft.  
**Maneuverability:** Average  
**AC:** 6  
**Hardness:** 12 (steel)  
**Base melee attack:** +2  
**Base ranged attack:** -1  
**Unarmed damage:** 1d10+6  
**Trample:** largest Medium; safe Small; damage 3d6  
**Saves:** Fort +2, Ref -2, Will -  
**Abilities:** Str 22, Dex 8, Con -, Int -, Wis -, Cha -  
**Mechcraft DC:** 36  
**Base Planning Time:** 72 days  
**Base Cost:** 1,431 gp  
**Total Cost:** 6,551 gp  
**Labor Time:** 1,920 man-hours  
**Construction Time:** 24 days (10 avg. laborers plus 1 overseer)  
**Special:** Extra weapon mounts (1)

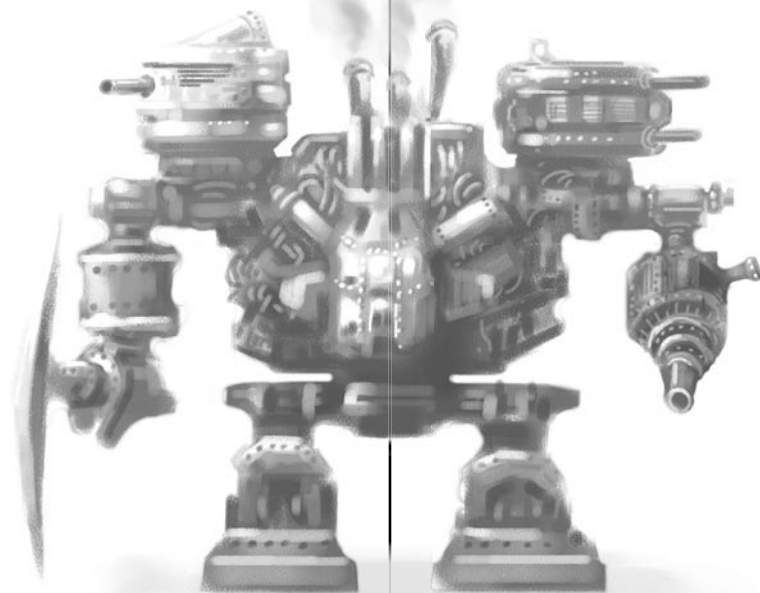


#### PAYLOAD USAGE

PU	Use
3	Crew
8	Weapons
11	Total

Arbitrators are a common mech among the Mechanized Assault division of the military. Since they are versatile and can host a variety of weapons, they serve many functions. The basic chassis resembles a 25-foot tall dwarf with no head and massive shoulders. The lack of a head is intentional: since the torso is specially designed to be able to spin 360°, the mech has no front or back. Often one arm will point in one direction while another points in the opposite direction, then both will spin 360° to reverse facings. The left arm is equipped with a steam cannon or ballista, while the right often carries a powerful melee weapon. The basic design is easily modified by the mech jockeys that own them and Arbitrators tend to be quite personalized. The weapons listed are standard weapons for the base model.

The relatively small size of the arbitrator allows it to attack both enemy foot soldiers and mechs alike. Arbitrators are commonly deployed in units of 3-5. They make excellent support for ground troops since they tend to be equipped with long-range cannons or ballistas that soften enemy forces before the troops close in. They also serve as a mobile rally point for ground operations and often establish a safe retreat zone for friendly infantry. They are large enough that common monsters stand little



#### TABLE I-2: MECHS OF THE STENIAN CONFEDERACY

Mech Name	Faction	Size	Power	Price (GP)
Arbitrator	Dwarves (Stenian)	Gargantuan	Steam	6,551
Landshark	Dwarves (Stenian)	Colossal	Steam	13,152
Pouncer	Dwarves (Stenian)	Huge	Steam	1,226

#### TABLE I-3: ONBOARD WEAPONRY – STENIAN CONFEDERACY

LOCATION	ARC OF FIRE	WEAPON (DAMAGE, RANGE IN FT., OTHER)	PU	CREW
Arbitrator Onboard Weaponry				
Left arm	180° forward*	Huge steam cannon (2d10/x3, 1000)	4	2
Right arm	Melee*	Huge axe blade (2d8+6/x3)	4	1
Total			8	3
*SINCE THE TORSO CAN SPIN 360°, THE ARC OF FIRE PERTAINS ONLY TO THE DIRECTION THE MECH IS CURRENTLY FACING.				
Landshark Onboard Weaponry				
Head	Melee	Gargantuan mech bite (2d8)	8	1
Back	45° forward	Huge steam cannon (2d10/x3, 1000)	4	2
Total			12	3
Pouncer Onboard Weaponry				
Right shoulder	Melee	Large lance (2d6+6/x3)	2	1
Underbelly	90° forward	Huge ballista (3d6/x3, 120)	4	1
Total			6	2

chance against one, yet small enough that they can even follow creatures into their lairs.

Arbitrators are made almost entirely of steel and are plated with sheets of lightweight armor. They look like a headless suit of dwarven plate with large weapons instead of hands. Small shuttered viewports look out from each of the cockpits. Several steam pipes stick out from a large chamber on the back of the mech. The legs are single-jointed and very sturdy, with large stone block feet to counteract the weight

of the massive shoulders.

The arbitrator is operated by a three-dwarf crew. Two dwarves run the weapon systems from small cockpits in each of the shoulders, with the pilot assisting as needed for the steam cannon. Each of the gunners' cockpits is built into the mech shoulders in a ball-joint system, so the individual cockpit can spin 360° just as the main mech does, too. The cockpits have view ports from both front, rear, and side facings. The pilot of the mech sits in the central cockpit located in the hips of the chassis. The main pilot controls the legs and the spin of the torso. From here he is also able to command and coordinate the movements of the gunners.

The crew of an arbitrator is often commanded by a regin or higher-ranking officer. One of the gunners is usually the second in command and is typically one rank lower than the commanding officer. In the event of the commander's death, the gunner can slide down a chute to take his position in the center cockpit. Communication on board the arbitrator is aided by a series of wavemakers.

Space within an arbitrator is limited. The cockpits were designed with dwarves in mind and members of larger races will find these spaces quite confining. It is possible to modify the pilot's cockpit to accommodate larger races; however, the gunner cockpits are small even for dwarves. Many a commanding officer of an arbitrator has been forced to assign extra physical training for pilots under his command who have a hard time fitting into their seats. There are no sleeping quarters on board the arbitra-



tor, and mech teams on board have learned to take their meals and leisure while remaining at their posts.

The arbitrator typically charges by enemy positions in a passing attack. If the attack succeeds, the arbitrator is now positioned behind the enemy mech. A quick spin of the torso allows the arbitrator to attack the rear or flank of the enemy while the enemy mech is forced to turn around. If the initial attack misses, the arbitrator is still in position to spin and attack the vulnerable backside.

## Special Rules

**Rotating Torso:** The arbitrator's torso is able to spin independently from the lower legs and can face any direction. This allows for a great deal of freedom on the battlefield. The torso is treated as having perfect maneuverability for purposes of turning in place and maximum turn per round. It can be swiveled as a free action up to once per round by each crew member, on their turns.

## LANDSHARK

**Size:** Colossal

**Power Source:** Steam

**Payload Units:** 24

**Height:** 15 ft.

**Space/Reach:** 15 ft. by 35 ft./15 ft.

**Crew:** 4 (weapons: 3)

**Firing Ports:** 13

**Hit Dice:** 48

**Hit Points:** 264

**Critical Thresholds:** Green, Yellow 132, Orange 66, Red 26

**Base Initiative:** -1

**Speed:** 40 ft./20 ft. burrow

**Maneuverability:** Average

**AC:** 2

**Hardness:** 13 (steel, Colossal)

**Base melee attack:** +2

**Base ranged attack:** -1

**Unarmed damage:** 1d12+10

**Trample:** largest Large; safe Medium; damage 4d6

**Saves:** Fort 0, Ref -4, Will -

**Abilities:** Str 30, Dex 8, Con -, Int -, Wis -, Cha -

**Mechcraft DC:** 39

**Base Planning Time:** 78 days

**Base Cost:** 2,862 gp

**Total Cost:** 13,152 gp

**Labor Time:** 3,840 man-hours

**Construction Time:** 48 days (10 avg. laborers plus 1 overseer)

**Special:** Extra payload mounts (8)

### PAYLOAD USAGE

PU	Use
4	Crew
8	Passengers (usually an assault squad)
12	Onboard weaponry
24	Total

Looking like its frightening namesake, the landshark is a unique type of mech. Its subterranean mobility lets the landshark serve as a spy, artillery support, and troop transport. Unlike the lumbering earth breaker (see page 7 of the **Mech Manual**), the landshark is especially intended for combat, not construction.

Landsharks are approximately 35 feet long and 15 feet wide. The front of the mech houses a large pair of serrated steel drills, which not only add to the fearsome appearance of the mech but serve as a weapon. The drills can snap tight as if they were mandibles, dealing a great deal of damage, or they can perform their original function, enabling the landshark to burrow through solid rock. A retractable steam cannon complements the unit's arsenal.

Landsharks have four powerful steam-driven legs (also retractable) and are jointed twice in the middle. The jaws of the landshark can pivot 35° in either direction to allow the mech to move rocks or even bite the legs of enemy mechs. The large fin at the rear of the shark conceals the steam cannon when not in use. A small viewing window is located at the top of the head. The tail of the mech covers the rear exit bay, which can be used to enter the mech or deploy a small unit of soldiers. Landshark crews sometimes paint menacing faces on the sides of the mech and some witnesses of the mech in action have mistaken it for the actual beast.

Landsharks travel by burrowing beneath the earth. Powerful steel legs push it along while the steel jaws soften the earth before it. They are very slow, but since they can move

underneath the earth virtually undetected, they are formidable additions to the military.

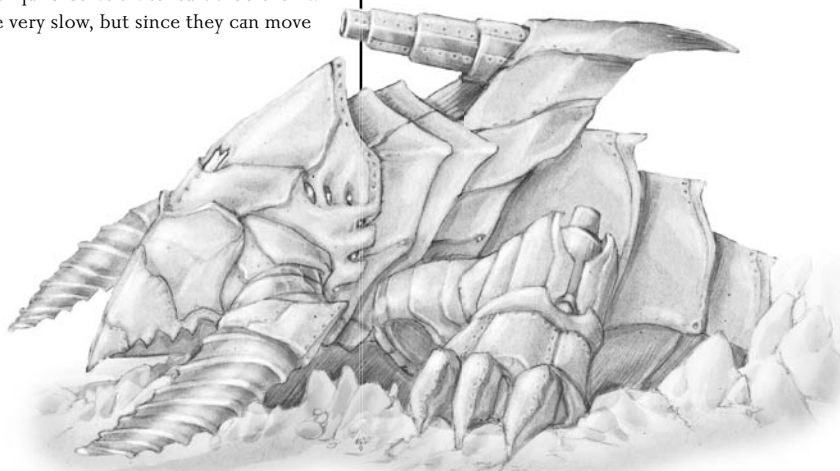
When resting within 10 feet of the surface, the landshark is able to deploy a periscope from the top of the head. Noticing a landshark periscope requires a DC 15 Spot check, since most casual observers would not recognize it for what it is. Since the steam cannon employed by the mech has excellent range, landshark commanders prefer to park a great distance from enemy positions, fire their shells, and retreat into the earth before they are spotted.

The main cockpit is located just behind the head with area for the pilot and the commander (who often controls the bite). A team of two rear-mounted gunners operates the steam cannon. The excess crew space is generally used for shock troops, but the remaining crew fills in positions where they are needed and it is common for landshark crews to trade off on their assignments.

Landshark crews are typically commanded by a vardoc or marek officer. The second in command is usually an odhum or regin. The rest of the crew will be parbles, with the possibility of a marek or regin as the commander of the assault squad on board.

Piloting a landshark mech is no small feat. Since there is virtually no visibility when underground, the pilot is forced to steer on instinct alone. Coglayers have experimented with sonar devices that assist somewhat, but it is the dwarven native sense of life underground that makes such tunneling possible. Other races have a much harder time judging distances and depths under the ground, but the dwarves seem to do it by instinct.

It also helps that the Stenian Confederacy has developed detailed navigation charts for underground raids. By carefully tracking the rate of travel and the mech's bearing, the mech





commander is able to roughly position his mech relative to surface features. Detailed maps of terrain are essential to landshark travel, since an inadvertent course under a lake or river could spell doom for the crew. In unknown areas, the mech travels within 20 feet of the surface and rises to periscope depth to take a visual picture of the immediate bearing before continuing forward.

Although landsharks rarely get involved in mech-to-mech combat, they are not defenseless. If an enemy is too close, the landshark typically uses its large steel jaws. The goal is to grasp an opponent and retreat into the earth, hopefully toppling the enemy mech. Alternatively, the landshark attempts to get beneath an enemy mech and rise upward, spilling the mech onto its side where the steel jaws finish the job.

For most military operations, the landshark spies on enemy positions and relays these coordinates to a support fleet of arbitrators or similar mechs. They usually lend fire support but rarely get involved in the actual combat. Their intention is to spy and retreat without their enemy even knowing they are there. Modified landsharks have been used to deploy troops into enemy terrain, and it is not unknown for a small unit of special forces (usually mareks) to be delivered to their combat zone by a landshark mech.

## Special Rules

**Attack From Below:** A landshark may attempt to trip an opposing mech by rising to the surface beneath the target's feet and making a bite attack. This special attack from below can only be made on the first round of combat when the landshark charges. Treat this as a normal trip attack for two antagonists of the appropriate size and Strength, with the landshark gaining a +8 bonus due to its low center of gravity and upward thrust. When making an attack from below, a landshark cannot be tripped in return on a failed trip attempt. However, it is not capable of gracefully switching into reverse, and landsharks that fail with this tactic are often exposed to enemy attacks while scrambling to get back underground.

## POUNCER

**Size:** Huge  
**Power Source:** Steam  
**Payload Units:** 7  
**Height:** 15 ft.  
**Space/Reach:** 10 ft. by 10 ft./10 ft.  
**Crew:** 1 (weapons: 2)  
**Firing Ports:** 1  
**Hit Dice:** 12  
**Hit Points:** 66  
**Critical Thresholds:** Green, Yellow 33, Orange 16, Red 6  
**Base Initiative:** +1  
**Speed:** 60 ft. (but see below)  
**Maneuverability:** Good  
**AC:** 8  
**Hardness:** 10 (iron)  
**Base melee attack:** +4  
**Base ranged attack:** +0  
**Unarmed damage:** 1d8+6  
**Trample:** largest Small; safe Small; damage 2d6  
**Saves:** Fort +2, Ref -2, Will -  
**Abilities:** Str 22, Dex 12, Con -, Int -, Wis -, Cha -  
**Mechcraft DC:** 43  
**Base Planning Time:** 66 days  
**Base Cost:** 696 gp  
**Total Cost:** 1,226 gp  
**Labor Time:** 960 man-hours

**Construction Time:** 12 days (10 avg. laborers plus 1 overseer)

### PAYLOAD USAGE

PU	Use
1	Crew
6	Onboard weaponry
7	<b>Total</b>

The pouncer is a specialized mech designed for the DragonMech special forces unit. Although it lacks the dragon's power of flight, the pouncer is able to leap great distances into the air and attack dragons on their own terms. The life of a DragonMech pouncer pilot is often very prestigious — and very short.

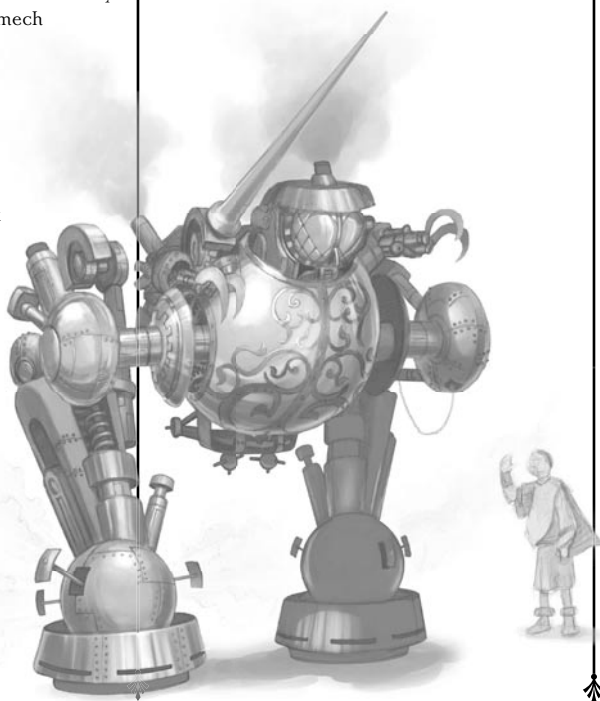
A pouncer has of a central globular body with two retractable arms that end in talon-like hooks. A large lance is firmly fixed to the right shoulder. A pair of powerful backward-jointed legs suspend the unit off the ground. A small steam engine rests on the back of the unit underneath a layered metal canopy that closely resembles the chitinous covering of an insect, and the two large cockpit windows look like a bug's eyes. Beneath the central globe rests a large ballista. Ambitious coglayers have tried attaching the ballista's bolts to chains and winches to create a smaller chain tentacle, but with little success.

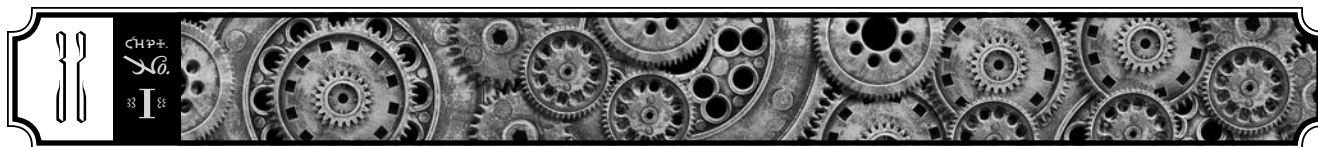
The pouncer is quite swift on the ground and can often easily outdistance creatures that could cause it damage. They are usually used to get a dragon's attention and lure it closer to the ground where the other mechs in the DragonMech unit can easily attack it. Charges from a fleet of Pouncers have deadly results when the forward lance is employed. However, the specialty of the pouncer is not in its speed or agility, but its ability to jump.

The cockpit of the pouncer is just large enough for one Medium humanoid. The mech is entered from the belly, which is also the most vulnerable part of the mech. Pilots are often welded in to prevent an angry dragon from ripping open the hatch and devouring the pilot. Pouncer missions are usually very short, as pouncers are not intended for patrol. Their use is restricted to dealing with dragons when the need arises.

## Special Rules

**Jumping:** The pouncer is able to leap because of a specially designed steam engine that uses explosives to give it short bursts of massive power. The explosive agents are chemicals housed in the rear of the engine. When these volatile agents are mixed, they ignite and propel the pouncer





high into the air. The pilot manages the amount of chemical released and can therefore control roughly how high he jumps. The legs are built to withstand the impact when the pouncer lands.

No pilot has managed to survive a jump of more than 300 feet. The mech's legs are not strong enough to save the unit from such a high jump. Even much shorter jumps often leaves the cockpit buried several feet in the ground. And mixing that much of the explosive chemicals effectively transforms the pouncer into a very large bomb. Shorter jumps are advised — unless your goal is a heroic death by detonating atop a lunar dragon.

To perform a jump, the pilot must succeed at a Mech Pilot skill check against DC 30. This check allows him a vertical leap of up to 50 feet. To add horizontal distance to the jump, the pilot must make a Mech Pilot skill check per the normal jumping rules (see page 88 of *DragonMech*).

Jumping higher than 50 feet requires a Mech Pilot check of DC 30 plus 2 for every additional 10 feet. Thus, a 90-foot-high jump has a DC of 38. If the skill check is successful, the pilot has jumped to the desired height.

Failure on a jump check can mean several things. A roll of 1 indicates a misfire and explosion, which damages the mech; see below. Any other failure by 5 or more indicates the explosive agents weren't timed properly and the mech doesn't leave the ground. A failure by 4 or less means the mech jumps, but lands off target. Use the rules for missing with a thrown weapon given in Chapter 8: Combat of the *PHB*, treating the pouncer's range increment as 5d10 feet (rolled with each missed jump).

A roll of a natural 1 on any Mech Pilot skill check intended to make a pouncer jump or land indicates a malfunction. The mech automatically suffers a main boiler explosion, as if an attacker had rolled 00 on the critical hits table (refer to Table 2-4 on page 74 of *DragonMech*).

Any jump that covers a total vertical and horizontal distance of 201 feet or more is in danger of damaging the mech when it lands. In these situations, the pilot must make a Mech Pilot check against DC 30 when landing the mech. Failure indicates the mech takes damage equal to a fall of the distance traveled less 200 feet. For example, a pouncer leaps 120 feet high and 120 feet across to attack a nearby dragon. This is a total distance of 240 feet. When it lands, the pilot must make a DC 30 Mech Pilot check. If he fails, the pouncer will take 4d6 damage, as if it had fallen 40 feet. This falling damage automatically bypasses hardness.

TABLE I-4: DURGAN-LOK PAYLOAD USAGE

PU	Use
1,448	Cramped workspace, living quarters, and common spaces for 965 civilians and crew
200	Less cramped quarters for 70 senior military personnel, aristocrats, council members, and Justicars
64	Foundry and repair bay for mechs of Colossal II or smaller
160	Hangar space for mech fleet
184	Onboard weaponry
2,056	Total

TABLE I-5: DURGAN-LOK ONBOARD WEAPONS

LOCATION	ARC OF FIRE	WEAPON (DAMAGE, RANGE IN FT., OTHER)	PU	CREW
Right arm	180° forward	Colossal III steam cannon (8d12/x3, 800)	64	3
Left arm	Melee	Colossal III axe blade (7d12/x3)	64	1
Shoulders	360°	2x Colossal II steam cannons (6d12/x3, 850)	32	3
	360°	2x Colossal steam cannons (4d10/x3, 900)	16	3
	360°	2x Gargantuan steam cannons (3d10/x3, 950)	8	2

A successful jump attempt means not only that the pilot got his mech into the air, but that he can guide it effectively. A mech that has jumped can make melee attacks against creatures in its path, provided the pilot has the Spring Attack feat.

Any melee attack made during a jump is treated as a charge. A pouncer that uses its lance while jumping is treated as if it charged with the lance.

## CITY-MECH DURGAN-LOK

Imposing, legendary, and prestigious: Durgan-lok is the best known city-mech in all of Highpoint, for it was the first. Constructed under the supervision of Parilus himself, it is a model of advanced engineering, despite its antiquated appearance. Gearwrights like to say it is both ancient and modern, for it combines the oldest secrets of the Master Repository with the needs of the new age. Its residents don't care; what they value most is the security it brings.

### Stats

**Size:** City-mech C  
**Power Source:** Steam  
**Payload Units:** 2,056  
**Height:** 500 ft.  
**Space/Reach:** 270 ft. by 270 ft./270 ft.  
**Crew:** 514 (weapons: 12)  
**Firing Ports:** 329  
**Hit Dice:** 528  
**Hit Points:** 2,904  
**Critical Thresholds:** Green, Yellow 1,452, Orange 726, Red 290  
**Base Initiative:** -5

**Speed:** 140 ft.

**Maneuverability:** Clumsy

**AC:** 2

**Hardness:** 22 (stone, City-mech C)

**Base melee attack:** +16

**Base ranged attack:** -5

**Unarmed damage:** 9d6+24

**Trample:** largest Colossal V; safe Colossal III; damage 11d6

**Saves:** Fort -2, Ref -8, Will -

**Abilities:** Str 58, Dex 0, Con -, Int -, Wis -, Cha -

**Mechcraft DC:** 70

**Base Planning Time:** 140 days

**Base Cost:** 335,667 gp

**Total Cost:** 337,667 gp (not including weapons)

**Labor Time:** 491,520 man-hours

**Construction Time:** 123 days (500 avg. laborers plus 50 overseers)

TABLE I-6: DURGAN-LOK MECH FLEET

MECH	SIZE	PU	QUANTITY	TOTAL PU
Juggernaut	Gargantuan	16	4	64
Arbitrator	Gargantuan	16	4	64
Lancer	Gargantuan	16	2	32
Total				160

### Combat Tactics

Durgan-lok lacks versatility on the battlefield. Because Durgan-lok was originally designed with a dwarven stronghold in mind, it fights like a mobile fortress. It is primarily defensive, with a huge battery of steam cannon artillery that can be aimed at whatever comes near. Its only concession to modern mech warfare is a gigantic axe, which is one of the least



effective melee weapons in this age of buzzsaws and bomb launchers. Even so, those who wish to modernize Durgan-lok have gotten nowhere; the first city-mech should rightfully serve as a symbol of the dwarves, say the senior officials of the Stenian Confederacy, and what better way to do that than with an enormous battleaxe?

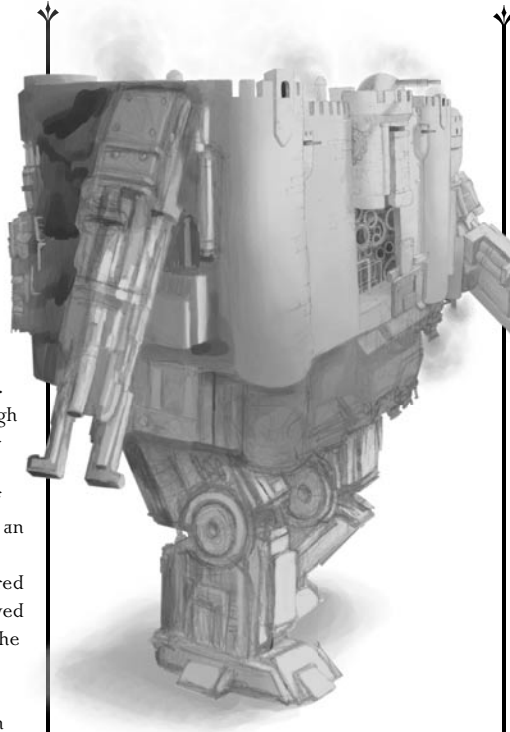
The legs do not contain weaponry, which was later corrected on the construction of city-mechs that followed. Instead, soldiers on the lower leg levels fire out from weapon ports throughout the legs to repel ground attackers that attempt to board. If the docking bays are opened, there's enough space for nearly 100 soldiers to bring their weapons to bear, not to mention another 200-odd firing ports within easy range of ground level, so the city-mech can present an impressive array of infantry fire if need be.

The right arm cannon could be considered the mech's primary weapon. It is employed exclusively at the enemy that is deemed the greatest threat. Unfortunately, this also makes it the primary target for enemies. Gun crews that operate the arm cannon understand this and consider it a honor to draw the fire of the enemy because it means they are doing their job. The axe on the left arm is used only in close desperate situations and is directed at the enemy mech's legs or joints.

The main defense of Durgan-lok is its mech fleet. It was never intended to engage in outright battles on its own for very long. Instead, a fleet of mechs from its hangar are in charge of protecting the mech and destroying enemies. The smaller mechs are faster and more versatile, and present a much more immediate threat than the city-mech itself. When battle ensues, the mech fleet immediately deploys and attempts to draw enemy fire.

The one exception is attacks by tightly clumped enemy forces. Intelligent races have learned not to make such attacks, but monsters and less canny raiders (such as orcs unfamiliar with a city-mech) sometimes make this same mistake that's been made many times before. In these cases, the mech fleet remains on board — and Durgan-lok simply takes a step in the enemy's direction. All that remains after that is finishing off whoever escaped the trample, then scraping the crud off the city-mech's feet.

Surprise attacks to the city-mech are very rare. Smaller mechs constantly patrol the area for miles around Durgan-lok and can easily engage or destroy the enemy long before they reach the structure. In addition, landsharks and crag striders deployed ahead of the city-mech will detect an enemy presence long before it



is a threat. These patrolled "safe areas" around the mech provide a constant forewarning of enemy approach.

## Appearance

**O**utside: Durgan-lok was the first city-mech ever built, under the instruction of Parilus himself. It is boxy, squat, and awkward, looking more like a mobile fortress on legs than a humanoid. Nonetheless it is built with extremely advanced techniques, for it is the only city-mech to be constructed under the direct supervision of a Master Gearwright. It is rumored that spies and agents of Shar Thizdic have tried for decades to infiltrate Durgan-lok in order to learn its secrets, whether through bribe, blackmail, or subterfuge, but to this day the military's secret police have stopped every attempt.

Durgan-lok stands 500 feet tall. The whole of the mech is surrounded by sturdy stone armor over an iron skeleton. In most respects, Durgan-lok resembles a walking stronghold. It has square shoulders that house a huge array of steam cannons. The right arm of Durgan-lok ends in an enormous steam cannon, while the left arm wields the traditional weapon of the dwarves, an axe (of massive proportions). Smokestacks and chimneys line the mech, filling the air with black smoke that can be seen for

miles as the mech lumbers along. Unbeknownst to those who have not been in Durgan-lok, its joints and vulnerable points are reinforced with mithral plates, an innovation not yet adopted by Shar Thizdic's mechs.

**Interior:** The shins of Durgan-lok open into the mech bays, where fleets of smaller mechs are quickly deployed to the ground. Large platform doors lower to deposit the mechs onto the ground where they can easily defend the structure from all sides. Patrols of smaller mechs (such as arbitrators or juggernauts) maintain a constant perimeter around the mech and are relieved at regular intervals.

The legs above the hangars are dedicated to the operation and movement of the mech. These cavernous expanses of massive machinery are attended by coglayers who often sleep on tiny cots housed on the fringes of their assigned area. A great many coglayers end up hard of hearing from such long-term sleeping arrangements. Little do they know that the minor problems they find should be the least of their concerns; thanks to the coglings dwelling deep in the gear forests, few coglayers ever need venture deep into the machinery.

Personnel and visitors travel from the hangars to the upper levels of the legs via either a series of stairs and chutes, or four gigantic steam-powered freight elevators. The elevators are generally reserved for dignitaries and military personnel, though in slow periods their use may be offered to visitors with cargo. Otherwise, visiting merchants must truck their goods up more than 30 stories of staircases by foot. Travel up the stairs is a grueling trip and can take a great deal of time, but for dwarves accustomed to mountain strongholds, it's not that different than life back in the underdark.

The upper thighs of the mech serve as housing and living quarters for less important personnel. These quarters are cramped and uncomfortable, with several individuals often sharing very small bunkrooms. For dwarves this is rarely a concern since they spend a great deal of their lives in such crowded conditions. However, humans and larger races that serve on Durgan-lok find that life here requires some adjustment. Entire extended families sometimes live in a 10 foot by 10 foot room. When Durgan-lok was constructed under the height of military preparedness, the creators built two communal mess halls into each thigh, where the workers were given their daily meals. Originally, commanding officers would brief the workers here. Now those days are gone, and many residents



eat in their own space. The communal areas are still used for meals, and also as impromptu common spaces and marketplaces.

The torso consists of several levels of common space used for businesses, shops, inns, mess halls, and even farmsteads. Areas of the torso have retractable walls where earth-filled areas have been adapted to grow crops and maintain livestock. Visitors to Durgan-lok will most likely be housed on one of these levels. The few inns on Durgan-lok are always crowded, offering no more than a communal sleeping room with mats on the floor. For an additional fee, a visitor may sleep on a cot or hammock. These levels are laid out almost exactly like a typical dwarven underdeep city, with narrow streets, blocky architecture, and very low ceilings. Over the years, taverns and game houses have cropped up naturally to keep passengers and off-duty laborers entertained.

The upper levels of the chest are reserved for military personnel and important individuals such as gearwrights and councilmen. Access to these levels is restricted; the freight elevator doesn't go this high, and the few staircases leading in area always guarded. Thick iron grates are placed in all ventilation tubes leading to this level, to prevent access by stalkers, and a small group of coglayers maintains an array of tiny clockwork puppets that serve as scouts throughout the hollow spaces leading here. The housing in the upper levels is a tad more luxurious, with terraces and balconies that overlook the sides. Although these rooms aren't larger than those on the lower levels, fewer residents live in each one. There is also less machinery to get in the way.

One unusual aspect of the uppermost levels is the farming zones. The wide, boxy construction of Durgan-lok means there are several acres of nearly flat areas on its topside. Roughly five acres of the uppermost level is dedicated to farming. Steel panels in the ceiling slide or fold aside to reveal the sun during the day, then close tight again at night.

The main cockpit and bridge of the mech is located directly in the head, which sits between the shoulders of the mech. The top of the head is almost flush with the top of the mech's shoulders. The bridge is constantly manned by a crew of at least a dozen pilots, navigation officers, gunners, and of course the mech commander himself. The mech commander's personal quarters are located directly behind the bridge so he can easily be awakened or summoned to the bridge as necessary.

The arms are reserved exclusively for military personnel. Soldiers rarely sleep or eat very far from their assigned stations. The shoulders

and arms are constantly manned by gunners so the mech is ready for battle at a moment's notice.

The dwarven engineers that designed Durgan-lok fashioned the interior to look as much like a dwarven stronghold as possible. The basic structure includes a variety of secret doors and sliding walls that are known to the residents but never mentioned to outsiders, not to mention crawlspaces, secret rooms, and dangerous unmarked chutes in the floor. And of course most areas are pitch black, designed for creatures with darkvision. Non-dwarves find the layout very confusing, and it is incredibly easy to get lost on board.

**Mannerisms:** Durgan-lok is no less ordered than Nedderpik. Yet it retains far more of the old ways, being the first city-mech built and the only one still governed by a clan structure. Dwarves on Durgan-lok are far more likely to display clan affiliations, which are still tolerated (and in some cases encouraged) there. Their lawful nature is directed more toward a clan and less toward the Stenian Confederacy. The camaraderie they feel toward other city-mechs is less like a political ally than a strange cousin; they don't understand the non-clan governing system of the other city-mechs, but still accept the strange ways of their distant kin.

### Life on Board

Life on board Durgan-lok is much like traditional life in a dwarven stronghold, except it's a lot noisier and the stronghold bounces around a bit. There's a regimented schedule and an awful lot of work to do, but when was that ever not the case? Many dwarves are quite content living on Durgan-lok, strange as that may seem.

Visiting adventurers find a degree of acceptance among citizens who admire them for their bravery. The dwarven tradition of tale-telling is strong here, and residents are always glad to hear a tale of conquest or heroism. Shop owners and innkeepers often make special allowances and perform favors for adventurers to ensure their future business. Traveling parties with well-known reputations are viewed as local celebrities, and it is not uncommon to see prominent merchants openly competing for

their patronage. "Look, there's Varitus the warrior! I hear tell that he and his coglayer fellow infiltrated and destroyed an orc slaver-mech from the inside!"

Nonetheless, visitors are never be allowed to purchase living space on the city-mech. Durgan-lok's primary function is that of a military vehicle, and it cannot afford to grant space to those who don't directly contribute to its operation. Even the most famed adventurers remain on board only at the whim of the authorities, who expect them to be willing to work for the administration whenever needed.

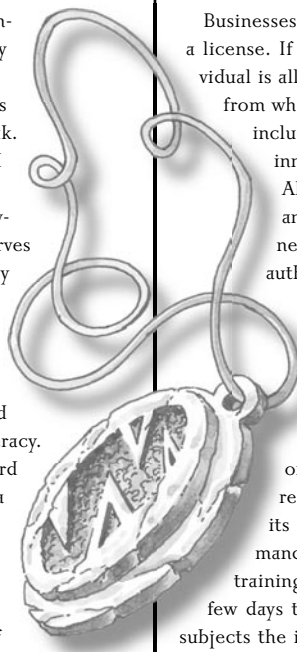
Businesses on board must apply and pay for a license. If the license is cleared, the individual is allowed to rent space on the mech from which to run their business. This includes everything from taverns and inns to craftsmen and merchants. All space is carefully regulated, and all institutions — such as businesses — need the approval of the authorities. As usual, all goods are considered military property when on board, and on rare occasions goods are requisitioned for military purposes.

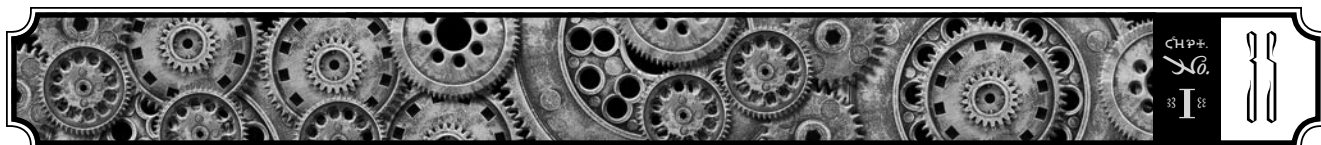
There is very little distinction between civilian and military on Durgan-lok. All permanent residents of Durgan-lok are part of its militia. This isn't a decision; it's mandatory. They receive basic martial training, and are required to spend a few days training every month or so. This subjects the individual to the command of an officer, which he must obey. Rarely do military officers begin barking orders to residents, but it has been known to happen.

As members of a militia, all residents of Durgan-lok must swear allegiance to the Confederacy, and are considered Confederate soldiers as long as they stay on board. Interestingly, most of the training on Durgan-lok still happens in clan units. Despite the fact that Durgan-lok's military is expressly loyal to the Stenian Confederacy, it is the only city-mech military to still function in clan formation.

### Getting on Board

Getting on board Durgan-lok is a great deal more difficult than boarding any other city-mech in the Confederacy. The city-mech's clan structure makes its residents much more receptive to kin than strangers, and further biased toward dwarven residents. It's a well known fact that many of the mechanisms powering Durgan-lok are more advanced than





any others in the Stenian fleet, despite the city-mech's age and appearance, and security is tight as a result.

Those that wish to board are subjected to a thorough search and interview, far more detailed than on Nedderpik. Establishing status as essential personnel or a legitimate visitor is only the first step. Even merchants with an established relationship to the city-mech are re-interviewed each time they wish to board. Those who don't do well in the interview may be subjected to spells like *detect evil* and *discern lies*. All applicants are examined for weapons, contraband, and magic items. All weapons and offensive magic items must be surrendered before boarding. Some wizards have even been asked to surrender spell books, if they contain spells like *fireball* or *magic missile*. Of course, the city-mech's residents still retain their own personal armament, so this puts visitors at a distinct disadvantage — which is okay by the administrators.

A visitor who is permitted to come aboard is granted a visitor's medallion, much like those used on Nedderpik. They are required to wear this at all time. Security on Durgan-lok is more strict than on other city-mechs, and visitors who put their medallions out of sight find themselves apprehended by military guards very quickly. After all, Durgan-lok only has 1,000 residents, so most residents know what the other residents in their area look like. If a given resident and his friends don't recognize someone without a medallion, they're quick to report him.

Permanent or longtime residents of the Lok are issued a similar medallion that they wear underneath their clothing. Since all permanent residents are well known to each other, either through blood relationships, clan ties, or professional affiliation, their identity is rarely questioned. Occasionally an officer will ask to see someone's medallion, but having the locals vouch for you is just as good as having a medallion on this clan-based city-mech. Losing a medallion is a punishable offense, however, so most residents still carry them at all times to be on the safe side.

The Blank Face, a criminal organization dedicated to smuggling well-paying clients into safe living arrangements (such as on Durgan-lok), has a controversial presence on the city-mech. It's a well-known fact that certain locals are on its payroll. When the Blank Face smuggles someone on board with a forged citizenship medallion, these paid-off locals vouch for their false identity if need be. What's not well known is exactly who the paid agents are. Clan loyalties prevent their neighbors from giving them

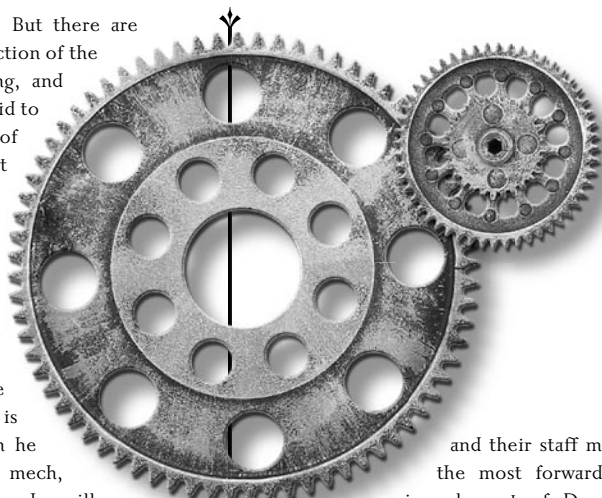
up to Stenian justice. But there are rumors that a secret faction of the military is investigating, and some clan elders are said to be dispensing justice of their own in an attempt to keep the government out of their affairs.

Whether or not a potential visitor is allowed to board the mech depends on several factors. The role of the individual is weighed by how much he can contribute to the mech, versus how much space he will take up. Tall races, especially humans, start out at a disadvantage in this calculation. Warriors willing to serve are always welcome, as are mechanics, coglayers, mech jockeys, and skilled tradesmen. Entertainers are useful, but hardly considered necessary, so they receive only temporary passes. Adventurers are admitted if they're of the right sort (read: law-abiding and respectful) and willing to work for the city-mech.

## Government and Major Factions

Although Durgan-lok is a member of the Stenian Confederacy and one of its founding fathers, the government on board the Lok is far more similar to the traditional dwarven clan structure. When it was constructed, the Stenian Confederacy was still in its infant stage. Clan Miglud played a key role in constructing Durgan-lok, and Clan Fralief made up the vast majority of its early settlers, with more than a third of the city-mech's residents still claiming affiliation with Fralief. Command on board Durgan-lok developed somewhat but never strayed far from the dwarven clan model, despite pressure later applied by the rest of the Stenian Confederacy. Durgan-lok is still subject to the Law, but its interpretations are much more traditional and clan-based. Durgan-lok's close proximity to Duerok only reinforces this.

There are three real powers on the mech. The first is mech commander Andvar Ugredh Silvervein (dwarf male Ftr6/Mcj12; LG), of the now-defunct Silvervein clan. The Silverveins were largely destroyed and Ugredh is one of the few senior officials on Durgan-lok whose primary loyalty is to the Confederacy. His plying and policy commander is his brother-in-law Trigoth Silvervein (dwarf male Ftr4/Exp4/Mcj8; AL LG). Together, these two officials



and their staff make up the most forward-thinking element of Durgan-lok authority. In fact, they make up the only official Stenian authority on the mech.

Nonetheless, there are other authorities that command a great deal of dwarven loyalty. Clan Fralief has essentially migrated to Durgan-lok. Approximately 400 Fralief dwarves live there, including the son and extended family of the eldest clan leader (who himself still lives in Duerok). Forneth Glomgek (dwarf male Ftr12; LN; Str 20) is a force to be reckoned with, both personally and politically. A lumbering hulk of a dwarf with an immense chest and arms, he also commands the loyalty of a third of the mech's crew. Ugredh gets little done without Glomgek's assent. The two are on good terms, but it's clear to all that Stenian loyalty only goes so far without Glomgek's approval.

Finally, there is Clan Miglud. There are only 150 or so Miglud dwarves on board, and none of the clan's elders or their direct kin reside there, but the Miglud dwarves on Durgan-lok are in charge of virtually all the important technical functions. Miglud dwarves helped build most of the early city-mechs, and when it came to Durgan-lok, they got most of the jobs as coglayers, engineers, technicians, and blacksmiths. Now many have advanced far within the Gearwrights Guild, so even the senior gearwrights on Durgan-lok are Miglud. The Miglud dwarves retain a tight kinship and spend most of their personal time together at communal forge-hearths, away from the rest of the crew. They're a clear faction of their own.

The Gearwrights Guild has less influence over the operation of Durgan-lok than any other city-mech. The Guild wasn't really established on the surface world when Durgan-lok was built, and didn't pay for its construction (as it did for Nedderpik). And the dwarves of Durgan-lok are far more traditional to begin with. Unlike on other city-mechs where the

Guild acts as a de facto branch of government, on Durgan-lok it really is limited primarily to a technical role.

Those members of the Stenian Council on board Durgan-lok are more like figureheads than anything else. They serve more as liaisons between Durgan-lok and the Confederacy than as commanders or leaders. Most prominent among them is Stenius, a famous coglayer who helped build one of the very first mechs. In recent years, Stenius has become an adherent of Dotrak, and openly preaches about his “mechanical messiah” despite the strong traditional tendencies of Durgan-lok.

Durgan-lok’s role as protector of Duerok and surrounding territories is perfectly satisfactory to the Fralief and Miglud dwarves, and as long as the Stenian Confederacy asks for nothing more of them, there’s will likely be no disagreement. But unlike other city-mechs which see themselves as part of an extended brotherhood, the Durgan-lok dwarves see the other city-mechs as separate allied clans with their own interests. If ever the mistakes of the lunar invasion are to be repeated, it will be by the clan leaders of Durgan-lok, who to this day do not recognize that are perpetrating the same decentralized, fiefdom-based governmental model that caused Duerok to fall.

Adventurers are viewed as useful tools by many factions. They’re welcomed by Durgan-lok authorities, provided they’re of the right sort and willing to work for the authorities (as described above). The only way to get personal weapons on board is often to get hired for an adventuring job, in which case the military lets the adventurers reclaim their weapons for the duration of their visitor’s permit.

The major powers of Durgan-lok are more aware of both the harshness and bureaucracy of the Stenian Confederacy than any other city-mech. Both Ugrehth and Glomgek welcome adventurers willing to work around the system and get things done quickly. Ugrehth tends to use adventurers for dealing with surface diplomacy, special investigations, or situations concerning clan politics, all of which can be muddled badly by Stenian soldiers with their pointed questions and lack of respect for the old ways. Glomgek has a similar use for adventurers, and he requests that his employees ask no questions, especially about whether the Confederacy approves of their actions. It’s a well-known but unspoken fact that Glomgek often bypasses official channels entirely (with Ugrehth’s approval) when he gets frustrated with Stenian politics. However, it is rare that the names Glomgek or Ugrehth ever come up in association with these assignments. They

## JERBY KINDROOT, ADVENTURE BROKER

“If there’s a job to be done, an adventure to be found, then I’m the man to talk to.”

Finding a halfling living a luxurious life on board a city-mech would be considered strange to some. That is, until they meet Jerby Kindroot. In his lavish clothes and feathered hat, he is somewhat a spectacle as he strolls along the halls of Durgan-lok with his large and silent bodyguards. His mustache and beard are greased to a point and his hair is combed rather neatly under his hat for a root-dweller. Despite his small size and insignificant stature, he is nonetheless a figure to behold. When speaking to Jerby, one would immediately find that he is articulate to a fault and quick with an insult or quip. He carries himself like a rich merchant twice his size and has all the arrogance and posture of the same. His imposing muscular companions make no sound, aside from an occasional snicker at a well-placed insult from Jerby.

Jerby Kindroot has a rather unique profession. He refers to himself as an “adventure broker.” In simple terms, he hires adventuring parties for jobs and collects a percentage of the treasure they find. At first, most adventuring groups scoff at the very idea of such an individual. Adventuring jobs are hardly difficult to find. Why would any group want an associate that takes a share of the booty without contributing to its collection? That is, until they discover just how much of a job Jerby can do for them.

Jerby is extremely well connected. Not only does his influence extend throughout Durgan-lok, but well into the thieves guilds and refugee camps throughout the safe zones. If a desolate locale has been found, Jerby heard of it first. If an ancient artifact is believed to be located there, Jerby can tell you what it is and if it is worth risking your life for. If a hydra with twelve heads guards it, he can probably tell you what each one looks like — and to avoid the one on the left.

Jerby deals in the coveted business of information. All he asks is a small percentage of what is found. Not only is he a wealth of information regarding all locales and rumors, he is also able to find a buyer for nearly any manner of unusual artifact, from mechanical sculpture to magical scripture. If adventurers have difficulty collecting gold from a relic from before the lunar rain, Jerby can put them in contact with an interested buyer who will pay top price. He can get most magic items past the checkpoints and have them easily identified before nightfall. He can find other adventurers if a party lacks a few members and can ensure that any wounds are immediately treated by one of the many healers he keeps on the payroll.

Once examined, his services are greatly appreciated. Adventurers are free from a lot of legwork for a nominal fee. Jerby’s contacts are well informed and easily approached. At the end, they often find

themselves much further ahead than they would have been if they had set out on their own. Jerby may be annoying at first, but once his information proves to be true, his fee is hardly missed.

Jerby has any number of available jobs both on board Durgan-lok and in notable locations near the areas the mech patrols. Parties may be needed to investigate monster lairs near the patrol zones that are too small for mechs to fit in. They may be required to quell some dispute between two rival merchants or infiltrate the labor camps on board Durgan-lok and find out who is really working for whom. Adventurers working for Jerby are given special consideration on Durgan-lok, even from the Footman Guard. Jerby provides a much-needed service for adventuring parties and his organization is greatly appreciated by the Ugrehth and Glomgek.

**Jerby Kindroot, male halfling adventure broker Exp 9:** CR 4; Small humanoid (halfling); HD 9d6; hp 28; Init +2, Spd 20 ft.; AC 15 (+2 Dex, +1 size, +2 deflection), touch 15, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +6; Grp +5; Atk +5 melee (1d4-1/19–20, dagger); Full Atk +5/+0 melee dagger (1d4-1/19–20); SA Sneak attack +2d6; SQ Halfling traits; AL CG; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +8; Str 8, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 17.

**Skills and Feats:** Appraise +11, Bluff +14, Diplomacy +14, Gather Information +17, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (local) +11, Knowledge (history) +11, Knowledge (geography) +11, Listen +11, Search +13, Sense Motive +13; Investigator, Negotiator, Persuasive, Skill Focus (Gather Information).

**Possessions:** Ring of protection +2, wand of magic missiles (CL 7, 42 charges), dagger.

**Languages:** Common, Dwarf, Elven, Halfling, Orc.

**Bodyguards (3):** 5th-level fighters.





almost always use brokers, such as Jerby Kindroot (see sidebar).

## Society

Social structures on Durgan-lok are much like those on other mechs, with vertical height dictating importance. Yet the clan involvement on Durgan-lok complicates things somewhat. Just as the least important city-mech dweller may be a more skilled craftsman than 90% of surface dwellers, someone on Durgan-lok with few skills to contribute may be extremely important to one of the clan factions. Fralief and Miglud are the largest clans present aboard Durgan-lok, but there are many more. In many cases, individuals have swapped quarters with clan elders, so the traditional vertical hierarchy of the mech has broken down. You may find a plygen living low in the legs, since he gave up his space high in the mech to his great-great-great-great-grandfather, whose age-weakened skills makes him rather unimportant to the city-mech's survival.

One issue with Durgan-lok's social structure has been the prominence of the city-mech itself. It is the most famous of all city-mechs, and many a wealthy aristocrat would prefer a Durgan-lok address to anywhere else. The city-mech's rather small size and close-knit clan structure makes it difficult to board illegally (as the Blank Face has discovered), but the legal purchase of dwellings and citizenship medallions is another matter. More than on any other city-mech, Durgan-lok officials have been tempted by ridiculous bribes — in some cases, *thousands* of gold pieces are offered for a small apartment and single medallion. There have thus far been no documented convictions on a case of bribery, but on more than one occasion, the decision on who should occupy an empty living space has gone in favor of a wealthy outsider with nominal skills over a long-term resident with a clearly greater value to the city-mech.

## Economy

In a good year, Durgan-lok is almost completely self-sufficient. Built to include areas for agriculture, livestock, living quarters, tradesmen, specialists, administrators, a military garrison, a small marketplace, and even a few passengers, it can produce everything it needs. The only commodities sometimes lacking on Durgan-lok are quality fuel and metals for repair, but both of these are raw materials easily located through prospecting or mining. Durgan-lok's economy is like that of a small

town located on a busy thoroughfare: It's self-contained, but has a regular influx of visiting traders.

## Organizations

The most prominent organizations on Durgan-lok are the clans. The Gearwrights Guild has a small presence, as do some of the military clubs seen on other city-mechs such as Nedderpik. But most social life revolves around clan affiliations. Clans Fralief and Miglud are the most prominent, with nearly a dozen others represented in one way or another. Most clans have a central gathering area somewhere on the mech. In some cases, this is almost like a fiefdom, or "turf" among city-dwellers; certain common spaces are known to "belong" to a certain clan, even though they have no legal claim to it. One of the surprising consequences to this is a great deal of camaraderie among the few humans, halflings, and gnomes to dwell on Durgan-lok. Left out of the traditional clan structure, and often with few common spaces to call their own, they gather together and form stronger bonds than normally appear among people of different origins.

## MECH ORGANIZATION IN THE STENIAN CONFEDERACY

The Stenian Confederacy has five city-mechs, which originally formed the alliance under which it was built. Each of these five mechs has a patrol area it is assigned, and each keeps several thousand square miles more or less safe for surface dwellers.

The city-mechs are accompanied by fleets of smaller mechs that dock in the amply sized hangars on the lower levels of the mech. When a city-mech patrols, several smaller fleets of 3-6 mechs each always travel before it to scout the terrain and deal with any potential dangers. The area before a city-mech is often carved out and secure long before the city-mech sets foot there. Since the Confederacy has established a safe zone extending for miles for each city-mech, the patrol areas are well known and could almost be piloted blindly by the seasoned mech jockey.

The fleets of smaller mechs are led by a single commander who takes his orders from the mech commander himself. Communication from the mech commander to the patrols is made through a series of wavemakers that allow for verbal communication only. Com-

mands are usually received by the central unit of the patrol who later dictates these orders to the other mechs under his command. Although it is possible for the subordinate mechs to communicate with the city-mech directly, confusion is avoided by commands being dictated and amended by the fleet commander. This prevents an excess of cross talk among the communicators and provides a much more orderly procession of attack.

Patrol fleets vary from city-mech to city-mech. This usually depends on the number of available mechs. Stenian city-mechs have enough hangar space to accommodate 7-10 Gargantuan-sized patrol and combat mechs. Since combat mechs dock in stages — and many dock only once every few months when major repairs are needed — it's possible for a city-mech to support a fleet many times the size of its hangar space. Usually, a patrol will be made up of juggernauts supported by lancers, arbitrators, or scorpions. Since the awe-inspiring juggernaut is usually the focal point of the attack, the arbitrators often distance themselves and use their cannon fire or accompany the juggernaut into melee.

One thing worth noting is that the military mech fleet that swarms around a city-mech is often the *smallest* contingent of nearby mechs. A much larger complement of traders, travelers, craftsmen, and simple civilian mechs always travels in the city-mech's wake. Most of these hangers-on are in mechs, but not all. The Stenian Confederacy isn't particularly tolerant of these safety-seekers, and forces the ragtag bunch to stay a certain distance from the city-mechs for safety concerns. (No one wants to explain why Nedderpik just stepped on a family of four.) Even so, close proximity to a city-mech is a safe place to be, and many people seek that safety.

## TACTICS OF THE STENIAN CONFEDERACY

Although attacks on a city-mech proper are indeed rare, the safe zones still contain a great deal of enemies that require the attention of the mechs of the Stenian Confederacy. Monsters are far more prominent since the lunar rain has forced many of them to seek new hunting grounds for food. Humanoid bands have banded together and are in greater concentration than they ever were before. Attacks on patrols with guerilla tactics are much more common than a direct assault on a city-mech, but the occasional attack is not





entirely unlikely.

For smaller threats (such as humanoid attacks or monsters), the city-mech itself continues moving while the patrol mechs at the feet engage the enemy. If the enemy is small enough for ground troops, the soldiers will deploy and use the mech as a rallying point. A second and third mech surrounds and contains the enemy while the city-mech moves to safer ground. If the threat is somewhat larger (such as a few Gargantuan-sized mechs or a particularly large lunar dragon), the city-mech maintains a safe firing distance while the patrol mechs close in for the kill.

When engaging other large mechs, it is very common for smaller mechs to spread out and attempt to draw enemy fire. The more targets they present, the more the enemy has to commit to attacking one of them. When the enemy decides which direction to turn, the remaining mechs close in. Juggernaut units are notorious for charging directly at the enemy while the arbitrators fan out and pepper the enemy with cannon fire. Scorpion units usually follow behind the juggernauts and attempt to disable enemy mechs while the juggernauts deliver the final blow.

The city-mech itself reserves fire until a clear target is available. Few opponents require the full offensive attention of the city-mech, and are easier left to the smaller mech patrols. Occasionally, when a suitable enemy is encountered, the Stenian city-mech opens with a barrage of fire while it releases smaller mechs from its hangar bays. These mechs assume their formations and move to box the enemy in. Once the enemy is softened by the cannon shots of the command mech, the patrol mechs will close in and engage.

A typical patrol and attack formation includes one to three juggernaut mechs with a compliment of scorpions or lancers in the second rank. A pair of arbitrators travels before and to either side of the juggernaut-led formation. When the attack ensues, the arbitrators spread out while the juggernauts head directly for the enemy. When the juggernauts are within melee range the arbitrators cease cannon fire and close. The scorpions or lancers pick up smaller opponents so that the juggernauts and arbitrators can concentrate on the greatest threat.

DragonMech units reserve their combat techniques for dragons when they are encountered. Being the intelligent creatures that they are, dragons have responded to the DragonMech techniques with their own tactics. The DragonMech units have learned to vary their attacks greatly in their encounters so

that a dragon corpse provides few educational tips to its allies.

Despite their training and professionalism, DragonMech units are only successful at killing a dragon about twenty percent of the time. The dragon often decides the DragonMechs aren't worth the trouble, and simply flies away. This is acceptable to DragonMech pilots, since driving it away still protects their charges — although there is a certain satisfaction to having a dragon-skull trophy hung from your mech.

Some DragonMech pilots have become obsessed with “the one dragon that got away.” They will go to great lengths to track their quarry and finish the job, even defying direct orders. This is not something the Confederacy commanders approve of. However, given the brilliance of most DragonMech jockeys, it is tolerated as long as it doesn't cause the Stenian people to be harmed.

## LIFE AMONG THE STENIAN CONFEDERACY

Life on board one of the city-mechs is like life on a military base. Soldiers' families live with them on the mech, and are an integral part of its operation. Everyone on board serves a function. Each person's job and responsibilities integrate into their daily lives.

Everyone that serves the Confederacy understands that military might is currently the most effective solution to the problems caused by the lunar rain. The ability to find and eliminate military threats is the primary function of the city-mech. All other concerns are secondary. Were it left to the Stenian purists, the mech would perform no other function than patrol and battle. However, wiser heads have prevailed, and the five city-mechs are functioning communities as well as massive weapons platforms.

Early on, the city-mechs enforced strict military discipline to everyone in their patrol areas, including surface residents. Citizens under the watch of the Confederacy were questioned on

matters great and small. At times, it felt almost like a police state; the citizens were deemed just as much a threat as outsiders. This strict discipline was effective in some regards, but engendered far too much negativity toward the Confederacy. As the lunar rain has diminished somewhat, the need for such martial measures has declined. Now the Confederacy focuses more attention on true threats rather than simple transgressions like the wrong stamp on a salvage permit.

Nonetheless, the years of harsh military rule left the Stenian Confederacy with a tainted reputation. Although the patrols are welcomed when danger threatens, during peaceful times they're called tyrants. They're arbitrary tyrants, too; the full authority vested in field commanders puts them on a long leash. Leniency varies from mech to mech, and even from one officer to another. Justicars supposedly ensure even treatment, but they are few and far between, and are so stern and judgmental that few surface denizens will approach them for protection. Most mech commanders are far more tolerant now than they used to be, but not all. Dealing with Confederate authorities can still be unnerving, to say the least.

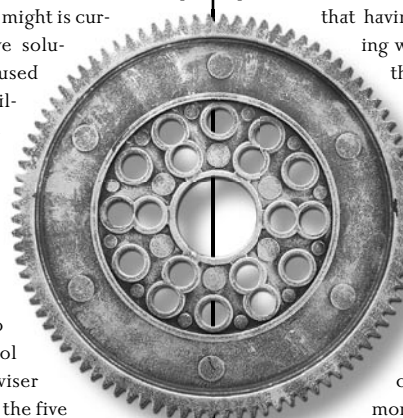
The problem is interpretation of the Law. For such an ordered domain, the Stenian Confederacy relies on a remarkably vague document for its laws. The Law is not written anywhere, yet it is the cornerstone of the Stenian legal system. Three mech commanders may issue three separate verdicts as punishment for a crime, each arguably within the confines of the Law, but with widely varying degrees of latitude. A black-market junkyard may go unpunished for years because one mech commander realizes

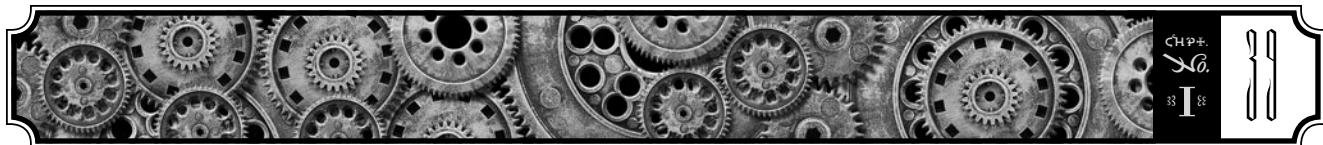
that having Stenians illegally salvaging wrecks is better than having the Irontooth do it — but when that officer gets reassigned, his replacement might promptly execute the junkyard operator for violating Stenian law.

Most Stenian citizens see this system as a necessary compromise. Under the current circumstances, security is more important than some set of impractical ideas about liberty.

The Law can be strict, and the military rarely explains itself to civilians, but the alternative is chaos. As the saying goes, “Better a night in the brig than eternity in the dragon's gullet.”

The vast majority of those living on the city-





mechs are laborers and soldiers who belong to the Stenian Confederacy. Temporary workers, traders, adventurers, and dignitaries may work or even live on a mech, but they generally have short-term passes.

Day-to-day life in the Confederacy tends to be long stretches of tedious monotony, interrupted by brief spurts of deadly activity. Every Stenian knows his place and his job, and the job usually involves a great deal of repetitive labor: shoveling coal, mining for ore, hauling supplies, tending a field, or forging parts. Day after day is the same... until a bad lunar rain or a dragon attack. Then it's high excitement for an hour or two. With their staid dwarven heritage, most Stenians would prefer twice as much drudgery if they could dispense with the potentially deadly excitement.

Life on the surface is a little less repetitive. There is less physical structure to provide the protection necessary to ensure order: Without a city-mech's hull to protect you, you're never quite sure what may try to raid you — or eat you. Day-to-day life on the surface often involves a never-ending pursuit of food, water, and the basic materials necessary for housing and protection. There's a lot more excitement, in the form of attacks and dangers. The most productive times are those when a mech patrol is near, for then the citizens can be sure that

there will be little excitement.

It's important to remember that the vast majority of Stenian citizens are commoners. In an age of city-mechs, it's easy to think that everyone is an engineer or mech jockey. On the city-mechs themselves, there is a startling degree of talent, since only the most essential personnel were allowed to join. Very few commoners reside on a city-mech; even the least prominent citizens are often experts of some kind. But this is a highly atypical arrangement for any medieval society.

Stepping off the city-mech and traveling around the surface reveals the truth of the matter. The vast majority of the surface-dwellers are commoners, pure and simple. Furthermore, surface societies have a very hard time retaining skilled workers. The appeal of the city-mechs means that anyone who can gets on, does — leaving the stupid, lazy, and unskilled to survive on the surface. This is one of the more subtle problems faced by the Stenian Confederacy, which has so far gone unaddressed: How will the Confederacy eventually rebuild the surface when everyone wants to live on the city-mechs?

## LANGUAGES

Dwarven is the official language of the Confederacy, but with the number of non-dwarf citizens on the rise, Common is becoming the language of everyday business. Officers in the Confederacy now learn an ancient dwarven dialect called Thuzin to issue commands during battle or other sensitive operations. This prevents intelligent enemies from understanding intercepted communications. Those who already speak Dwarven can learn Thuzin without too much difficulty. Those who haven't learned it, but who know Dwarven and have an Int of 11 or more, can make an Int check to understand spoken Thuzin: DC 10 for simple words, DC 15 for ordinary sentences, and DC 20 or higher for complicated commands and explanations.

Only members of the Stenian military are taught Thuzin. This language is strictly guarded, and simply teaching an outsider one or two phrases is technically treason. Officers of the Confederacy can learn the language, as can exceptional enlisted soldiers or laborers. Player characters that belong to the Confederacy are assumed to be among this special group. This language can be purchased for the usual cost, but only if the GM gives permission, as it's supposed to be reasonably secret.

## CALENDAR

The Stenian Confederacy uses the Stenian calendar, as described on page 146 of *DragonMech*.

## RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

Religion is no longer an integral part of life in the Stenian Confederacy. Those who live safely underground may well pray with the same fervor they always have, but those in the city-mechs know who their real saviors are. Law and steam have essentially become the new gods of the Stenians. Distrust of the traditional deities is commonplace among the once-faithful dwarves; no one trusts a god who allows something like the lunar rain to happen.

Nonetheless, some religions are still practiced by citizens of the Confederacy. Because the Stenian Confederacy has no official religion, there are no punishments for practicing in this manner, although your neighbors may think you strange.

## COMMERCE

The Stenian Confederacy uses the usual copper-silver-gold coinage system. Duerok has minted coinage for generations, and this practice continues to this day. The old dwarven coins featured the faces of respected elders long since passed. The Stenians have abandoned this practice in favor of martial icons. Copper pieces are imprinted with a shield, silvers with a dagger, golds with an axe, and platinum with a helm. The old coins of Duerok are still in circulation, but most gold pieces these days feature the Stenian icons, which are minted on well-guarded presses within the city-mechs.

A limited number of strange golden coins were issued by the Gearwrights Guild during the production of *Nedderpik*. These coins feature exotic symbols which translate into no known language. The symbols vary widely between coins of the same value. Some scrupulous money-hoarders have even claimed the symbols on their coins *change* over time, and the strange reputation of these coins makes them hard to spend in some places. They generally aren't accepted in the Duerok, and even some Stenians shy away from them. The Iron-



tooth Clans are happy to take them, however; “gold’s gold,” as they say.

Trade and profit are closely regulated by the Confederacy, both on the city-mechs and in the patrol zones. Strict rules govern the amount of any goods that an individual can purchase, the amount of profit she is allowed to make, the prices she is allowed to charge, the tax she pays, and most importantly, whom she is allowed to do business with. Since no surplus of any one good exists, it is important to the Confederacy to control these goods and ensure that everyone receives a fair and lawful share. The military is considered the first priority, and food and supplies are often requisitioned for military purposes, much to the dismay of the merchant class.

For practical purposes, this domineering approach rarely interferes with everyday life. Adventurers, farmers, and tradesmen can still get the goods they need, at a price that isn’t too inflated. But a character buying large supplies of weaponry may find himself taken aside and questioned. And a sudden swelling of enemy forces in an area may see the Stenian military commandeering the local blacksmithing facilities for use in repairing mechs, leading to a sudden shortage of finished metal goods. And, of course, more than one merchant has tried to hire adventurers to carry his goods piecemeal off a mech, the better to avoid paying taxes.

Thanks to this system, there’s a thriving black market. The Stenian government maintains a constant effort to shut down this market, but the lure of profit can always motivate people to find new ways to skirt authority. Stenian officials often take it personally when they catch a merchant trying to avoid paying his taxes, because it’s those taxes that fund the protection that allows the merchant to ply his trade in the first place. If it weren’t for the Stenian Confederacy, there would probably be no trade.

## SOCIAL STRUCTURES

Life on a mech is governed almost exclusively by the military. Soldiers and laborers are assigned times to work, times to rest, and short periods of free time. Each member of the Confederacy reports to a superior of some kind, whether it’s a master blacksmith or a commanding officer, and these superiors assign daily duties to everyone. These superiors in turn are given their assignments by their superiors, and so on, until the chain reaches the andvar or the plygen. At some point, all civilian hierarchies

intersect with the military, though it’s often through a guild or trade group. Although things are relaxing as the lunar rain finally abates, work shifts are long and leisure time is short.

City-mechs have a strict social structure defined by their vertical construction, as described elsewhere (see **DragonMech**, page 227). Yet even the lowest city-mech laborer is a skilled craftsman of some kind. Otherwise he wouldn’t be living on a city-mech. Regardless of their station on the mech, city-mech residents see themselves as more important than common land-dwellers. A distinguished dwarven clan leader dwelling in a surface stronghold may find himself looked down on by a coal-shoveler from Nedderpik.

## VALUES

The two most dominant values in the Stenian Confederacy are order and security. The Confederacy has brought security to a vast territory that formerly had none, and for this it has earned the loyalty of thousands. It ensures that security through order, order, and more order, and this value has been hammered into its citizens’ minds as the only way to survive.

## Property

Property on board a Stenian city-mech is owned by the military. All personal property is subject to being commandeered by the military as needed. No one owns land permanently on the mech, and even high-level officers can be ousted from their quarters if the mech commander deems it necessary. This is fortunately not common. The city-mechs have a system allowing residents to rent or lease space, and in some cases even “own” land, which grants citizens a feeling of stability and helps cover the mech’s operating costs. Laborers and soldiers alike feel a certain kinship to property that they own. This kinship leads to a greater pride in their work and a desire to keep this property safe from invaders.

The Policy Commander on board the mech governs rules regarding property. The plygen determines which spaces are the most desired and ranks their worth accordingly. Purchasing property — which really entails a long-term lease with a long list of caveats (such as “this property can be reclaimed by the Con-

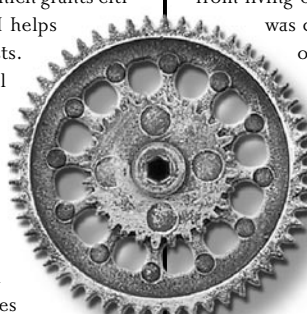
federacy with no compensation at any time”) — involves long waiting lists. Sometimes a well-placed bribe or favor can circumvent these lists. Property on board mechs is often willed to descendants and could possibly remain in a family for generations, as heredity is another factor in lease assignment.

It is possible for a soldier to purchase a smaller mech, using a similar system. The cost for the unit is deducted from his pay, much in the same manner as his living space. It is still considered military property, and therefore subject to the usual orders and regulations, but the commander is the primary owner. Mechs are often personalized by the team on board. The Confederacy realizes the value of allowing soldiers ownership over their commands. Much in the same way that dwarven weapons are honored items that accompany a soldier (and perhaps the soldier’s kin) in battle, a mech is seen as an extension of the warrior that wields it. Ownership of mechs is often willed to descendants or close friends. The Confederacy has been known to bypass this process and reclaim ownership of a particularly powerful mech, although some compensation is usually offered in exchange.

The mech is viewed as a part of the military just as the soldier that operates it. The soldier operates the mech no differently than he would an axe or polearm that he has been issued. Since the officers who command mechs are military personnel, their mechs are also considered under the command of the military. It is the duty of the soldier to ensure that his mech is properly repaired and maintained so that it is constantly ready for battle. This is rarely an issue, since most Stenian mech pilots are more concerned with their mech’s appearance and performance than they are their own.

On rare occasions, mechs are confiscated from living owners, usually because the pilot was derelict in his duties. The matter of confiscating personal mechs is treated with extreme caution. Support mechs are the backbone of the city-mechs, and anything that could dampen the fighting spirit of mech jockeys in battle is avoided.

City-mechs often have scores of mechs that are without private ownership and are thus considered military property. These mechs are usually the basic design of the model and have few modifications. The commanding officer is usually given first bid if he wishes to purchase the mech, but if he decides not to, a lower-level member





of the crew (with the commander's permission) may acquire ownership. Sometimes the crewmember in question must wait until he is promoted to a higher rank before he can legally own the mech. For the most part, though, military mechs remain government property.

If a mech is stolen or destroyed, the owner's honor is greatly tarnished. An officer's mech is his life and losing one in battle is very embarrassing. It can also lead to punishment under the Law for dereliction of duty. Ownership reduces recklessness since most individuals do not get careless with their own property. Most commanders would prefer dying in their mech than surviving its destruction unscathed.

## Marriage and Family

Stenian Law has done little to change the way Dwarves view marriage and family. Dwarven clans have long been a source of pride among the dwarven culture. These clan ties have not been forgotten over the years, even as adherence to them wanes.

Dwarves (and the Stenians in turn) view marriage as a bonding of two families. This is far more important than a simple dwarf marrying another for love. Love is often the last reason that dwarves marry. The family (and one's clan) is seen as far more important than an individual's feelings toward someone else. Marriages are often arranged, sometimes decades before the actual union can take place.

Since the dwarven family line is traditionally traced on the male side, the parents of a girl usually take the first step toward arranging a marriage. Marrying a daughter into a prominent family increases the reputation of one's own clan. For this reason, male dwarves are rarely allowed to choose their own life mates. Daughters may be chosen for them on the day of their birth in order to meet some political need or settle an ancient feud.

Dwarven matrons are trained from the days of their youth to be a support system for their husbands. The family unit is meant to be very strong and more than one dwarven grandmother will assure you that this strength rests solely on the shoulders of the woman.

That said, this structure has cracked somewhat in the last century. Every dwarf, male or female, has an important role to play in rebuilding the surface. The last two dwarven generations have had a more tolerant view of their daughters' ambitions, and the practice of marrying for love doesn't seem quite as ridiculous as it did.

Non-dwarven Stenians have their own customs, of course. The Law is very even-handed

about marriage. Property is owned jointly and responsibility is split equally. Women have the same rights as men in a marriage. Children are legally considered to be members of their fathers' extended families for purposes of inheritance, in keeping with dwarven tradition.

## Organized Crime

Even under the stern Law, thieves can be found. It has long been said, "You cannot create laws without creating criminals." Since the Stenian Confederacy has laws for nearly everything, a number of lawbreakers are hiding in the shadows. Even on the closely guarded halls of the city-mechs, thieves guilds can flourish. Smuggling, forgery of identification, reassignment of living quarters, and general acts of lawlessness are just as prevalent as they would be in any other city.

To some degree, the presence of these organizations is tolerated. Although officers of the Confederacy rarely admit it, organized crime is considered acceptable to the alternative. Since the Stenian philosophy regards law as an absolute, orderly criminal activity is seen as a better option than chaos. The criminal element can never be fully removed. Far better for the criminals to police themselves than allow crimes to go on with no consequence.

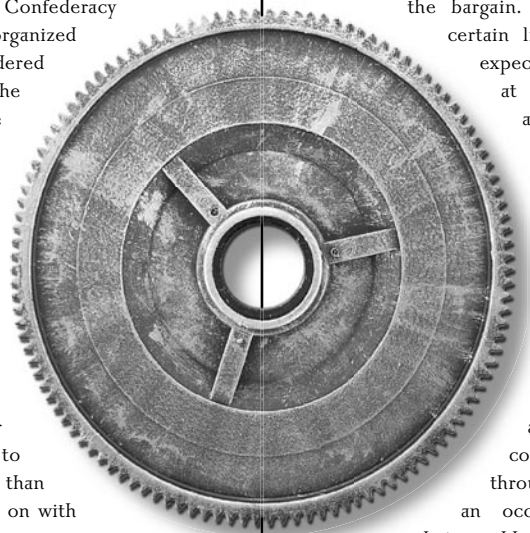
The commander of any city-mech probably has a symbiotic relationship with the major criminal groups that operate on board. Even though such activity is closely watched by the military and condemned by the Council, it is necessary to maintain order on the mech. Thieves guilds ensure that serious crimes are kept to a reasonable minimum. Thefts are common, but they almost never hurt the mech's operation. Smuggling is actually regulated and controlled. By ensuring that security is lax at a tempting target, the mech commander can be confident that muggings or murder will be kept to a minimum. Thieves guilds are better at policing their own criminal activity than the military could ever hope to be.

A certain acceptable minimum of crime is ignored. Wealthy passengers are occasionally relieved of excess possessions, businesses are "protected from accidents" by paying a monthly fee, and random crimes such as muggings or vandalism are kept to the poorer districts. Criminals who operate outside the guild are punished with worse fates than any sentence the Justicars could impose. For the mech commander, these tolerable criminal acts are far more acceptable than anarchy aboard the mech.

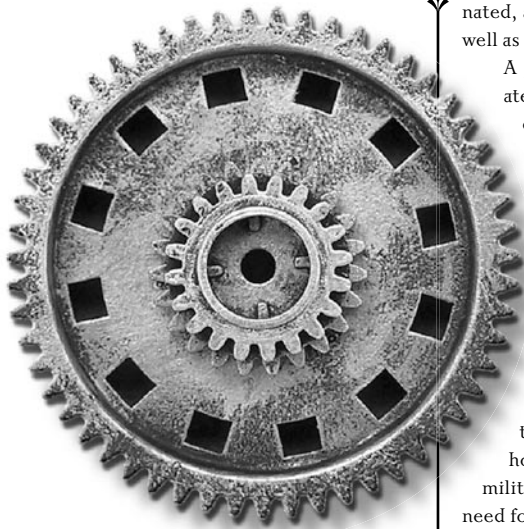
This relationship between the officials on board and organized crime is always clandestine. Even members of the thieves guild itself are often unaware of such arrangements. Usually, a go-between is utilized from the guild to the authorities. At lower levels, guardsmen and supervisors are often "on the take" to relax security on a particular night or to take a knock to the head. These minor occurrences are widely overlooked by the mech commander.

The guild understands its side of the bargain. In exchange for certain liberties, they are expected to keep crime at a tolerable level and prevent anything that could damage the mech. No mech commander would stand for crime sprees, murders, or blatant disregard for Stenian Law. However, a few items of contraband slipping through a check point, an occasional dignitary being robbed, or the imposition of a few unofficial taxes could easily be overlooked. Thieves guilds are often very cooperative for this very reason.

In return, they keep an eye out for intruders and saboteurs. More than one stalker has fooled the authorities and prepared for an assault on the city-mech's inner workings, only to find that the local criminals have been watching him since he set foot on board. Nobody wants to see their home invaded and their family made vulnerable. Once the guild has dealt with the outsider, they make a quiet report to the local authorities, and another nameless stranger's body is pulled out of the gear forest one piece at a time.







## RULES INFORMATION

Characters from the Confederacy are almost exclusively of lawful alignments. Most are lawful neutral or lawful good. A few are neutral or neutral good, but these are in the minority. The Stenians do not tolerate evil and chaos.

The Confederacy accepts all races, yet its foundation is in dwarven tradition. New recruits should feel comfortable around dwarves if they expect to get along in the Confederacy. Furthermore, most of the city-mechs were constructed with dwarves in mind, so taller races have a difficult time navigating much of their area.

Playing a character from the Confederacy is easiest if every character from the party is also Stenian in origin. Because Stenian characters are usually lawful, they prefer to advance the interests of their government. However, it's still easy to play campaigns where the rest of the party is not also from the Stenian Confederacy. The Stenian PCs may spend a lot of time trying to persuade their compatriots as to the virtues of the Confederacy. They might see themselves as proselytizers converting the unfaithful, or even secret agents infiltrating their enemies. If the other characters are neutral, they may have no objections to adventuring in the name of the Confederacy. Even if the other characters are chaotic, there's still some common ground to be found: the Stenian characters can agree with most others that lunar threats are to be elimi-

nated, as are most orcs and other monsters, as well as many scavengers.

A group composed entirely of Confederate characters is easy to play. It is fairly common for small military units to be made up of several individuals that have varying jobs within the Confederacy. Alternately, some PCs could be in the military, while others are civilian support staff. Making the PCs a single Stenian mech crew provides an excellent justification for giving low-level PCs a mech.

A party could also be freelancers working for the military. The adventurers guild of Thurandom is a perfect hook for this sort of adventure. Any military command will occasionally find the need for "black ops" or undercover operations where regular military forces aren't appropriate. Adventurer characters are perfect for such missions.

The process of an outsider becoming a member of the Stenian Confederacy is actually very simple. Acceptance requires little more than accepting the demands of the Stenian soldier who happens to be insisting that you join. The Stenian military is not shy about forcing those who dwell within their safe zones to join their cause. They usually require that the applicant swear allegiance to the Confederacy, but other than that, the process is fairly informal. Subsequent visits by mech patrols may validate whether or not a member is maintaining his allegiance in good faith. Of course, if he's not, appropriate enforcement action may be necessary.

Becoming part of a more formal faction of the Confederacy is a little more difficult. Joining the military generally requires certification of the individual's alignment via spells such as *detect evil/law/chaos* and *discern lies*. A solid record of good behavior or well-known acts is also a prerequisite, although relatively unknown parties may still join by committing acts of great heroism. A new recruit must complete his training satisfactorily before being officially commissioned with a rank. Once in the military, the soldier may be stationed wherever his superiors deem necessary. Most soldiers are attached to one of the city-mechs, but that doesn't necessarily mean they dwell on the city-mech; many low-ranking soldiers spend their entire careers on smaller mechs in surface patrols.

Each division of the military has its own training facilities and standards for success. The Footman Guard trains its soldiers at an underground facility near Duerok. The Mecha-

nized Assault division trains from smaller mechs deployed from one of the city-mechs. During standard patrols, trainees participate in mech drills and combat formations. The Mechanized Defense division trains almost exclusively on the city-mechs. Mech patrols will often set up targets and provide mock attacks for trainees to participate in.

A new recruit is considered a parble once he completes his training. If the individual is already an accomplished warrior or pilot, he must still undergo training to familiarize himself with policies and procedures, but his performance in the combat aspects of training may warrant his initial commissioning at a higher rank than parble. This is rare, but it does happen. These individuals have proven themselves well enough that no one would question their promotion to a higher rank.

Getting on board a city-mech for a short period is fairly easy, but for long-term habitation may prove quite difficult. See page 224 of **DragonMech** for details. Someone who joins the military may get stationed aboard a city-mech.

## CLAN HERITAGE

Clan heritage has a large role in the self-image of any dwarven character. Stenian characters of dwarven origin (which is most of them) will undoubtedly feel a connection to their hereditary clan. This connection is extremely strong for some dwarves, rivaling (or exceeding) their loyalty to the Confederacy, while for others it is simply a fact of their personal history. Regardless, it's worth considering during character creation, as both a source of adventure hooks and a factor in the character's psychological makeup.

The clans described on page 9 are some of the best known, but there are many others. Most clans are well known for a particular economic or professional specialty, or a defining personal characteristic (such as great endurance, bloodlust, or honesty). Individual members of the clan represent such traits to varying degrees. This grants dwarven characters some special abilities.

Each 1st-level Stenian character of dwarven origin chooses a clan heritage. This clan heritage grants certain special abilities, but also some limitations. The following four clans are the most common among Stenian citizens.

**Clan Fralief:** Clan Fralief is known for its traders and freighters. In days gone by, it was the clan most commonly encountered by



outsiders. Clan Fralief dwarves are open and welcoming — at least to other dwarves. They are more friendly toward strangers than any other clan, and the most socially progressive when it comes to issues like accepting half-orcs into polite company. This has aided them over the years in their roles as the “face men” of the dwarven trading economy in Duerok. Clan Fralief dwarves receive an additional +1 bonus to all Appraise checks, as well as a +1 bonus to Diplomacy checks. The bonus to Appraise checks stacks with the normal dwarven bonus.

Clan Fralief has spent more time negotiating than warring. Unlike other dwarves, they are not supremely familiar with the tactics of their enemies. A Fralief dwarf does not gain the dwarven racial bonus to attack rolls against goblinoids, or the dwarven dodge bonus to AC against giants.

**Clan Kudeah:** Kudeah dwarves have a history of gemcutting among their clan. They were traditionally one of the wealthiest clans, and the best artisans when it came to working tiny gems. They wore elaborate, colorful garments with hundreds of gems stitched into the seams. Most such gems were low-valued costume jewelry, but as a Kudeah dwarf aged and accumulated greater wealth, he slowly added more valuable gems to his garments until he was eventually wearing his entire fortune.

After the Kudeah stronghold was destroyed, it was discovered that the fine manual dexterity of the remaining Kudeah dwarves translated into the fine motor skills necessary to pilot a mech. Many Clan Kudeah dwarves are now mech jockeys, and they are distinguished from their brethren by maintaining the practice of embedding gems in their armor. Kudeah dwarves receive a +1 competence bonus to Mech Pilot skill checks.

However, Kudeah dwarves are not as deeply trained in the martial arts as other dwarves. A 1st-level Kudeah dwarf must choose one light weapon and one martial weapon which he has never trained with. Regardless of class-granted proficiencies, the Kudeah dwarf cannot gain proficiency with this weapon unless he uses an Exotic Weapon Proficiency feat.

**Clan Miglud:** The Miglud clan has always been one with the forge. From a young age, every Miglud dwarf grows up learning the trades of the hammer and anvil. Other useful crafts, such as leatherworking, fletching, and carpentry, are also strong traditions among the

Miglud. Miglud characters receive a +1 bonus to one Craft skill check of the player’s choice, which stacks with the normal dwarven bonus if applicable.

**Clan Duerok:** Clan Duerok is the largest and most varied clan of the Duerok stronghold. It represents the traditional values of dwarven society, and its members are closest to what might be considered typical dwarves. They receive no special bonuses or limitations.

### FEATS OF THE STENIAN CONFEDERACY

The Stenian Confederacy has developed a culture of its own. With that culture has come a variety of specialized abilities, represented as unique feats. The following feats are available primarily to characters of Stenian origin. They must be selected using normal feat slots. These feats can be selected by PCs of non-Stenian origins, but only if they can explain how their characters would acquire knowledge generally limited to the Stenian Confederacy.

#### Attack Coordinator (General)

When you lead a coordinated attack in a mech, your assistants are much more productive.

**Prerequisite:** Wis 12+

**Benefit:** When you lead any cooperative skill check or attack attempt in or relating to a mech, those who assist you have their bonuses increased. Whenever allies use the aid another action to assist you, a number of allies equal to your Wisdom modifier have their bonus increased by +2 (usually to a total of +4) if they succeed in their checks to assist you. This applies to cooperative trip attempts, whether you are piloting a mech or on the ground, as

TABLE I-7: STENIAN CONFEDERACY FEATS

FEATS	PREREQUISITE	BENEFIT
Attack Coordinator <sup>1,2</sup>	Wis 12+	+2 to bonus from those assisting in aid another action
Discipline of Law	Lawful	+2 to saves vs. chaotic effects
Disciplined Charge <sup>2</sup>	Lawful	Additional +2 charge bonus
Favored Enemy <sup>2</sup>	–	+2 to damage, skill checks vs. favored enemy
Interrogator	–	+2 to Intimidate and Sense Motive checks
Mech Flanker <sup>1</sup>	Attack Coordinator, mech attack bonus +4	Extra +2 flanking bonus in mech
Mech Slap <sup>1</sup>	Mechwalker	Can take AoO’s against boarders
Mech Solidity <sup>1</sup>	Mechwalker	+4 to resist being tripped in mech
Motivational	Lawful	+1 attack bonus for followers
Synergy Strike <sup>1</sup>	Mech Flanker, Attack Coordinator, mech attack bonus +8	Double threat range against specific target

<sup>1</sup> THESE FEATS MAY BE SELECTED BY A STENIAN MECH JOCKEY AS BONUS FEATS, PROVIDED ALL PREREQUISITES ARE MET.

<sup>2</sup> THESE FEATS MAY BE SELECTED BY A STENIAN FIGHTER AS BONUS FEATS, PROVIDED ALL PREREQUISITES ARE MET.



well as attempts to pry open mech hatches and other relevant skill checks, but only insofar as mechs are concerned.

Note that this feat does *not* grant a bonus to assistants' attempts to make their aid another roll. It only grants a bonus to the benefit you receive if they *do* make their roll.

### Discipline of Law (General)

Your respect for order is so great that your very nature seems infused with lawfulness. You are especially resistant to spells and effects that are from the realm of chaos.

**Prerequisite:** Lawful alignment

**Benefit:** You receive a +2 bonus to saving throws against spells and effects with the chaotic descriptor, and innate spell-like abilities cast by creatures with the chaotic subtype.

### Disciplined Charge (General)

Your unit is able to charge in formation, maximizing the effects of a charge.

**Prerequisite:** Lawful alignment

**Benefit:** When you charge in the same round as one or more allies with the Disciplined Charge feat, you each receive an additional +2 bonus to your attack and damage rolls, provided you each begin your turn within 30 feet of a charging ally with this feat, and end your turn within 30 feet of a charging ally with this feat. The attack bonus stacks with the normal charging bonus and does *not* provide an additional penalty to armor class.

The first character to charge can receive the benefits of this feat if other qualified characters commit to end their charges near him. All characters who begin and end their turns under the right conditions receive the benefits of the feat. If one character ends up out of formation, he may not receive the benefits of the feat, but other characters still do.

### Favored Enemy (General)

You have studied a hated enemy to the point that you are unusually effective in attacking them.

**Benefit:** Choose one favored enemy, per Table 3-14 in the *PHB*. You gain a +2 bonus on Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot, and Survival checks against that creature. Likewise, you receive a +2 bonus to weapon damage rolls against them. This applies to rolls made when piloting a mech.

**Special:** You may take this feat multiple times. Its effects can be stacked against the same enemy, or you may choose a new enemy each time.

### Interrogator (General)

You are exceptionally good at getting information out of enemies.

**Benefit:** You gain a +2 bonus on all Intimidate and Sense Motive checks. This stacks with the Persuasive and Negotiator feats.

### Mech Flanker (Mech)

When you work with another mech pilot, you are able to exploit your enemies' weaknesses even better than usual.

**Prerequisite:** Attack Coordinator, mech attack bonus +4

**Benefit:** When you are piloting a mech and you flank an enemy with an allied mech whose pilot also has the Mech Flanker feat, you each receive an additional +2 flanking bonus (for a total of +4) to melee attacks against the flanked enemy. This bonus applies only to attacks you make, not those made by any crew on your mechs.

### Mech Slap (Mech)

You can quickly slap at attackers who try to board your mech.

**Prerequisite:** Mechwalker

**Benefit:** When piloting a mech of good or perfect maneuverability, you may take an attack of opportunity with the mech against creatures that try to board. This counts toward your personal attacks of opportunity.

Any non-mech creature that attempts to board the mech within your mech's reach, whether through grappling hooks, jumping, climbing, or another method, is eligible for this attack of opportunity. Your mech must have a manner for damaging the creature (unarmed attacks are acceptable).

When making attacks of opportunity in this fashion, you run no chance of damaging your mech (see **DragonMech**, page 90).

**Special:** If you have the Combat Reflexes feat, you can make multiple attacks of opportunity against boarders each round.

### Mech Solidity (Mech)

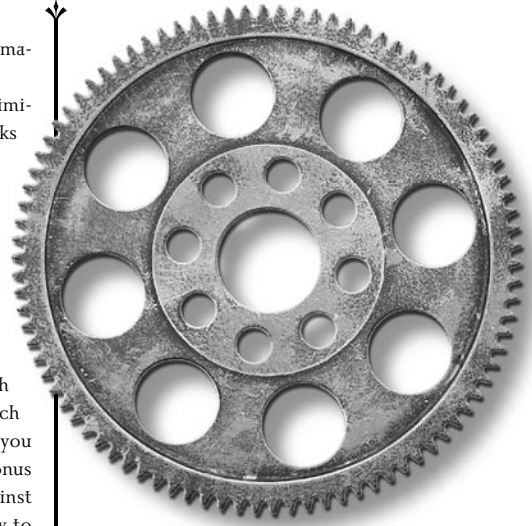
You have a knack for keeping your mech firmly planted, making it hard to trip.

**Prerequisite:** Mechwalker

**Benefit:** Any mech you pilot receives a +4 bonus to checks to resist being tripped. This stacks with other feats and abilities that provide such a bonus.

### Motivational (General)

You are especially motivational when commanding subordinates. Soldiers and subordinates under your command perform exceptionally well.



**Prerequisite:** Lawful alignment

**Benefit:** When leading a group of followers of up to your Charisma modifier in number (minimum of one), the followers receive a +1 bonus to all attack rolls or skill checks, according to how you choose to motivate them.

The followers must meet the following criteria: They must be at least two character levels lower than you; they must be of lawful alignment; they must recognize you as their leader; and they must be within visual or auditory range of you. Familiars and animal companions are automatically considered followers for these purposes, regardless of alignment.

For example, if your Charisma score were 14, you could motivate up to two followers. As long as the followers met the above criteria, they would receive a +1 bonus to attack rolls or skill checks.

If you take the Leadership feat, all cohorts are considered followers, regardless of alignment or level.

### Synergy Strike (General)

When your mech attacks an enemy in concert with a close ally, you can do tremendous damage.

**Prerequisite:** Mech Flanker, Attack Coordinator, mech attack bonus +8

**Benefit:** If an allied mech whose pilot has the Synergy Strike feat has made any attack earlier this round against a target you attack, your critical threat range is doubled for all attacks against that target. This only applies to attacks you make, not those made by your crew. Use the standard d20 doubling system (e.g., x2 + x2 = x3). This feat effectively acts as Improved Critical, except it stacks with other threat-range-enhancing abilities currently affecting

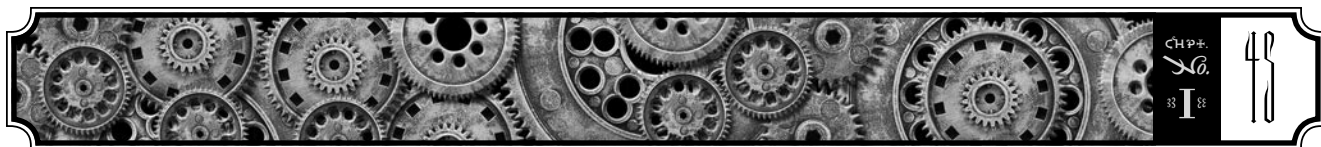


TABLE I-8: DRAGONMECH PILOT

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK	MECH ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+0	+1	+0	+2	+0	Mech evasion
2	+1	+2	+0	+3	+0	Nimble pilot
3	+2	+3	+1	+3	+1	Push the envelope
4	+3	+4	+1	+4	+1	Bonus feat
5	+3	+5	+1	+4	+1	Favored enemy techniques
6	+4	+6	+2	+5	+2	Bonus feat
7	+5	+7	+2	+5	+2	Improved mech evasion
8	+6	+8	+2	+6	+2	Bonus feat
9	+6	+9	+3	+6	+3	–
10	+7	+10	+3	+7	+3	Supreme coordination

you, but only for the purposes of attacks this round against a single target already attacked by a specific ally.

For example, you and an ally both attack with a Huge steam cannon. You both have the Improved Critical feat, so your threat range is 19-20. If your ally attacks a lunar dragon this round, his threat range is 19-20. If you subsequently attack as well, your threat range is doubled to 17-20, but only against that lunar dragon.

No threat range can be increased by more than double with this feat. If four allies with Synergy Strike follow up on your initial attack, the second through fourth attacks are still only at a doubled threat range, not tripled or further increased.

## DRAGONMECH PILOT (NEW PRESTIGE CLASS)

The DragonMech unit is the special branch of the Stenian military dedicated to battling lunar dragons. The DragonMech pilots are the best in the Stenian Confederacy, skilled in special cooperative tactics that allow them to work together against foes much larger than themselves.

DragonMech pilots are the most revered heroes of the Stenian Confederacy. Nearly every mech jockey aspires to be one someday, but inclusion in their ranks is reserved for only the best. DragonMech pilots must be fearless, quick, nimble, intelligent, cooperative, and willing to break the rules while still maintaining absolute loyalty to the Confederacy.

This is not a profession for the weak of heart. Facing lunar dragons on a fairly regular basis is frightening, to say the least. The DragonMechs frequently suffer severe damage to their mech fleet, as well as losses in their piloting pool. Although there are few DragonMech slots available, openings appears more often than

you might expect. Casualties are high.

Even so, the DragonMech ranks are extremely selective. Even the best of pilots is forced to wait months or years just to try out for a slot. When one DragonMech pilot retires (or dies), a new one is selected only after being approved by all of the former pilot's crewmates. Cooperative tactics are essential to the DragonMech combat style, so it is absolutely imperative that a new recruit get along with his new crew. Sometimes slots remain unfilled for long periods until the right candidate is found. Some pilots may find themselves skilled enough to join the ranks, but not have the right personality; it's not unheard of for a strong pilot to be rejected for one opening but accepted for a subsequent one with a different crew.

Currently there are ten active DragonMech mechs throughout the Confederacy, with a total crew of approximately 80.

**Hit Die:** d6

### REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a DragonMech pilot, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria:

**Abilities:** Dexterity 18+, Wisdom 18+

**Skills:** Mech Pilot 17 ranks

**Feats:** Attack Coordinator, Mech Fu

**Mech Attack Bonus:** +10

**Favored Enemy:** The DragonMech pilot must choose lunar creatures as a favored enemy (especially lunar dragons!). This can be either through the class abilities granted by the ranger and clockwork ranger classes, or through the new feat Favored Enemy.

**Stenian Confederacy:** The character must be a member of the Stenian Confederacy with a sworn and undoubted loyalty.

**Irontooth Training:** An unofficial requirement among the DragonMech pilots is that at some point in the character's career, he must have trained under the Irontooth Clans and learned mech fu. The Stenian Confederacy officially discourages such practices, but rec-

ognizes the substantial benefits reaped from learning Irontooth techniques. Typically a promising Stenian pilot will take a personal leave of absence as an excuse to pursue such training. Some DragonMech pilots are accepted on the condition that they find an Irontooth Clan willing to train them. Pilots without this training are essentially defenseless against lunar dragon attacks and considered a liability to the rest of the DragonMech squad. Finding and training with an Irontooth Clan should be role played.

**Special:** When an opening in a DragonMech unit is available, the character must first make three DC 15 Diplomacy checks. This represents the ability to get along with the character's prospective teammates. If all checks are passed, the character must then pass a number of skill tests designed by the DragonMech unit. These tests vary by location and available targets, but are always extremely difficult. The exact details are up to the DM. Sometimes failure is still considered a passing grade, particularly if the PC agrees to attempt a task that appears impossible (and may in fact be impossible).

### CLASS SKILLS

DragonMech pilot class skills and the key abilities for each are Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (mechcraft) (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (mechs) (Int), Mech Pilot (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), and Spot (Wis).

**Skill Points at Each Additional Level:** 6 + Int modifier.

### CLASS FEATURES

**Weapon and Armor Proficiencies:** A DragonMech pilot gains no additional weapon or armor proficiencies.

**Mech Evasion (Ex):** The DragonMech pilot is skilled at ducking for cover when an area effect threatens to damage his mech. If he makes his Reflex saving throw against an attack that normally deals half damage on a successful save (such as dragon breath or fireball), the mech instead takes no damage. This applies only when he pilots a mech.

**Nimble Pilot (Ex):** The DragonMech pilot learns the benefits of never being pinned down. Starting at 2nd level, the DragonMech pilot is able to add his ranks in Escape Artist to grapple checks when piloting a mech. He does not other normal modifiers to the Escape Artist skill (such as Dex modifier or feats like Agile). Unlike a normal use of the Escape Artist skill, this does not replace the grapple check, but augments it. This applies to grappling weapons such as changlers and lobster claws as well as

grapple attempts by monster such as lunar dragons.

**Push the Envelope (Ex):** At 3rd level, the DragonMech pilot receives the benefits of the mech jockey's *push the envelope* ability, with the benefits of extreme redlining and no overheating. He may use this ability twice per day. If he already has this ability, its uses per day are increased by two.

**Bonus Mech Feat:** At each indicated level, the DragonMech pilot may choose a free bonus feat, selected from the usual list of mech jockey bonus feats. This includes new feats available as bonus feats, as indicated on Table 1-7. If the DragonMech pilot does not have the feats Attack Coordinator, Mech Flanker, and Synergy Strike, he must choose these before any other feats.

**Favored Enemy Techniques (Ex):** At 5th level, the DragonMech pilot develops new techniques for fighting favored enemies. First, he receives the Favored Enemy feat for free, but it must be applied toward lunar creatures. Second, he now gains the following benefits when attacking *any* favored enemy in his mech:

**Mech Fu:** The DragonMech pilot may use mech fu against his favored enemy. Normally, the Mech Fu feat can only be used to counter mech strikes, but the DragonMech pilot can use it to counter *any* melee attack from any of his favored enemies. Any additional feats along the Mech Fu feat tree (see page 125) can also be used against favored enemies.

**Relentless Attack:** When making a full attack action against a favored enemy while piloting a mech, the DragonMech pilot gains one extra attack at his lowest mech attack bonus.

**Defining Favored Enemies:** Most DragonMech pilots have only a single favored enemy: lunar creatures, especially lunar dragons. But some have more than one, and sometimes these enemies can pilot mechs. An enemy mech counts as being one of the DragonMech pilot's favored enemies only if it is piloted by his favored enemy, the majority of its crew is also the favored enemy, and it uses tactics common to the favored enemy. The spirit of the favored enemy ability is that the character can study his enemy and use that knowledge against them, so the enemy mech must behave in a manner typical for its race for such knowledge to be useful.

**Improved Mech Evasion (Ex):** At 7th level, the DragonMech pilot improves her mech's ability to avoid area of effect attacks. This ability works like mech evasion, with the exception that the mech takes half damage on a failed save, and no damage on a successful save.

**Supreme Coordination (Ex):** At 10th level,

the DragonMech pilot's constant work with his team has reached its highest potential. The DragonMech pilot must select up to seven allies with whom he has worked closely over the past few years to be his teammates. These can include PCs and NPCs, but dead teammates can only be replaced if the character works closely with the replacement for a period of two years. When working with these specific teammates, the character gains the following benefits during mech combat:

- Teammates using the aid another action do not count toward the character's total for purposes of the Attack Coordinator feat.
- The character receives a +2 attack bonus against all targets previously attacked by a teammate during this round. Even if multiple teammates attack an enemy previously in the round, this bonus cannot be greater than +2.
- If the character shares a favored enemy with any of his teammates, he receives an *additional* +2 bonus to damage against that favored enemy.

The teammates may also receive such benefits, but only if they also have the supreme coordination ability.

## STENIAN EQUIPMENT

Far more so than any other society, the Stenian Confederacy has pursued methods of mass production. The Legion is not far behind, but it's still stymied by the traditional nomadic legacy of its people. The dwarves, on the other hand, come from a long tradition of stolid, relentless labor, and their lawful nature allows an easy tradition toward mass production.

Stenian engineers have already discovered several methods of speeding up industrial production, including early versions of the assembly line, and their troops are starting to wield mass-produced weaponry and armor.

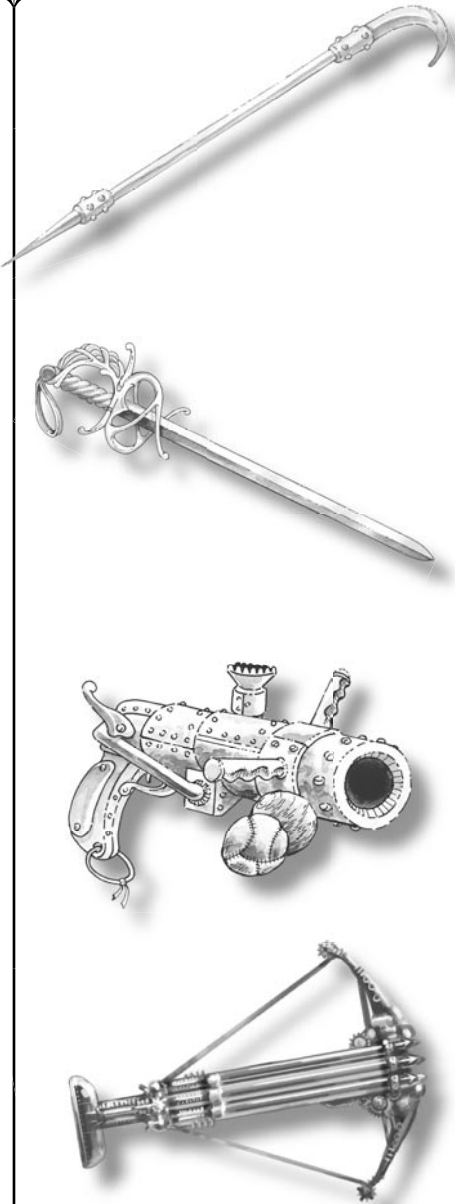


TABLE 1-9: WEAPONS OF THE STENIAN CONFEDERACY – EXOTIC

WEAPON	COST	DMG (M)	CRITICAL	RANGE	WEIGHT	TYPE
One-Handed Melee Weapons						
Officer's sword	450gp	1d8	18-20/x2	–	3 lbs.	Slashing
Two-Handed Melee Weapons						
Foot hook	25 gp	1d8	x2	–	8 lbs.	Piercing
Ranged Weapons						
Thumper	200 gp	1d8*	x3	40 ft.*	8 lbs.	Bludgeoning
Triple-fire crossbow	500 gp	1d10*	19-20/x2	50 ft.*	15 lbs.	Piercing

\*SEE DESCRIPTION.





TABLE I-10: ARMOR OF THE STENIAN CONFEDERACY

ARMOR	COST	ARMOR BONUS	MAX DEX BONUS	ARMOR CHECK PENALTY	ARCANE SPELL FAILURE	SPEED (30 FT.)	(20 FT.)	WEIGHT
Light Armor								
Officer's Armor	250 gp	+4	+5	-2	20%	30 ft.	20 ft.	18 lbs.
Medium Armor								
Footman's Armor	70 gp	+4	+3	-3	20%	20 ft.	15 ft.	25 lbs.
Heavy Armor								
Dragon Cage	1,000 gp	+7	+0	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*	300 lbs.*

\*SEE DESCRIPTION.

The Gearwrights Guild isn't excited about this abandonment of their ideals of craftsmanship, but Stenian authorities aren't backing away from the chance to arm their soldiers cheaply and quickly. Furthermore, the Stenian emphasis on order is enhanced by similar appearances for all soldiers, and assembly lines help ensure this. Nearly identical weapons are churned out by the thousands to equip the growing number of soldiers.

Stenian equipment is easily identified by its sharp designs and powerful insignias. Use of Stenian military equipment by those outside of the Confederacy is considered an executable offense. Soldiers of the Confederacy are horribly offended to see the remnants of their comrades' armor or weapons in the hands of someone else.

## Weapon Descriptions

**Proficiencies Note:** Dwarven characters from the Stenian Confederacy automatically consider all of the following weapons to be martial weapons rather than exotic weapons as part of the dwarves' weapon familiarity ability. Coglayers are automatically familiar with the thumper and triple-fire crossbow.

**Foot Hook:** The foot hook is a polearm favored by the Stenian Footman Guard. Nearly every soldier carries one. Stenian soldiers are taught coordinated techniques with the weapons and favor them for use in melee.

The weapon consists of a short spear shaft (about 4 feet long) with a blunt hook and a sharpened point. One soldier uses the hook to trip an opponent, while a second soldier delivers a blow when the target hits the ground. The soldier can also use the hook to disarm an opponent, or work the hook into the opponent's armor and effectively grapple him with it.

When using a foot hook, you receive a +2 bonus on attack rolls made to disarm or trip an opponent (including the roll to avoid being disarmed or tripped). A foot hook can be used to grapple a target wearing medium or heavy armor, but when it's used in this manner, the

target does not enter the attacker's space and can still take normal actions. He is restricted only in his movement; he cannot move beyond the reach of the attacker unless he succeeds in a grapple check.

**Officer's Sword:** Officers of the Footman Guard favor a practical light sword. Officer's swords are usually highly decorated weapons that appear to have more of a cosmetic appeal than a functional one. In fact, they are some of the most advanced swords known to the Stenian blacksmiths, and are extremely difficult to manufacture. The smithing technique for these weapons utilizes techniques normally found only in the eastern realms. The blade is very light, yet exceptionally strong.

Officer swords are always considered masterwork, and are usually customized (and sometimes magical). They are often awarded to the officer when he attains a prestigious rank (such as odhum or marek).

Officer's swords are not commonly available for sale on the open market, as they are individually crafted to reward specific officers. Purchasing one on the black market is possible but can have negative repercussions; because each sword is unique, those who witness the character using his weapon may recognize its original owner and alert his relatives or fellow officers to the location of the weapon.

**Thumper:** Designed to subdue opponents for questioning, the thumper is a low-powered steam gun that packs a thunderous charge. Named for its resounding "thump" when fired, the thumper launches a wooden or leather ball to a maximum range of 40 feet. The weapon inflicts nonlethal damage and can even take an opponent off his feet.

A successful strike from a thumper requires the opponent to make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + damage taken). If the save is failed, the opponent falls to the ground and is considered prone. Furthermore, he must make a second Fortitude save at the same DC, or be stunned for 1d4 rounds.

The thumper's rate of fire is extremely slow; like a steam gun, it can only be fired once every other round. Thumpers are usually carried by

Justicars.

**Triple-Fire Crossbow:** This deadly design was conceived to aid the Footman Guard with crowd control. The weapon fires three crossbow bolts at a time into a cone-shaped arc 50 feet long and 25 feet wide at the end. The first three targets in this area are automatically targeted. The bolts are severely underspined to ensure they retain most of their force for the short-range attack, but this makes them lose all combat effectiveness after a range of 50 feet.

A separate attack roll is made for each bolt for each of the first three eligible targets in range. No creature is targeted by more than one bolt. The weapon always attacks with a base attack bonus of +4 and an effective Dexterity of 10. The attacker's BAB and Dexterity do not modify the attack, nor do feats such as Point Blank Shot or Precise Shot.

Because the weapon is so inaccurate and clumsy, it is never fired into a group that contains Stenian soldiers. Reloading a triple-fire crossbow is a full-round action. Footmen equipped with the weapons coordinate their fire into the group to maximize the number of casualties and disperse the crowd.

There are rumors that Stenian coglayers are working on developing quadruple-fire crossbows, as well as more advanced models with repeating clips or fully automatic firing mechanisms.

## Armor Descriptions

**Officer's Armor:** The Stenians pride themselves on well-kept professional appearances. Officers of the rank of odhum will often wear officer's armor in preference to all other types. Officer's armor is designed to be worn for long periods of time in cramped and uncomfortable surroundings. Its design is similar to that of pilot's armor, but is clearly designed for a sharper appearance. Rank insignias and medals are crafted directly into the breastplate and shoulders. It does not offer a great deal of protection, but is very comfortable and suitable for wear inside a mech.

Officer's armor consists of a light metal

plates molded over a padded jacket. Similar metal plates are worn over leather leggings. Both the jacket and the pants can be easily removed and quickly donned (requires a full round action). Officer's armor must be designed specifically for the officer that wears it.

**Footman's Armor:** Ground soldiers need lightweight, dependable protection that doesn't hinder their ability to get in and out of mechs. Footman's armor fits the bill. It's fairly uncomfortable when worn on a mech, but isn't as bad as other similarly protective armors due to its special construction.

Footman's armor consists of a central breastplate with interlocking shoulder guards and half-sleeves. A final plate hangs down between the soldier's legs in both the front and rear. The legs are completed with a matching pair of leather leggings. Footman's armor was designed with mass production in mind so it is very common for armor to be passed down to subordinates when the guard who wears it is promoted. This is considered a great honor among the Footman Guard.

**Dragon Cage:** Mech pilots have very little protection in the cockpit once the enemy has breached the hull. Nowhere is this more evident than among the elite pilots of the DragonMech units. Lunar dragons have claimed many of their number by easily tearing the pilot to shreds once they managed to locate the cockpit.

The dragon cage was designed to protect these pilots. The dragon cage, or DragonMech armor as it's sometimes called, is actually molded over the pilot as he sits in his pilot's seat. A cage with metal plates at vulnerable locations lowers over the pilot and protects his vital areas. DragonMech pilots customize the armor to fit over their cockpit while allowing them to pilot the mech freely. As a result, a dragon cage is not really armor so much as protective coverings that are in place while piloting the mech. They are fused to the chassis of the cockpit so DragonMech armor cannot be worn outside of the mech, nor can the pilot leave his chair while the dragon cage is in place. The dragon cage can be released at any time as a free action, but while still in place DragonMech armor has provided precious seconds to downed pilots. The armor may not hold up for long, but usually for enough time for the pilot's crewmates to distract or kill the dragon before the pilot is lost. Some DragonMech pilots disdain its use and prefer to rely more on their skill than a piece of metal, which they claim is no real protection once the dragon has breached the hull.

A dragon cage fits snugly over the mech

pilot. As such, it is treated as part of his personal equipment and does not count toward the mech's PU. A dragon cage can be fitted to any pilot station, but generally cannot be added to positions that require mobility, which includes gunner's stations for any weapon that must be reloaded, as well as most passenger stations.

## SECRECS

### FORMATION OF THE STENIAN CONFEDERACY

The Stenian Confederacy came into existence with the construction of Durgan-lok, the first city-mech. A dwarven visionary named Parilus had emerged from the underdeep with plans to a city-mech and ancient tales of a vanished Gearwrights Guild. Parilus' knowledge and motivation led to the construction of the first mech, and subsequently the creation of the first city-mech, as is well known (see page 170 of **DragonMech**). What is not well known is the political maneuvering that went on behind the scenes, by which Durgan-lok was "freed" from Duerok and Nedderpik was built from scratch as the first Stenian mech.

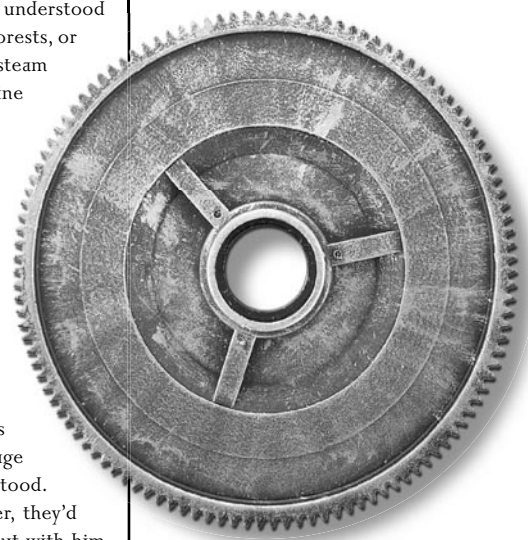
When Parilus departed, Durgan-lok was complete, but the only living dwarves with the knowledge to keep it running were Parilus' three junior gearwrights. Thousands of dwarves had participated in the construction of the city-mech, and many knew enough to repair their particular boiler, or maintain the pulley system they helped devise. But none fully understood the intricate workings of the gear forests, or comprehended the vast tunnels of steam vents that kept the massive machine operational.

Because of their rarified knowledge, the three junior gearwrights were vaulted into positions of power. Each of the three was at heart an engineer who wanted nothing more than to practice his craft, and none was particularly interested in acting as an administrator. But suddenly each of the three was forced into exactly that role, as they tended to all aspects of the huge city-mech which only they understood. When Parilus had acted as a buffer, they'd had time to practice their craft; but with him gone, they were now the buffers between day-

to-day city-mech life and the practicalities of steam engineering.

It was obvious to every clan in Duerok that Durgan-lok was a power greater than anything they possessed. When Parilus departed, it became clear that the three remaining junior gearwrights were the key to that power. Only they had the knowledge to run Durgan-lok. More importantly, only they had the knowledge to build another such city-mech — which many clan leaders perceived as a weapon. And without even trying, the gearwrights were attracting followers from far and wide, who viewed their enigmatic knowledge of steam technology as a great secret waiting to be learned. The three junior gearwrights were effectively building a new branch of the Gearwrights Guild on the surface world.

Soon the three junior gearwrights found themselves not only acting as administrators (a role they never wanted), but being courted by all the major powers of Duerok (a role they were never trained for). With each passing week, clan elders offered ever-greater prizes for the loyalties and knowledge of the gearwrights. Each wanted the power for their own clan. Even more disturbingly, emissaries from still other powers began to make proffers. Drow matriarchs, ambitious wizards, renegade elven mages, and even a well-disguised orc managed to gain an audience, whether legitimately or through subterfuge. In one case, a human wizard literally stepped out of midair to confront the three gearwrights with a proposal. It's rumored that Shar Thizdic himself journeyed to speak with the gearwrights; there is an unexplained gap in his time spent with





the nomads of the endless plains, and although there is no direct evidence of his visit, there is no evidence against it, either.

At the same time all this was happening, voices of dissent were rising among the traditional leadership of Clan Duerok and the other major clans. It was clear that something had gone terribly wrong in Duerok's attempts to defend itself. At the time of Durgan-lok's construction, more than 250,000 dwarves had already died in battle or attrition, and hundreds more were still dying by the day. The wave of refugees had slowed but not stopped, and Durgan-lok was at that point still spending part of its time defending surface entry points to Duerok.

While the elders couldn't see the forest for the trees, the younger generation of dwarven leaders could easily point to the weaknesses in Duerok's defenses. Any simple tactical map revealed the problem: Obvious holes were left in the outer perimeter around clans that had few allies, while clans with strong ties to other clans ended up with a surplus of defenders. Clan Kudeah was a perfect example of the situation. It was a small clan with great commercial wealth but few warrior allies. Kudeah's stronghold was rapidly overwhelmed and most of the clan slaughtered by invaders and refugees, who then used that opening to advance further into Duerok territory. If another clan — like Duerok itself — had rerouted its warriors to defend Kudeah, the refugees would never have found entry through the borders of Duerok. But reinforcements had gone where they were dictated by clan loyalties, not tactical decisions. As a result, dwarves died — by the thousands.

A central command was needed. The younger warriors agreed on this. Even within the traditionally stoic, orderly society of the dwarves, the younger warriors were speaking out — after all, this was a war zone where soldiers were dying every day. For the first time in recent memory, there was open dissent between generations, open disagreement between the elders and their progeny. But no one had a workable solution.

Now return to the three junior gearwrights. Courtied by every dwarven clan — and in some cases courtied by separate generations of rulership within the same clan, as the elder and younger warriors splintered into separate groups — they were bewildered. These were engineers, not politicians; they were tinkers, not governors. No clan or other faction seemed to making any progress in gaining their loyalty.

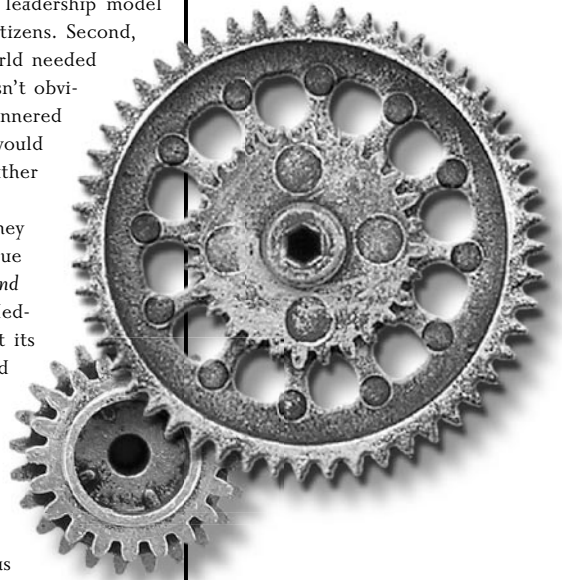
The junior gearwrights were in agreement

on a few things. First, it was obvious (even to them) that the Duerok leadership model had failed to protect its citizens. Second, it was obvious that the world needed more city-mechs. What wasn't obvious to these meek, mild-mannered technicians was how they would accomplish a solution to either problem.

...Until, one day, they announced out of the blue that they would build a *second* city-mech, to be called Nedderpik, which would accept its builders as its citizens, and would be controlled by the Gearwrights Guild. Nedderpik would accept as equals the rich and poor, the elders and the youth, and the strong and weak, provided they contributed as equals to its construction. Nedderpik would be the first of a new generation of city-mechs they dubbed the Stenian Confederacy, and would accept as allies only those who proclaimed loyalty to order and law above all else. Its mission was to bring a new dawn to the world, where order would preserve strength, and so on, and so forth, and many idealistic proclamations followed.

The gathering at which this was announced was attended by representatives of every major clan in Duerok, as well as many minor ones and some *polymorphed* interlopers as well, all of whom had tried to sway the gearwrights. Three questions entered their heads: First, what had brought the gearwrights to a decision? Second, why did the gearwrights turn down *my* offer? And third, where do they propose to get the millions of gold pieces necessary to build this city-mech?

That last question, where the money came from, is one of the most enduring mysteries of the Stenian Confederacy. The first question, what had brought the gearwrights to a decision, eventually became clear — at least, it seemed so — as the gearwrights explained how the Gearwrights Guild would own and run the mech, which would exist in an alliance with other Stenian mechs. It seemed obvious that they'd sidestepped the question of loyalty by reverting to the one institution they trusted most, their own guild. But where did the money come from? As far as anyone knew, contact was minimal at best between the gearwrights of the Master Repository, with



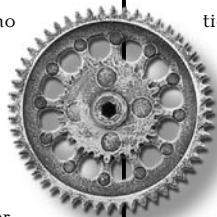
whatever resources they might have, and the modern gearwrights here in Duerok.

And, strangest of all, why did Durgan-lok, with its firm ties to the traditional clans of Duerok, immediately announce that it would become part of this Stenian Confederacy?

Soon a Stenian Council was formed. The junior gearwrights ceded authority to the council, which began organizing the construction of Nedderpik. The gearwrights could now focus on building a mech rather than dealing with administrators. One of them became the chief engineer responsible for building Nedderpik, while the other two began drawing up plans for future city-mechs.

The Gearwrights Guild grew in influence as the mech was constructed, and the pleas and proffers of the old clans fell on deaf ears. Rejected, the clan elders began disowning dwarves who chose to join this heretical crusade, but many of their younger warriors, who already held the elders in contempt for their failed defense of Duerok, declared they'd prefer to be disowned. The first public rifts between the Stenian Confederacy and Duerok appeared, which have continued to this day.

Some of those who worked with the inaugural members of the Stenian Council were surprised to hear a name known to students of the arcane: Fasil. The inclusion of a human on the Stenian Council was also rather odd, especially given that the rest of the council was dwarven. But this human called Fasil disavowed knowledge of all things arcane, and the gearwrights answered that he was included because of his great abilities as an administrator.





Soon questions about Fasil were deflected to one of his peers on the Council, a Clan Miglud engineer named Stenius, who had been instrumental in building Durgan-lok and had since been appointed one of its governors. Those who met with Stenius in quiet areas could swear that he was accompanied by a soft tick-tock noise at all times, and his skin had begun to take on a silver sheen. Stenius' influence over the affairs of Durgan-lok was well known, but it was considered strange how much time he spent with the chief engineer of Nedderpik, working on the construction of a new city-mech. He seemed almost obsessed with the project.

When Nedderpik was complete, many laborers wondered at the gold coins they were given in payment, which bore inscriptions so strange they seemed extraplanar in origin. The clan leaders weren't satisfied; they still viewed the whole affair as a repudiation of traditional dwarven values. To this day, the distinctive gold coins offered by the Gearwrights Guild in payment for building Nedderpik are still not accepted as legitimate currency in the halls of Duerok.

As the reality of Nedderpik became more established, the questions about Fasil and Stenius faded into the background. Eventually, they were seen as nothing more than frail inquiries by jealous traditionalists. As Nedderpik began functioning, so did the Stenian Confederacy.

## THE STEINGARD

Of the implements at the Confederacy's command, none is more feared than the Steingard: the secret police of the Confederacy. Despite all the good that the Stenian Confederacy has done for the surface dwellers, it is not without bitter enemies. Resistance groups are many, lunar cults are constantly forming, and within the normal spectrum of criminal activity there are some forces that demand special attention. To protect the sovereignty of the Confederacy, the Steingard was established. It is their job to eradicate internal threats to the Confederacy, including societies that dwell within the safe zones but refuse to accept the Confederacy's generous offer of safety.

The Steingard consists of elite soldiers from all three divisions of the military. Its main criteria for admission are exceptional ability and fanatical devotion to the Confederacy. A character of any class, whether fighter, warrior, cleric, mech jockey, or coglayer, can

find a place in the Steingard provided he is of sufficiently high level, he's fanatically loyal, and his record is unblemished. The Steingard is organized into independent, self-sufficient units, almost like small adventuring parties, and each unit is largely independent of the others. Higher-level "coordinating factors" are groups of officers responsible for directing units below them, but their direction is usually vague and open-ended.

It's this vague and open-ended direction that makes the Steingard so widely feared. Any perceived threat to the Confederacy is subject to their investigation. They have been known to execute raids on settlements simply to *determine* if a threat exists. If there is no threat, the raid was still justified (in their minds) in order to confirm that there was no threat.

The Steingard conducts interrogations of suspicious individuals with very little evidence, and has been known to arrest or even execute those who openly speak out against the Confederacy. Their existence and reputation are widely known. Their reach extends throughout the safe zones, and they are rumored to have hundreds of operatives working deeply under cover wherever the Stenian Confederacy roams. In truth, the entire Steingard is fewer than 300 individuals, but they are of such high level that they are able to accomplish a lot. And word of their "accomplishments" spreads far and wide.

Although the Steingard commands no mechs itself, its presence is felt in nearly every operation of the Stenian Confederacy. Officers of the Steingard have authority even over officers that outrank them. If they have sufficient cause, they can even commandeer an officer's command, if they believe doing so will prevent harm to the Confederacy. They operate above the rule of the military, and, in theory, are subservient only to the Justicars — but there are a lot more Steingard than there are Justicars. Their sole duty is to identify and remove threats to the Confederacy regardless of the cost or consequences.

Members of the Steingard are chosen from the military by the Stenian Council. They usually approach soldiers or officers who display an undying support for the Confederacy — individuals whose loyalty rises above all else, including family, friends, and clan. Soldiers who make extreme sacrifices for the Confederacy are recognized and may be considered for the Steingard when they become sufficiently powerful.

Despite its small numbers, the Steingard has a vast array of informants and secret agents who reports to its members on a regular basis. The

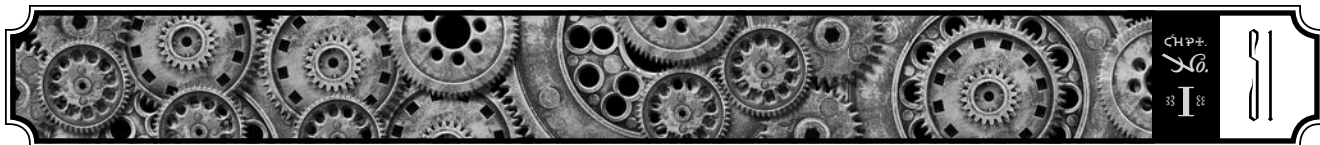
Steingard pays well for good information, and punishes severely those who attempt to thwart its efforts. The Steingard is not above torture to extract information, nor is it hesitant to simply destroy areas it believes to be hideouts for Stenian enemies. The Steingard is the dark shadow of the Confederacy's military protection, and its members consider themselves above the very society they are guarding.

Unfortunately for that society, the Steingard's application of security is extreme. Steingard officers are paranoid about enemies of the Confederacy and tend to find them wherever they look. This is not to say that enemies of the Confederacy are so prevalent, but instead that the Steingard often make enemies out of those that merely grumble about strict laws. Many an outspoken laborer has been dragged from his home at night and beaten until he confesses simply because he was overheard complaining vehemently about being overworked.

The Steingard are greatly feared and mistrusted. Individuals that normally have no problem with the martial law imposed by Stenian law still shudder when a Steingard patrol enters town. Too many companions have disappeared in the night never to be heard from again simply for making their opinions about the city-mechs known. However, the Steingard are seen as a necessary evil by most members of the Confederacy, and although their techniques may be extreme, many a Stenian's life has been saved by their efforts.

The biggest difference between the Steingard and the Justicars is the source of their loyalty. The Justicar are fundamentally loyal to the Law, which is an abstract ideal representing the best possible situation for dwarven civilization (at least in their view). They're a little harsh and overly severe about their application of the Law, to be sure, but essentially their primary loyalty is to an ideal.

The Steingard, on the other hand, are more about fear than ideals. Their primary loyalty is to a political institution, the Stenian Confederacy, and they have been known to overstep the boundaries of the Law in order to preserve their charge. They are fundamentally afraid of the endless enemies of the Confederacy, and thus are more concerned about rooting out enemies than perpetuating an ideal.



## Gryzin Argyle, Steingard Vardoc

“There are many enemies of the Steingard Confederacy. Wherever they may lie, I will find them. If I end my days tracking them to the bowels of the ninety-nine hells, I will never stop.”

Gryzin Argyle is a model officer of the Steingard. His uniform is polished to a shine. His hair is perfectly cut and angled in traditional dwarven military cut. His beard is braided and short. His eyes gleam with the intensity of battle. If there are enemies to find, you can bet that Gryzin is on their tail.

Gryzin was born to one of the most important families that emigrated to Durgan-lok. His father and mother were prominent members of the Stenian Confederacy and instilled within him a great sense of lawfulness since the day of his birth. His father Rysto was a civilian marek who served as a repair tech on the great steam engines of Durgan-lok. There was no mechanical problem that he could not solve. As a boy, Gryzin was apprenticed to his father as a steam-tech.

When he was not quite full-grown, a great tragedy struck. A steam valve burst and sent roiling geysers of scalding steam into the crew areas. Dozens were burned, and several workers were even killed. Rysto Argyle was one of the dead. When it was learned that the valve burst was the work of a saboteur, Gryzin took it upon himself to find the perpetrator. Gryzin applied to the Stenian military and demanded that he be allowed to find his fathers' murderer. Unfortunately, Gryzin lacked the military experience and was considered far more useful as the steam-tech he already was.

Furious at their refusal, Gryzin rallied sev-

eral other steam-engine workers and began his own investigation of the Durgan-lok slums. His group unearthed several “criminal elements” hidden among the residents of Durgan-lok itself. Gryzin couldn't prove they were responsible for his father's death, but he eradicated them nonetheless. He was caught red-handed (literally) by Stenian soldiers as his axe fell through the chest of the last of the “criminal elements.”

Gryzin's case was considered a special one, for he had committed his crime in the name of the Confederacy and the Law, and it was clear from a search of the area that those he had slain were indeed working against the Confederacy. Gryzin accepted the fact that he had broken the law, but demanded that he receive a trial from a Justicar. His request was honored. Gryzin entered the trial chamber — and was never heard from or seen again.

Behind closed doors, Gryzin was given a life sentence of hard labor, but in recognition of his actions, skills, and obvious devotion to the Confederacy, he could serve this sentence in the military rather than the mines. His appearance was magically altered so that he would no longer have any claim to clan, family, or any other social standing except as a soldier. Then he was sent into service.

His performance was exemplary, and his ferocity in the service of the Confederacy was well noted. Gryzin advanced up the ranks handily, eventually becoming a well-known marek. It was duly noted that the sacrifices he made were reminiscent of the hero of whom the rank was named. When he was deemed to be sufficiently powerful, he was recruited into the Steingard.

As a Steingard officer, Gryzin has since risen to the rank of vardoc and continues his quest to destroy enemies of the Confederacy wherever they may lie. Since he assumed command, his Steingard unit has removed many a threat and is responsible for the security standards in place on Durgan-lok today. Gryzin is a model of fear and intimidation. His interrogations are often very short and to the point. He gets the answers he needs and removes these terrorist threats as he finds them. He is greatly respected by other members of the Steingard, in part because his methods are often questionable.

**Gryzin Argyle, male dwarf Ftr 11:** CR 11; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 11d10+22; hp 92; Init +6; Spd 20 ft.; AC 20 (+2 Dex, +8 armor), touch 12, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +11; Mech Atk +5; Grp +15; Atk +18 melee (1d8+6, +2 heavy mace); Full Atk +18/+13/+8 melee (1d8+6, +2 heavy mace); SQ dwarven traits; AL LN; SV Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 19, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 16.

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff +8, Gather Information +6, Intimidate +16, Sense Motive +5, Spot +3; Blind-Fight, Cleave, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Interrogator, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (heavy mace).

*Possessions:* +2 heavy mace, +2 Steingard plate, ring of discern lies, masterwork manacles (4).

*Languages:* Common, Dwarf, Thuzin.

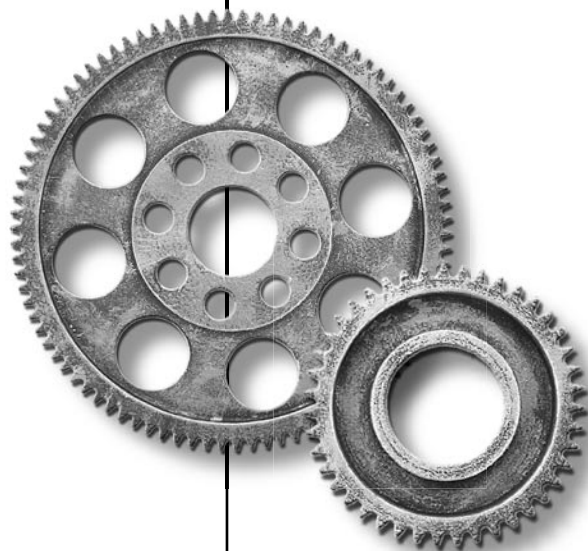
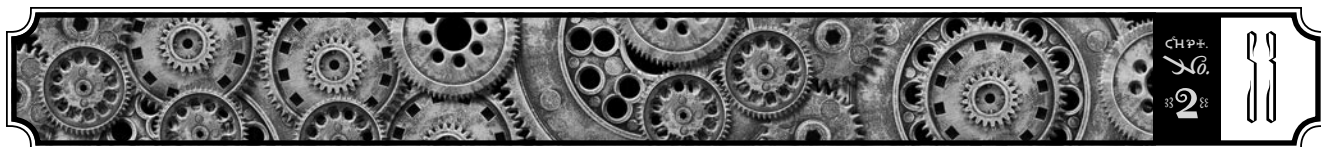






PLATE 3 *The nomads of the endless plains flock  
to settle on the Legion city-mechs.*



# THE LEGION

## EVERYBODY KNOWS...

THIS UNION OF NOMAD TRIBES IS A POWERFUL FORCE, RECLAIMING THE ENDLESS PLAINS FROM LUNAR HORRORS. BUT IT HAS A DARKER SIDE. THE LEGION IS FOR HUMANS ONLY — OTHER INTELLIGENT RACES HAVE NO PLACE ABOARD ITS MECHS. ITS LEADER SPEAKS OF A TIME WHEN HUMANS RULED ALL THE LANDS, AND MANY WONDER IF HE INTENDS TO CREATE SUCH AN EMPIRE AGAIN.

The people of the Legion come from dozens of tribes, each with its own traditional way of life, each composed of many small clans. But they all share a belief in what they are now doing. The people of the Legion believe in the Legion. They believe in working together, they believe in building a homeland for humanity, and they believe in their leader, Shar Thizdic.

However, they aren't drones or zombies. Even though their daily routines have changed in the last few years, they still value their families and keep some of their traditional ways. One common belief is a reverence for ancestors. Members of the Legion take pride in their heritage, naming children after heroic relatives and judging themselves by the actions of their forbears. Some of them even cling to the traditional practice of ancestor worship.

One of their strongest new beliefs is that humanity is on the verge of greatness. The endless plains have always been a place where innovation and excitement are found, but the scattered nature of the tribes meant that great deeds were done by individuals rather than by the whole. Now the tribes are organized into the Legion, and their ranks are growing every day. Other races did little to help humans when the lunar rain began, but humanity managed to survive. Now they have mechs of their own, they are defeating lunar dragons and other monsters, and the Legion is well on its way to creating a secure human homeland.

If you've heard of the Legion, you've heard of Shar Thizdic. He's the best-known (and perhaps the most feared) man on Highpoint, and the Legion is his monument. Shar Thizdic escaped the mountain city of Rook when it was razed by lunar dragons and he spent several years roaming the endless plains. He started as a friendless wanderer, but his silver tongue

wove its spell among the nomadic human tribes, and in time he rallied them together against the dragons.

Even more impressively, he turned this alliance into a mechdom that he called the Legion. Under his leadership, wild-hearted riders became willing laborers, and before long humans had created their first mech. Others were built, each one further cementing Shar Thizdic's place in the hearts of his followers. They turned their metal might against the monsters prowling their land. After decades of retreating, Shar Thizdic and his followers have advanced, sweeping their area like wildfire across a prairie.

Now the humans of the endless plains treat him like a king, if not a god. His charisma is tremendous and his cunning legendary. Shar Thizdic has led his people into one daring venture after another, always coming out on top, always extending the Legion's reach. His stated goal sounds impossible — destroying all the lunar monsters infesting his adopted homeland — but Shar Thizdic seems to overcome every obstacle he faces. Those who support him say that even something this far-fetched is not beyond his ability.

However, the new land he envisions seems to be one populated entirely by humans. Other races are not allowed aboard the Legion's mechs, and they are second-class citizens within its territory. Shar Thizdic has made it clear that his domain is to be a human homeland. Dwarves have their caverns and elves have their forests, he has said, so why should humans not claim territory for their own? Many fear that this is just the first step, and the Legion mechs hunting dragons today will be turned against other races tomorrow.

Whatever the truth, it will likely reveal itself

soon. Shar Thizdic has shown himself to be clever and ambitious on a scale far grander than the endless plains have ever seen. If anyone dwelling there has the ability to bring a dream to life, he does.

When the Legion first came into being, many thought it would fall before the lunar dragons, unless internal bickering destroyed it first. Even when they produced their first mechs, elf and dwarf alike scoffed. But once the city-mech Rebirth took its first step, doubters were silenced. A new mechdom had arisen and Rebirth was its symbol.

The first human city-mech was a slap in the face to everyone who doubted the flighty, short-lived nomads could endure the lunar rain. Word of its existence ran through one tribe after another like fire through dry kindling. The stream of humanity coming to the Legion turned into a flood, and everyone wanted to see Rebirth.

Few of them could actually dwell aboard the city-mech, of course. It serves as Shar Thizdic's headquarters, and its space is needed for the Legion's leaders and their underlings. But Rebirth has become the focal point for the Legion. A fleet of smaller mechs accompanies it at all times, and literally thousands of tribesmen travel in its path.

Not only does this make governance simpler, it serves as an excellent rallying point for military action. Rebirth always has an army to lead, and it in turn supports the troops in all manner of conflicts. Shar Thizdic once defeated a lunar dragon with little more than grappling hooks, scared peasants, and raw nerve. With Rebirth and its new "sibling" Haven serving as the flagships of a growing mech fleet, the Legion is sweeping an ever-larger area free of lunar infestation.

Many threats prowl the endless plains, none greater than the lunar dragons. Their enormous size and destructive power make them a match for even large mechs. And two years ago, one lunar dragon on the edge of Legion territory emerged with a mech fleet of its own.

The beast was an ancient dragon named Mkadolkalakn, new-fallen to Highpoint. In the dead of night, it crossed paths with a mighty Legion mech, a hundred-footer of the paladin class (see page 24 of the **Mech Manual**). The mech commander was hastening to the site of a reported revolt, outpacing its smaller escorts — except for the two mechs in its onboard hangar. Attempting to make time by traveling around the clock, the mech instead stumbled past the dragon's lair. Mkadolkalakn had the gift of dominating mortal minds, unfortunately for the paladin's crew, and before they realized



they were in a dragon's territory, they were under its spell.

For a newcomer, Mkadolkalakn moved quickly. It realized the advantages presented by its new plaything, and it stayed out of sight at first while it solidified its control over the paladin mech. By the time it showed itself, the entire command crew was enthralled, and they ordered their troops to follow the lunar monster's wishes. The Legionnaires obeyed these strange orders, discipline trumping confusion. When the rest of the paladin's escort showed up, they were all but destroyed by their own comrades.

One small mech escaped, bringing word of the disaster to Legion command. The dragon obviously needed to be destroyed, but the mechs it now controlled were valuable. As Legion forces strove to evacuate the area surrounding Mkadolkalakn's rampage, Shar Thizdic himself came up with a plan to separate the beast from its new slaves.

As a half moon hung heavy in the sky, a great

many cattle and other herd beasts were driven close to the dragon's lair and then goaded until they began a stampede. The sound attracted the dragon's attention, as it was new to Highpoint and not yet familiar with the ways of the plains. It dove at the noise and, upon discovering the dozens of startled animals, delightedly began to feast on them.

However, these animals had been gorged all day on fermented grapes and barley-brew. As Mkadolkalakn ate, the potent alcohol began coursing through its veins. None knew what effect this would have on the beast, but they hoped that Shar Thizdic had guessed correctly.

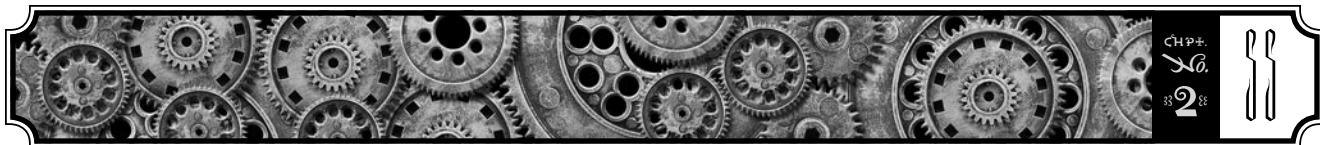
He had. The dragon grew increasingly confused as it ate, and more importantly its hold on the minds of its mech crew was loosened. A contingent of mechs from the nearby Ferocity chapter opened fire on the dragon as it ate, drawing its attention, while others moved between the dragon and its own mech force.

As the dragon raged, two fast Legion mechs snared it with chain tentacles. Confused, Mkad-

olkalakn kept trying to bring its own mechs into action rather than escaping, but its inebriated mind was unable to command them clearly. Before long Mkadolkalakn was defeated, and only minimal damage was inflicted on the mechs it controlled and the new ones attacking it. A number of cattle were eaten or just disappeared, but that was accounted a small price to pay for killing a lunar dragon.

## HISTORY

Appropriately, the Legion's story begins with the slaying of a lunar dragon, one day before the city of Rook was wiped from the face of Highpoint. That dragon had been terrorizing the city, yet although Shar Thizdic was merely a humble shepherd from the city's edge, he was able to do what Rook's leaders and warriors could not. With his forceful personality and



golden speech, he persuaded dozens of peasants to join him in one last stand even as the aristocracy was fleeing. His mind being as agile as his words, he conceived a plan so simple yet effective that everyone who heard him was convinced that they had a chance. They in turn convinced others, and soon the word had spread through Rook's lower classes.

The next time a dragon raided Rook, it met a terrible surprise. Waves of carpenters and farmers and stableboys surged from all sides, guided by Shar Thizdic. They snared it with razor-sharp grappling hooks, pulling the startled monster back to the ground when it tried to fly away. Even its mighty armor couldn't withstand the terrible pounding inflicted by hundreds of furious peasants holding simple weapons. Although it broke free and took wing, it only flew a few hundred yards before succumbing to its injuries.

When it fell, Shar Thizdic paid a terrible price. The dragon fell directly onto his family cottage. All his family was crushed to death — his parents, his brothers, his sister, everyone he loved. He had to be pulled away from the site by the town's brawniest blacksmith, and even then he returned after night fell. Kneeling by the wreckage, he cried out to the mocking moon above, asking if he had to pay such a terrible price for his victory.

Just before sunrise, Shar Thizdic learned that he had only begun to pay. A quintet of dragons, searching for their missing pack member, found its corpse with the weaponry of Rook's peasants still embedded in its hide. Furious, they flew through the city and razed every structure they found. As Rook's citizens fled the destruction of their homes, the dragons swooped on them with fire and claw. No mercy was shown by the lunar fiends. Before the sun rose high, Rook was a gutted smoking shell. Where once a proud city had teemed with people, nothing moved except flies and carrion birds.

A sparse handful of people found safety, among them Shar Thizdic. He had been present in the shadows, still grieving, when the dragons arrived for revenge. Now stumbling wordlessly down the mountain trails he knew so well, he vowed to himself that someday it would be the dragons fleeing.

This story is told all across the endless plains, and versions of it are found nearly everywhere in Highpoint. Shar Thizdic's legend is met with grudging respect even among those who distrust him. Some naysayers doubted the story at first, but as the survivors of Rook made their way across the continent, they told much the same tale.

To be candid, nobody told the story as much

as Shar Thizdic himself. He moved down into the plains, and everywhere he went, the story caught ears and opened doors. As he moved from one tribe to another, Shar Thizdic's tale set hearts aflame, none more than his own. His pride in bringing down a dragon, his agony at the fall of his city, his thirst for vengeance — all these things combined during his wandering years. After a few years, he knew he possessed countless hands that could strike back. But without a weapon for those hands to wield, the lunar dragons were bound to exact a terrible toll.

Then Shar Thizdic heard another story. In the flatlands to the west, it was said, dwarves were creating giant mechanical men capable of battling the fiercest lunar monsters. Although he was keenly aware that the dwarves had offered little help to humans when the meteoric rain began, Shar Thizdic sought them out. In the city of Edge, he found a few dwarven engineers who were willing to assist humanity in creating mechs of their own, if the price was right.

By calling in every favor he was owed and incurring new honor debts of his own, Shar Thizdic convinced his tribal allies to put aside their differences and help him with this grand

project. Plans were drawn up, resources were gathered, and tasks were assigned. From the beginning it was an uphill battle. The free-spirited nomads chafed at daily manual labor, and the dwarven hirelings turned out to have never designed a mech before. Setback after setback hit the project, and it took all of Shar Thizdic's diplomacy just to keep the tribes from turning on him.

But the dwarves were still competent engineers, and the tribes were driven by their hatred of the lunar rain. Right up to the last hour's work, Shar Thizdic spent eighteen hours a day overseeing the project and soothing furious tempers. At last the first human-built mech was completed. Hundreds of nomads waited, expecting failure. The air was heavy as Shar Thizdic stepped onto a makeshift stand in front of the wood-armored construct.

"All of you have given much," he said to the crowd. "Your time, your treasure, the sweat of your brows. But more valuable than these is a gift all of you have shared, a gift that humanity desperately needs if it is to survive. I need you to keep giving that gift, but as a token of repayment, I offer that gift back to you. People of the plains, I give you Hope." And with that he







waved his arm at the mech behind him.

Nothing happened. For a long moment the crowd was silent, staring at the oily smoke puffing from Hope's stack. Angry murmurs began to well up in the heart of the crowd. Shar Thizdic stood impassively. Then, just as a few nomads were thinking that perhaps what they needed was Shar Thizdic's head on a spear, Hope gave out a terrible grinding noise and lifted its leg.

One step, then another, then a third, and the crowd's fear and disappointment melted like spring snow. As Hope took its first faltering steps across the plains, the tribes surged around Shar Thizdic. He was hauled to their shoulders, held aloft like a prize, celebrated like a god. Hope began to walk. Shar Thizdic was carried in its wake. The Legoin was born that day.

Since then Shar Thizdic has hardly had to persuade anyone of anything. Stories of the man and his dream leaped from one tongue to another. Even now, years after the Legion's founding, new arrivals show up almost daily, all wanting to take part in the rebirth of humanity, willing to do almost anything asked of them.

Fortunately, Shar Thizdic moved quickly to organize his followers, allowing them to work and live more efficiently. By the time Hope's first walk ground to a halt, Shar Thizdic was quietly explaining the idea of the nine chapters to several key tribal leaders. Awed by what they had just achieved, they agreed. Before the glow of building a working mech had faded, the humans who had created it were separated from their old tribes and clans, and their old ways were quickly replaced by a new regimen.

Now the Legion is the dominant force on the central endless plains, its influence stretching to the southern swamps and brushing the edge of the northern forests. Not all is well within its loose borders — dragons still rampage, renegade tribes still raid and plunder — but none can deny that Shar Thizdic and his followers have quickly achieved something once thought impossible by the other races of Highpoint. Humanity has mechs, and more importantly, it finally has the discipline and organization to fight back against the lunar menace.

## RELIGION

Before the lunar rain, countless religions were found among the human tribes of the endless plains. Most tribes practiced some form of ancestor worship. The details of their rituals varied, as did the identities of each tribe's sacred ancestor spirits, but some core beliefs were common.

A person's cunning and courage in life, it was said, affected their spirit after death. Fools and cowards simply blew away with the wind, moaning across the plains forever. Ordinary folk were given another chance after death, being reborn in time as one of their descendants (which made genealogy a very important field of study to some). Those few souls whose iron nerve and sharp wits made them great in life ascended to an exalted status after death. They became guardians of their descendants, ancestor spirits tasked with guiding their tribes to future glories.

This belief has worked well for Shar Thizdic, as nerve and wits are two of his strongest suits. Traditional belief in these spirits was battered by the relentless lunar rain. However, it was never quite eliminated. Shar Thizdic embodies the traditional virtues of the nomads' heroes. Not only has he rekindled a sense of faith among the tribes, that faith is now placed in him rather than in the ancestor spirits who have apparently been powerless for the last hundred years. Of the major tribes, only the Jajanya have a significant number of individuals who still practice their traditional faith, and those who follow this so-called Old Way are not well liked.

It should be noted that many smaller spirits of weather and geography were also revered among the tribes. These forces too lost their luster when they failed to stop the lunar rain. Now that the Legion offers food, protection, and a sense of purpose, worship of these semi-elemental entities is almost forgotten.

## MAGIC

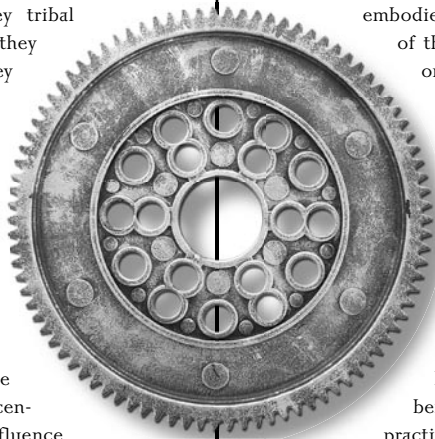
Formal magic is difficult to study from horseback, and so the endless plains produced relatively few wizards or scholarly clerics. Some were found in the cities, but only the elves to the north had a robust tradition of wizardry. Individual tribes and small hamlets were more likely to have an adept or two, perhaps augmented by a cleric who worshipped the local ancestor spirits. These individuals were respected advisers and healers who occasionally became tribal leaders.

Informal magic, however, suits the nomadic life perfectly. Sorcerers have always been common across the plains. Certain Legion authorities claim that humanity has a larger share of such gifted folk than other races, showing the innate potential of humanity; Shar Thizdic himself has not said such things.

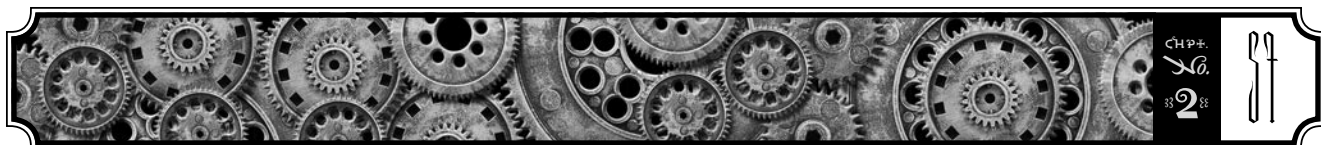
Just as common, and far more important, were bards. The cultures of the endless plains have a strong oral tradition. Singers, drummers, and storytellers played an important role in spreading news and sharing information. Nomads have difficulty maintaining libraries, but who needs libraries when Kothmar the bard is due to arrive any day with his tales of lands far away?

As tribes scattered to escape the lunar rain, bards became more important; they also traveled less regularly. Now news was hard to come by, and the influence of the old deities was fading. The news bards brought was vital and the spells they wielded were more useful than ever. But travel was risky. Fewer bards wanted to take the chance, preferring to take up residence with a particular tribe, perhaps settling down and training an apprentice or two instead of spreading knowledge far and wide.

The formation of the Legion didn't stop this trend. Even as the lunar rain is fading somewhat, the humans of the endless plains are gathering in one area. Admittedly it's a large area, but bards no longer have a monopoly on encountering other people. The Legion's militaristic mindset also has little use for free spirits and chaotic souls. Bards who can handle the discipline are as welcome as anyone else, but many have trouble living such regulated lives.







## DIPLOMACY

Until recently, the nomads of the plains were good neighbors to almost everyone. It helped that they weren't an organized group, of course, but primarily it's because they were fundamentally decent people. They still are, although it can be difficult convincing others of it nowadays.

Before the Legion was formed, the tribes had no central organization. How others felt about them depended entirely on which tribe was under discussion. For example, the Tlan were usually liked wherever they traveled, thanks to their cheerful and expressive ways. They weren't always trusted, as the Tlan have a reputation for lightening the purses of those they meet, but most cultures in and around the plains were pleased to see them and hear their wild stories.

And so it was for years. Different tribes had their own reputations, depending on whether they were trading or raiding, but none of the other cultures of Highpoint thought of them as enemies. With one exception: The orc hordes who also live on the plains were constantly in a state of low-level war with the nomads. To the orcs, these tribes were a handy source of slaves and plunder, and in lean times they made an adequate food source.

The tribes were no more fond of the orcs and regularly skirmished with them, burning their encampments to the ground when possible. In fact, prior to Shar Thizdic's amazing deeds, the largest tribal gatherings happened in response to orcish attacks. In one notable case, after an orc warband slaughtered a group of Gur traders, nearly three thousand riders from seven different tribes united to take vengeance.

After the orcs, the biggest threat most tribes faced was other tribes. Although they usually got along with outsiders, the tribes were natural rivals with one another. They competed for grazing space, they argued over worship sites, and they drew blades over the smallest insults.

However, these conflicts rarely escalated into outright warfare. Most tribes were too small to start a full-scale war, and given the size of the plains, a threatened group could just fold its tents and move. Rather than overt warfare, tribal conflicts usually consisted of one side raiding another's camps for treasure and then being raided in return. Eventually one side would tire of the game or just move away. Particularly nasty squabbles would often be settled when a third tribe came into the area, as

this new group would traditionally act as peace-makers in return for a few herd animals or some other consideration.

The various city-states of the endless plains usually saw the nomads as good neighbors. Food from the Gur, crafted goods from the Usni, tales and beadwork from the Tlan, and many other things were all welcome. Some tribes raided and plundered, but no city-state was actually endangered by it, and most of the tribes preferred to trade and buy, so everyone got along.

Chemak is an exception. More than once, that city-state has attempted to conquer the area surrounding it. This always led to conflict with the nomads in the area, who usually lost a few warriors to Chemak's incursions. However, the tribes could and would steal away in the night to less hostile territory, and Chemak always gave up after a few months or years of bluster. Since the lunar rain began, Chemak's territorial ambitions have been quiet.

## GEOGRAPHY

The endless plains are a vast rolling prairie. Hills rise and fall like waves frozen atop the sea. Although the land isn't flat, its heights rarely rise more than 200 feet above its depths. Rivers and streams cut across it, giving sustenance to small clumps of trees, but most of the plains is grassland.

### AFTER THE LUNAR RAIN

The people of the endless plains were battered when the lunar rain began, and so was their land. In the first few years, some high places were pulverized and low places filled by the moon's debris. This left the plains flatter than they had been. But as the rain continued, meteor craters and the like created a new topography. Major hills and valleys are largely unchanged, but smaller features are entirely different than they were a century ago.

One of the most striking effects of the lunar rain has been the change in vegetation. Meteor strikes don't mean much to a blade of grass, but endless days of scorching lunar dustfall can have an effect. For the first forty years of the lunar rain, the plains had fewer and fewer of their native plants. Smaller ones — grasses, shrubs, and so on — were hit hardest. Every succeeding year saw more bare patches where

once a lush prairie had bloomed.

In some cases, lunar vegetation fell to Highpoint and tried to establish itself. This usually failed. The fall was enough to kill most lunar plants, and the ones that survived didn't often find the nutrients they needed. A few patches of them, however, did manage to hang on. They seem to grow best in cool and damp locations with plenty of shade, such as a deep riverbank or the mouth of a cave.

Where the lunar plants have survived, they thrived, quickly choking out native species. They might well have taken over the plains if not for the fact that warmth and direct sunlight seem harmful to them. As it is, many sheltered spots near water have large clumps of pale, twisted lunar vegetation. None of it is edible to the creatures of Highpoint, and some of it seems almost hostile.

Of particular note is the plant called spiderspore, which releases seed pods from which gossamer streamers dangle. These streamers are acidic, burning the flesh of anyone who touches them. The spiderspore's seed pods drift with the wind, remaining caustic long after the sunlight has destroyed their potential to reproduce.

Some rivers and streams of the endless plains have also been affected by lunar rain. Smaller waterways can be temporarily dammed if a large meteor lands in the right place; fortunately, the residents of Highpoint are used to floods. A meteor strike can also shatter the bank of a stream, causing it to branch off and flow in a new direction.

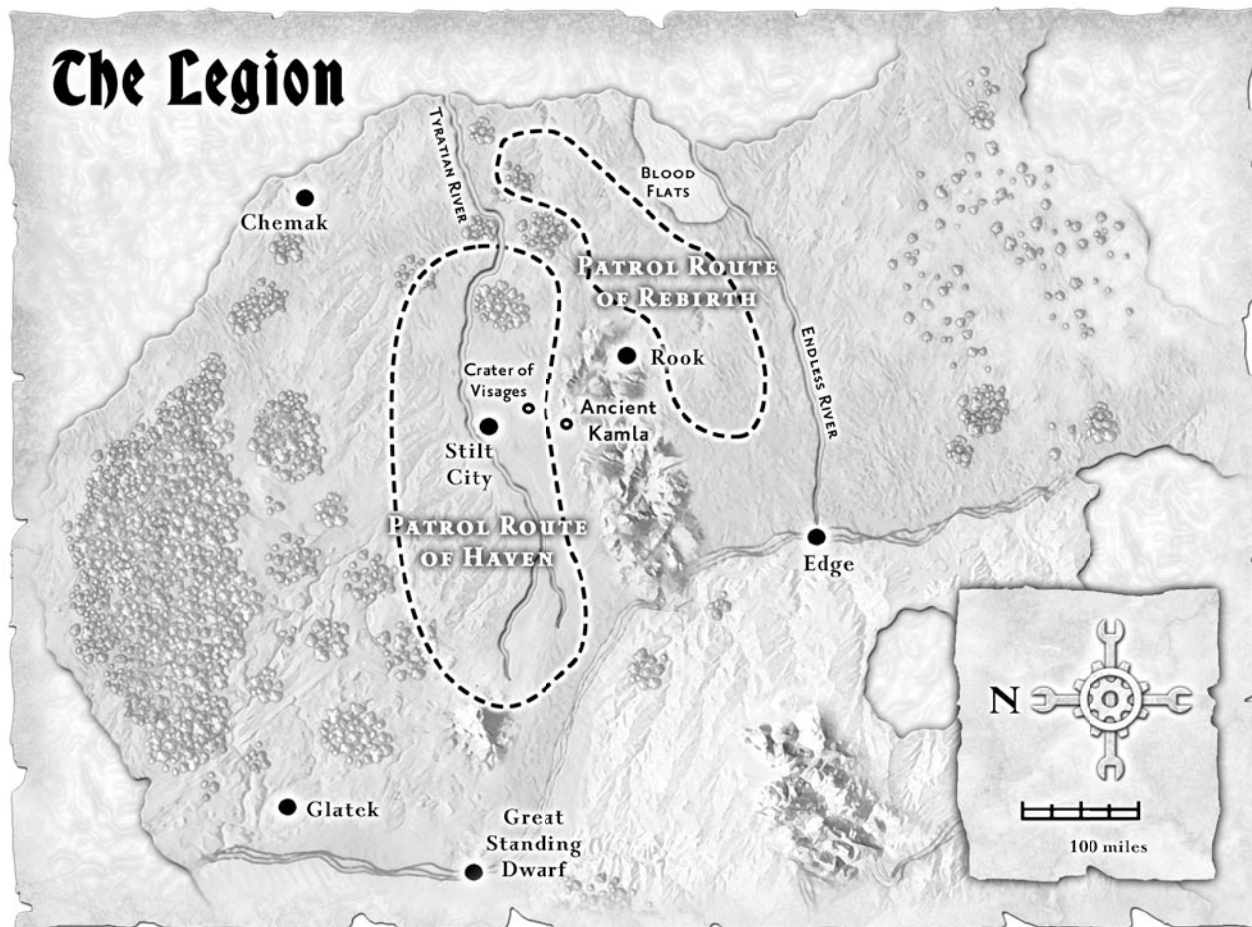
The biggest problem is silt. Lunar rock doesn't dissolve when it reaches the surface of Highpoint. Often it covers the ground as a bitter chalky dust, and the regular rains sweep it into waterways. Over time this process has filled many of the smaller streams. Now they are large brackish ponds, and in shady locations they might have lunar plants growing beneath the water. A wise herder is careful about where he or she waters animals, as some of these ponds have become mildly poisonous due to the high quantity of lunar dust suspended in their water.

### NATURAL RESOURCES

The endless plains are a vast hilly prairie. Most things that a growing mechdom needs are available somewhere within Legion territory. Wood is found to the north, farms are found in the south, and small mines across the Legion's expanse work to provide coal for the



# The Legion



steam engines.

One thing that Shar Thizdic always pushes for is new sources of metal. The Legion does as much as it can with wood, sometimes clashing with L'arile Nation mechs on the edge of the northern forests, but building good mechs takes a lot of iron and steel. Few mines have been found to extract this "gray gold" from, and even then the nomads are still learning the art of refining metal. Copper they have in abundance, but attempts at making useful copper-armed mechs have so far been failures.

Fortunately, other regions have more metal than food. Human traders in service to the Legion are found all across the plains (and lately in the flatlands), bartering produce from Gur farms for all the steel they can get.

## SITES OF NOTE

Although the people of the endless plains are nomads, they still have some important

fixed locations in their lives. Some are sites of spiritual significance, others are natural features of great majesty, and still others are just handy places to hide.

## The Blood Flats

The largest battle ever fought on the plains happened here, giving rise to its grim name. Many tribes now hold that it is haunted by all manner of spirits. It lies just north of the Endless River, midway between Edge and the sea, a flat prairie that stretches for miles in every direction on the southern border of Legion territory.

Many forces have clashed here over the years, as the flats are perfect for massing troops and deploying cavalry. Two hundred and twenty years ago, an enormous force of human nomads charged across it to break their lances against an equally imposing orcish army. These orcs were united under a leader of rare charisma. They were rampaging across the plains, nearly 8,000 strong, killing and burning everything in

their path.

When they got to the river, they were met with force. The combative Zhekmir tribe had united another dozen tribes under their banner and come forth to challenge the orcs. The humans numbered 5,000 warriors and they had more cavalry. The battle was sharp, bloody, and indecisive, as the orcs quickly moved to set the river at their backs to stop cavalry from encircling them. The armies fought from sunrise to sunset without a victor emerging, then retreated to their camps as a heavy fog came off the river.

As the fog thickened and the troops slept, a third force crept onto the field. The savage Jajanya and their allies had been trailing the armies with 2,000 warriors of their own. In the dead of night they struck the orc camp, overwhelming sentries and slaughtering troops. This noise drew the Zhekmir force, sleepy and ill-prepared but convinced that the orcs were finished. This human army was then ambushed by a second wing of Jajanya troops.

Ultimately more than 6,000 warriors were



killed from one sunrise to the next. The orcish army was destroyed, the Zhekmir were routed, and many Jajanya died when a shift in the wind blew away the fog that concealed their presence from their enemies. The bodies rotted for days before the Zhekmir army returned and burned them all.

Most plainsfolk believe that the warriors killed on this day will not rest. Folk wisdom holds that these spirits prowl the flats, hunting for lone travelers to ambush. By night the danger is worse, as the ghosts of the burned dead rise from their pyres and attempt to char the living into ash. Those who hold these beliefs travel in large groups across the flats, the better to deter the ghosts, and use bells and other noisemakers to frighten away the dead.

The Jajanya and the Zhekmir both see the flats as something else. To the Jajanya it is a site commemorating one of their great victories — they did destroy two large armies, even if most of their own number were slain. Many Jajanya travel here for important rituals such as marriage and important religious observances. The Old Way gives great weight to a site where the Jajanya spilled so much enemy blood.

The Zhekmir draw a lesson from the blood flats. They believe that if they had boldly pressed their advantage against the orcs, they could have slaughtered the hated foe and thereby been more prepared for the Jajanya ambush. True or not, the Zhekmir see the blood flats as proof that boldness is the correct course. They also have no fear of the ghosts that allegedly dwell here. It was the Zhekmir who dared to return and burn the bodies, and a rite of passage for young Zhekmir warriors is to spend a night alone and unarmed on the blood flats. The warrior doing so does not sleep, but instead calls out challenges to angry ghosts from dusk until dawn.

Whatever the truth, the blood flats are ominous at sunrise and sunset. The grass turns red in the muted sunlight, and wind coming off the nearby Endless River often carries the sound of voices calling and howling unintelligibly. Hostile plant life is common here, from ordinary nettles to carnivorous vegetation, particularly on sites where the Zhekmir burned corpses.

### Ancient Kamla

The mountains that once sheltered Rook hide other secrets. Dwarves once lived here, seemingly in some numbers long ago. Only a few of them dwelt there in the decades before the lunar rain, and they were unfriendly to outsiders. They have since retreated entirely, sealing off the entrances to their former

homes and collapsing the tunnels connecting them to the surface. But other subterranean construction survives.

On the northeast side of this small mountain range stands a cliff face that has been blasted by lunar meteors. Nothing about that is unusual, and the small gaps opened in the cliff by these meteors are also unremarkable. If not for an adventurous Loamasa tribeswoman, nobody would have found the city of Kamla slumbering behind the cliff.

If one is patient enough to spend an hour or two crawling through the tunnels behind those cliffside gaps, and if one manages to avoid any of the myriad hazards below the ground (including getting lost in the darkness), one narrow passage eventually ends at the top of a great bowl-shaped cavern. At the bottom of this cavern is a small abandoned city. Overhead is the open sky — meteor strikes long ago smashed away the peak of this hollow hill.

Many centuries old by the look of it, this city was apparently built by slathem, based on its architecture. Slathem travelers have claimed no knowledge of it and have dubbed it “Kamla,” a word meaning “lost” in their tongue. At one point this cavern was apparently full of water, and tunnels at the base of it still lead to underground streams.

Kamla provides little shelter and has been known to attract monsters; for a time, a fierce old red dragon named Zumaldin dwelt here, before being slain by Legion troops. Daring nomads occasionally brave the tunnels, returning with a small piece of worked stone to prove that they climbed down into the city and back.

### The Crater of Visages

The worst lunar meteor strikes came decades ago, when the hills and mountains of the moon were torn free and smashed into the surface of Highpoint. These massive strikes left large craters. One particular spot was repeatedly blasted by strange rocks that presumably came from the same lunar structure, leaving a huge crater full of carved lunar rock.

Perhaps four days' ride south of Stilt City, the mammoth crater is more than a quarter mile across. The shattered remains of enormous lunar hills still dot this plain, and the crater is full of rubble. This isn't the usual queasy-grey rock that falls from above, though. It was worked by hands unlike anything known to Highpoint. Some segments look like walls, others resemble roads, still others aqueducts. All of them are covered in bizarre carvings.

The dominant images are those of faces — grotesque asymmetrical faces with three eyes

and mismatched tusks. No known lunar creature matches the appearance of these ogre-sized faces. Grasping hands are also common, often carved as if reaching out from within solid rock. These hands have three fingers and a thumb, each long and possessing three joints. The hands end in wicked talons.

Not surprisingly, this crater draws lunar creatures and is home to many lunar plants. It lies within territory claimed by the Legion, and their troops routinely sweep through and kill any lunar beasts they can find. The crater is of interest to Highpoint's sages, and they occasionally visit to study the carved rock (or retain adventurers for that purpose). The Legion discourages this, as Shar Thizdic does not wish outsiders to needlessly risk their own safety while seeking to pry open the moon's secrets. His own scholars are often found here with heavy guard forces.

### Mist Valleys

Many locations across the endless plains share this name. The rolling terrain and abundant water mean that mist and fog are common throughout the year, especially around sunrise and sunset. These fogs hang in the lowlands, and they often stretch far across the countryside, especially when the temperature cools at dusk.

The valleys themselves are not usually remarkable. Some are ordinary depressions in the landscape, while others are formed by Highpoint's seasonal rivers and creeks. What makes them interesting is the legends surrounding them. Most common are the tales of mist goblins, strange squat creatures who are said to live entirely within the bounds of the fog.

All major tribes share stories of these horrid beasts, and while they are regarded as children's fare, many otherwise sensible nomads will shun the mist valleys. This is a practical choice, as traveling across rough ground in the fog is a good way to break a horse's leg. Anyone asking a nomad where the nearest mist valleys are will undoubtedly receive a response, though, as many of them have a quiet dread of these shadowy locations.

## FACTIONS

Shar Thizdic is the unquestioned leader of the Legion, but he can't be everywhere. Other people wield power among the tribes

— some appointed, some out of tradition, and a few who have the charm and wit to persuade others to follow them. Shar Thizdic is aware of all such individuals, and he watches them closely, always looking for someone who can help advance the Legion into its next stage.

Although the nine chapters are not exactly factions, thanks to Shar Thizdic's habit of transferring officers between them, it is important to keep them in mind when considering the Legion's structure and character. Remembering their names is also important, as they do not have their own cultures and habits. In alphabetical order, they are: Discipline, Ferocity, Friendship, Honor, Insight, Loyalty, Speed, Strength, and Valor.

## GOALS

The Legion's goal is simple: Reclaim the endless plains from lunar creatures and create a safe haven for humanity. No sane citizen of Highpoint objects to the first part of this creed. Indeed, the efforts spearheaded by Shar Thizdic have begun pushing monsters from the moon out of Legion territory, creating a Stenian-like safe zone.

The pushing extends to non-humans, however, and that's where the trouble lies. Shar Thizdic has never said he hates other races, and the average Legion citizen isn't foaming at the mouth with violent prejudice. It's just that, as Shar Thizdic says, no other race made a place for humans when the lunar rain began. It's time to repay the courtesy. Now that they're organized, members of the Legion don't see why they shouldn't claim an area as a racial homeland.

## STRUCTURE AND SUBGROUPS

The Legion is structured like a wheel, with Shar Thizdic firmly in the center. The rest of the hub is made up of people with close personal ties to him — old friends, canny advisors, and a few individuals he doesn't trust to let out of his sight. Stretching out from the center are nine spokes, the chapters named for the fighting virtues that Shar Thizdic praises. Around the rim are fragments of the endless plains' tribes. Despite their leader's wishes, not all of the Legion's members have given up their old customs and been absorbed into this new way of life.

## The Hub

Every major decision in the Legion comes from Shar Thizdic and his inner circle. Many minor ones do too, as Shar Thizdic has boundless energy mixed with a healthy dose of obsession. He isn't happy unless he knows everything that happens in his domain, down to the number of rivets needed to fix the smallest patrol mech. This allows him to make the most informed decisions possible for the thousands of people under his care. It also helps him keep track of threats to his power.

Nothing important happens in the Legion without Shar Thizdic's personal approval, but even he can't be everywhere. A handful of people are allowed to wield authority in his name. Shar Thizdic picks these people himself and they serve entirely at his whim. Generally they act as troubleshooters, finding and fixing problems under their leader's loose (but watchful) guidance. Everyone knows that when these people speak, Shar Thizdic is speaking through them.

Others are given specific responsibilities, but as is common in the Legion, they do not often remain at the same post for a long time. Unlike everything else in the Legion, this level of command is not heavily structured or defined. Everyone here serves at Shar Thizdic's whim and does whatever he directs until he tires of them.

One exception to this rule is the hulking figure named Benj Dyvent. He has served as Shar Thizdic's bodyguard for three years, only leaving his master's side when ordered away. His brain is as weak as his muscles are strong, but his loyalty to Shar Thizdic is unquestioned, for the two of them are both survivors of ruined Rook.

As membership in this inner circle is not a formal position, it is not always certain who Shar Thizdic's current trusted advisers are. At the moment, the following individuals are known to dwell with him aboard Rebirth and to undertake projects at his direction:

**Benj Dyvent (Bbn6/Cmn2):** Shar Thizdic's bodyguard is not a great thinker, or even a good one, but he is present for most of Shar's deliberations.

**Olinta Willma, also called Greeneye (Brd3/Exp5/Rog6):** She seems boastful and a little flighty, but this Tlan matriarch is perhaps the shrewdest nomad ever seen on the endless plains. In her youth she traveled far across Highpoint before returning to take her place at the head of an impoverished tribe. Olinta

promptly reversed their fortunes, and today at the age of 52 she is the wealthy leader of a family with a half-dozen heroic children. Five of them are daughters of marriageable age, as she is fond of reminding Shar Thizdic. She has one brown eye and one green, giving rise to her nickname.

**Malam T'chnal (Rgr10):** A leader of the Jajanya tribe, feared for his tracking skill and his enormous wolf companion. He has a reputation for savagery and is known to adhere to the Old Way. Malam is also a peerless ranger, succeeding at scouting missions that nobody else dares attempt. His wolf, however, has been barred from coming aboard Legion mechs, so Malam only stays on Rebirth when necessary.

**Balturb (Cog12):** Thin, nervous Balturb would much rather be tinkering with Haven than sitting at a table with Malam T'chnal or Shar Thizdic. But his fretting seems to amuse Shar Thizdic, and so he has taken his place among the advisers. He is one of the Legion's senior mech designers. This usually means that his role is to tell Shar Thizdic that a particular idea is not possible, and then to nod and worry when Shar tells him to do it anyway. His position at Shar's table is a source of pride to his Usni tribesmates.

**Morani Mylesi (Brd9/Virtue5):** The first graduate of the Virtue training program (described on page 87), Morani is surprisingly humble. He is also quite soft-spoken for a bard. This mild exterior covers a mind sharp and steely as a masterwork dagger. His advice is well worth heeding, as it places the needs of the Legion above those of individual members. Morani was born to the Gur, but left their farms as soon as he could, moving from one tribe to the next much like Shar Thizdic did.

**Filatii Thunderfoot (Mcj11):** Filatii is a seasoned mech jockey, but she shows the brash impulsiveness of a rookie. Her father was a horse-riding Stavian and her mother a Zhekmir, so not surprisingly she loves piloting and she lives to take risks. Her instincts have kept her alive so far. Shar Thizdic seems to trust her intuition, especially in matters of mech deployment and tactics. Filatii has served as Battle Commander in the Honor and Discipline chapters, and is currently the Mech Commander of Haven, a task requiring more patience than she sometimes has.

**Captain Gurk Vandred (Ftr12):** This grizzled sword-for-hire has been one of Shar Thizdic's advisers for some time, and it is widely suspected that he will not be one for much longer. A native of the walled city of Chemak, Gurk led a company of mercenary infantry for

These spheres of influence are deliberately vague. Shar Thizdic wants his subordinates to compete a little. Not only does this force them to be sharp and aggressive, good traits in military officers, but it discourages them from forming close alliances. The last thing Shar Thizdic wants is to see his commanders joining forces to undermine his position atop the Legion hierarchy.



For the same reason, all officers are transferred between chapters on a regular basis. Most of them serve one chapter for a year before moving on, although someone who displays competence and lacks ambition will be left in place for longer. Military units perform better when they've served together for a while, but Shar Thizdic also wants to make sure that his officers are loyal to the Legion as a whole rather than to an individual chapter.

## The Citizens

The Legion is composed of men and women drawn from the many nomadic tribes of the endless plains. All of them are now assigned to one of the nine chapters, and each tribe is split between three or more chapters when possible. Shar Thizdic's public reasoning is that this promotes cooperation among humanity. By putting aside traditional rivalries, Legion members can learn to work together for a greater goal.

This system also transfers their loyalties to the Legion and its leader. Lacking their customary structure, most of the Legion's people have in fact adopted the mindset Shar Thizdic hoped they would. They see themselves as part of one enormous tribe, the tribe of Humanity, and Shar Thizdic is the daring crusader leading them into a glorious future. However, scattered pockets still cling to some of their old ways.

A great many tribes make up the Legion. Some are little more than an extended family. Others have dozens or hundreds of members. Most major human tribes of the endless plains are represented, and many of them have joined the Legion en masse. Even scattered among several different chapters, a few tribal identities have managed to endure. Familiar groups like the Stavians and the Gur are both found in some numbers; so too are the colorful Tlan, the clever Usni, and the grim Jajanya. Despite the advice of some of his intimates, Shar Thizdic has so far allowed pockets of tribal loyalty to exist. In time these small groups will undoubtedly realize that he's leading them to a greater destiny than they would ever have found on their own.

Important and interesting tribes are described below. These eight groups are also discussed in the Rules Information section, as membership in a particular one of these tribes can have benefits and drawbacks.

**Gur:** Many of these noted farmers have joined the Legion. Some of them live aboard large mechs, turning their expertise toward the challenge of growing edible plants inside a giant metal construct. Others continue to live in small farming communities, trading



their foodstuffs (and occasionally their arcane expertise) for Legion protection. Shar Thizdic has begun resettling members of these thorp and villages, moving some of the residents into far-flung chapters and replacing them with members of other Legion tribes. His explanation is that the Gur need to learn about life aboard mechs, and others would benefit from learning the Gur's techniques.

**Hidalgez:** A relatively small tribe, but one that has stubbornly survived as larger groups have faltered. The Hidalgez claim that they are the first tribe to dwell on the plains, born of the great hero of the same name, and they value heroics (and theatrics) above all else. None can deny their bravery. However, they are not always a welcome sight, for what they call tale-telling is what others often call bragging.

**Jajanya:** A large tribe known for its hunting prowess, the Jajanya are also the subject of whispers. It is known that they speak their own language among themselves, and the Jajanya also cling to their unique religion, a bloody practice they call the Old Way. This, combined with their warlike ways, has made them the object of hatred and fear among the other tribes. The Jajanya do not seem to care. They see themselves as a group apart from the rest of the plainsfolk, and even as they join the Legion they resist being integrated into it. They follow their traditions. They practice their religion. And they will kill anyone who denies them what they want. Or so it is said.

**Loamasa:** Others call this tribe "the runners," for the Loamasa keep few riding animals. Indeed, they keep few possessions of any kind. They prefer to live simply on the plains. The Loamasa say that this keeps them aware of the greatness of nature and humble about their

own existence. Others say that the Loamasa are simply afraid to fight and are too foolish to raise herd animals. Those who have been on the other end of Loamasa spears, however, say no such thing.

**Shar'Stavians:** This splinter group of the well-known Stavians has sworn its allegiance to Shar Thizdic, going so far as to place his name in front of their own. It is said that the great leader lived among the Stavians while he was making his way across the plains, and that he so impressed these tribes that they resolved to follow wherever he led. Now they and their dust devils are found serving as Legion scouts and skirmishers. Many of the most daring mech jockeys are also drawn from Shar'Stavian ranks. This tribe is holding together somewhat more than most others, as their skill at mounted combat means that they are often assigned to the same units.

**Tlan:** When outsiders think of the nomads, they are usually thinking of the Tlan. No other tribe has traveled so far, learned so many stories, or befriended so many outsiders. Some would say that no other tribe has told so many lies and stolen so many things, but the Tlan dismiss this as jealousy. All agree that the Tlan are the greatest storytellers of the plains. They also produce the most and finest bards. In this age of declining religion, the Tlan are an especially welcome sight, as they often have the healing magic that is otherwise becoming harder to find. The Tlan are also known for the colorful patterns they wear in their clothing and for their intricate beadwork.

**Usni:** The rise of mechs has brought the once-small Usni tribe to greatness. Tinkering and alchemy have long been this tribe's secrets, and they possess a level of skill unmatched on the endless plains. Where once these things simply made them strange, now they are in demand. For every Shar'Stavian piloting a mech, there are two Usni coglayers keeping it in one piece. And while they are not known as fearsome warriors, the Usni specialize in using unusual weapons, the better to intimidate would-be attackers.

**Zhekmir:** What some would call recklessness, the Zhekmir call bravery. They hold that a person's worth is proven in conflict and risk. Warfare, it logically follows, is what tests a person's mettle and proves whether they are bound for greatness. The Zhekmir are not a dangerous or evil people; in fact, they are often very entertaining to be around. This lust for brave deeds causes them to cherish every moment. A Zhekmir wakes up in the morning wanting to prove himself brave, and he knows that he could die in the attempt, so he makes sure that every minute he lives is one worth living.



## CITIZENS OF THE LEGION

### Lodjon Vartuminsh, Farmer-Mage

**Lodjon Vartuminsh, male human Wiz11:** CR 11; Medium humanoid (human); HD 11d4+28; hp 51; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+1 Dex, +2 armor, +1 natural armor, +1 deflection), touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +5; Mech Atk +2; Grp+4; Atk/Full Atk +4 melee (1d4-1, dagger) or +7 ranged (1d8, masterwork light crossbow); SA Spells; SQ Gur armor penalty; AL LN; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +8; Str 8, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 17, Wis 12, Cha 10.

**Skills and Feats:** Knowledge (arcana) +18, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +17, Knowledge (nature) +20, Profession (farmer) +9, Search +3 (+5 to find secret doors or compartments), Spellcraft +20, Survival +15 (+17 when above ground); Brew Potion, Empower Spell, Extend Spell, Heighten Spell, Maximize Spell, Scribe Scroll, Skill Focus (Knowledge [nature]), Widen Spell.

**Possessions:** Masterwork light crossbow, dagger, amulet of natural armor +1, bracers of armor +2, ring of protection +1, wand of magic missile (13 charges, CL 5th).

**Spells** (4/5/4/3/1; save DC 13 + spell level): As 11th-level wizard.

**L**odjon is an important figure among the LGur. He is a master of agricultural magic, and he knows many useful secrets and obscure techniques that have helped the endless plains bloom. A kind but stern figure, Lodjon is willing to share his knowledge with anyone who shows the proper respect. Anyone, that is, except for worm farmers, whom he believes are the cause of many crop blights and pest infestations.

Lodjon is a plump middle-aged man with a long brown beard that's starting to go gray. His receding hairline and watery blue eyes give him a resemblance to a tortoise. He often smells of earth and grains.

### Talahi Muzid, Legion Scout

**Talahi Muzid, female human Rng8:** CR 8; Medium humanoid (human); HD 8d8; hp 37; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+3 Dex, +4 armor), touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +8; Mech Atk Bonus +4; Grp+9; Atk +10 melee (1d8+2/19-20, +1 longsword) or +13 ranged (1d8+1/x3, +1 longbow); Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d8+2/19-20, +1 longsword) or +13/+8 ranged (1d8+1/x3, +1 longbow); SA Spells; SQ Favored enemies (vermin +4, animals +2), swift tracker, wild

empathy, woodland stride; AL LG; SV Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +4; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 9, Wis 14, Cha 11.

**Skills and Feats:** Hide +14, Listen +15, Move Silently +19, Spot +4, Survival +16; Alertness, Endurance, Far Shot, Manyshot, Rapid Shot, Skill Focus (Survival), Weapon Focus (longbow).

**Possessions:** +1 longbow, +1 longsword, dagger, +1 studded leather armor, boots of elvenkind.

**Spells** (2/1; save DC 12 + spell level): As 8th-level ranger.

**T**rained as a vermin-hunter, Talahi has recently left her fields and entered the service of the Legion's army as a scout. Never a quick wit, she generally lets her bow do the talking. Her best friend is her animal companion, a brown dire bat she calls Pojon. Talahi is often found prowling the fringes of Legion territory. Pojon is usually overhead, looking for the giant vermin he likes to eat, although he will immediately return to Talahi's side if she whistles for him.

Talahi is a tall and graceful woman with black hair cropped close to her head. Her armor and accessories are all dark brown or faded green. She carries a longbow made of ash, and she fidgets with its string when she's thinking.

### Shen, Hidalgez Whirlwind

**Shen, female human Sor6:** CR 6; Medium humanoid (human); HD 6d4; hp 18; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+1 Dex, +1 armor), touch 11, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +3; Mech Atk +1; Grp+4; Atk/Full Atk +4 melee (1d8, masterwork morningstar) or +4 ranged (1d6, javelin); SA Spells; SQ Treat orcs as favored enemies (+2); AL CN; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 8, Cha 16.

**Skills and Feats:** Bluff +12, Concentrate +9, Craft (pottery) +9, Diplomacy +5, Disguise +5 (to act in character), Intimidate +5, Listen +1, Profession (brewer) +9, Spot +1; Alertness (with familiar), Craft Wondrous Item, Greater Spell Focus (enchantment), Spell Focus (enchantment), Toughness.

**Possessions:** Masterwork morningstar, javelins (x3), bracers of armor +1, scroll of charm person, scroll of rage (CL 6th).

**Spells** (6/7/6/4 per day; 7/4/2/1 known; save DC 13 + spell level): As 6th-level sorcerer.

**S**hen has the enthusiasm of a bear that's just found an unattended honey pot. Everything she does is a grand adventure. Every challenge is another chance to show her mastery of magic. Everyone around her had better look out; Shen's exploits have a way of sweeping up

everyone around her, willing or not. She was an enthusiastic Legion recruit for a few weeks, until the strict bureaucracy started to stifle her. Now she's looking for a new source of excitement. A cynical old snake named Sharptongue is her familiar.

Shen is a short woman whose face is dusted with freckles. She dresses in loose clothing with lots of pockets, and she always carries a finely crafted morningstar that she calls Wicked Sunrise. Shen claims it's the weapon of a long-dead tribal hero.

### Taro the Blessed

**Taro the Blessed, male human Pal8/Reborn5:** CR 13; Medium humanoid (human); HD 8d10+5d8+13; hp 83; Init -1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 23 (-1 Dex, +9 armor, +4 shield, +1 deflection), touch 10, flat-footed 24; Base Atk +11; Mech Atk +5; Grp+14; Atk +16 melee (1d6+5/18-20, +2 scimitar) or +11 ranged (1d6+4, +1 composite shortbow [+3 Str]); Full Atk +16/+11/+6 melee (1d6+5/18-20, +2 scimitar) or +11/+6/+1 ranged (1d6+4, +1 composite shortbow [+3 Str]); SA Turn undead, smite evil 2/day (+8 dmg), spells; SQ Treat orcs as favored enemies (+2), detect evil, lay on hands (32 hp), remove disease 1/week, special mount, epic Charisma, old soul, divinely anchored, epic resistance, personal legend, epic vitality, insight 3/day, ancient memory; AL LG; SV Fort +8, Ref +2, Will +9; Str 16, Dex 8, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 22.

**Skills and Feats:** Diplomacy +24, Knowledge (nobility) +8, Ride +15, Use Magic Device +14; Extra Turning, Iron Will, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Reborn Atonement, Ride-By Attack.

**Possessions:** +2 scimitar, +1 composite shortbow (+2 Str), +2 half-plate, +2 heavy wooden shield, ring of protection +1, cloak of charisma +4, phylactery of undead turning.

**Spells** (3/3/1; save DC 16 + spell level): As 11th-level paladin.

**F**or years, Taro was a holy man devoted to guarding his tribe. His greatest feat was slaying a vampire who falsely claimed to be Hidalgez himself. After that encounter, Taro felt a new calling growing within him, and he followed the path of the Reborn, sharing the gift of his revered ancestor Dijinal the Wise Speaker. He also found himself continually facing evil undead in various forms. Now that his Reborn gift has come to full flower, Taro must decide how to continue.

Taro the Blessed is an imposing figure with tremendous personal force. His hair was once a dull brown, but since he manifested Dijinal's

gift it has turned a fiery red just like his ancestor's. He moves deliberately and with great dignity. Not only does this add weight to his words, it hides the fact that he's actually rather clumsy. His special mount is a silver warhorse called Evenstar.

### Rakul Clach, Jajanya Rebel

**Rakul Clach, male human Bbn16:** CR 16; Medium humanoid (human); HD 16d12+32; hp 144; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 24 (+2 Dex, +8 armor, +1 natural armor, +3 deflection), touch 15, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +16; Mech Atk +8; Grp+21; Atk +26 melee (2d4+11/18-20 plus 1 Con, +4 *falchion of wounding*) or +19 ranged (1d6+2, +1 *composite shortbow* [+2 Str]); Full Atk +26/+21/+16/+11 melee (2d4+11/19-20 plus 1 Con, +4 *falchion of wounding*) or +19/+14/+9/+4 ranged (1d6+2, +1 *composite shortbow* [+2 Str]); SA Rage 5/day (+6 Str, +6 Con, +3 Will save, -2 AC, 8 rounds); SQ Trap sense +5, DR 4/-, uncanny dodge, improved uncanny dodge; AL CE; SV Fort +12, Ref +7, Will +6; Str 20, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

**Skills and Feats:** Climb +26, Intimidate +18, Jump +26, Ride +17; Athletic, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (whip), Improved Sunder, Mounted Combat, Plains Stare, Power Attack, War Rider, Weapon Focus (*falchion*).

**Possessions:** +4 *falchion of wounding*, +1 *composite shortbow* (+2 Str), +1 *handaxe*, whip, dagger, +3 *breastplate*, *ring of protection* +3, *amulet of natural armor* +1, *gauntlets of ogre power*.

Rakul Clach is feared across the endless plains. He's the patriarch of a wild Jajanya clan that defies even the Legion's authority. Rakul is also a deadly foe in melee combat, wielding the terrifying blade Heart-Eater (a +4 *falchion of wounding*) with inhuman strength. He lives to fight and expects everyone around him to obey his every word. Although he is usually found at the head of a Clach clan raiding party, he delights in single combat and will go out of his way to challenge other swordsmen. He rarely loses.

Rakul is a frantic mass of muscle, tall and strong and always moving. His eyes, however, pick a target and settle on it without blinking. His long black hair is tied back in a greasy braid, and he wears the fingerbones of his fallen enemies as ornaments. The *falchion Heart-Eater* is a huge curved blade with a dull red finish. Its hilt is decorated with glittering black onyx gems.

### Kethis Irek, Follower of the Old Way

**Kethis Irek, male human Clr4:** CR 4; Medium humanoid (human); HD 4d8+4; hp 29; Init -1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15 (-1 Dex, +5 armor, touch 9, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +3; Mech Atk +1; Grp+2; Atk/Full Atk +3 melee (1d4-1/18-20, masterwork kukri) or +2 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SA Spells, turn undead; AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +0, Will +7; Str 9, Dex 9, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 14.

**Skills and Feats:** Diplomacy +9, Gather Information +4, Heal +10, Knowledge (history) +6, Knowledge (local) +9; Combat Expertise, Empower Spell, Iron Will, Martial Weapon Proficiency (kukri), Scribe Scroll.

**Possessions:** Masterwork kukri, light crossbow, chainmail, light wooden shield, scroll of *cure light wounds* (x2), scroll of *eagle's splendor*.

**Spells** (5/4+1/3+1; save DC 13 + spell level): As 4th-level cleric. Domains: Ancestors, Protection.

Kethis Irek is a loyal member of the Legion, but he still keeps to the Old Way. These two passions guide his life. He is often found deep in debate, either urging other tribes to join Shar Thizdic's crusade or browbeating his fellow Jajanya to keep their traditions alive. He is as stubborn as he is persuasive. Although he is as combative as any Jajanya, Kethis has learned that he can achieve more lasting victories with words than with weapons.

Kethis is a plain young man until he opens his mouth. Not only is his oratory impressive, he has two memorably large front teeth. Those who have been cornered into an argument with him get the feeling of a hungry rodent searching for crumbs in the corners of their minds.

### Virdal Kecha, Loamasa Wanderer

**Virdal Kecha, female human Rog13/ HorizonWalker2:** CR 15; Medium humanoid (human); HD 13d6+2d8+30; hp 89; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 23 (+5 Dex, +5 armor, +1 natural armor, +2 deflection), touch 17, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +11; Mech Atk +5; Grp+13; Atk +14 melee (1d6+3/18-20, +1 *rapier*) or +19 ranged (1d4+4, +2 *sling*); Full Atk +14/+9/+4 melee (1d6+3/18-20, +1 *rapier*) or +19/+14/

+9 ranged (1d4+4, +2 *sling*); SA Sneak attack +7d6, +1 ranged attack with Loamasa weapons; SQ Evasion, improved evasion, slippery mind, uncanny dodge, trap sense +4, trapfinding, terrain mastery (plains, hills); AL N; SV Fort +9, Ref +12, Will +4; Str 14, Dex 20, Con 15, Int 14, Wis 11, Cha 12.

**Skills and Feats:** Appraise +18, Bluff +1 (+2 to send secret messages), Climb +20, Decipher Script +20, Diplomacy +17, Disguise +17 (+18 to impersonate someone), Gather Information +19, Hide +23, Listen +20, Knowledge (geography) +15, Knowledge (local) +18, Move Silently +9, Sense Motive +0 (+1 to understand a secret message), Sleight of Hand +23, Survival +8 (+10 to avoid hazards or getting lost); Diligent, Endurance, Far Shot, Plains Runner, Point Blank Shot, Run, Skill Focus (Knowledge [geography]), Understand Dialects.

**Possessions:** +1 *rapier*, +2 *sling*, *gloves of dexterity* +2, *amulet of natural armor* +1, *ring of protection* +2, +2 *studded leather*, *necklace of adaptation*.

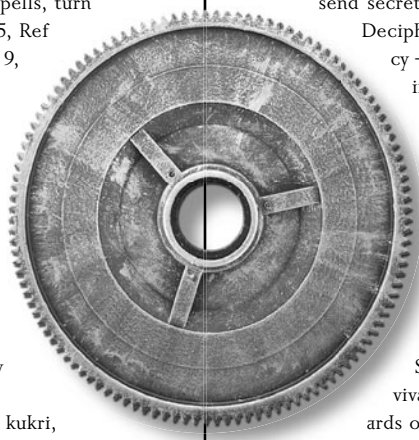
**Languages:** Common, Drumtalk, Dwarven, Goblin, Slathem.

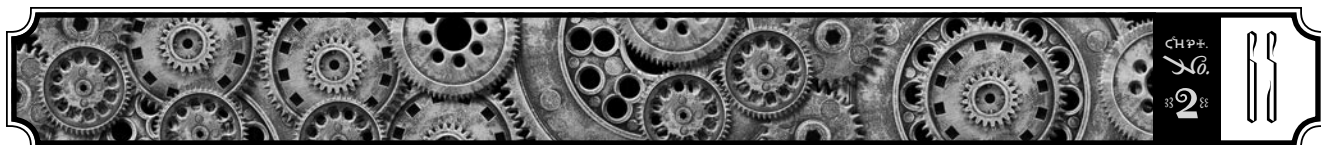
Virdal is a free spirit who's decided to return home. Before the Loamasa joined the Legion, Virdal left their territory and began running west. For twelve years, she crossed Highpoint, seeing everything that its settled areas had to offer. When she returned, her head was full of the wonders she'd seen, not least of them the mighty dwarven cities and elven mechs. Virdal thinks the Legion is a wonderful development for humanity, a way for them to finally equal the other races' security and pride. She has put her formidable knowledge at Shar Thizdic's disposal.

Virdal is short and slender. Her long black hair is braided and ornamented with colorful baubles, but otherwise she dresses plainly. When speaking, she often uses words from other languages to emphasize her point.

### Dayn Tarlong, Loamasa Animal Friend

**Dayn Tarlong, male human Drd2:** CR 2; Medium humanoid (human); HD 2d8-4; hp 6; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15 (+1 Dex, +3 armor, +1 shield), touch 11, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +1; Mech Atk +0; Grp+2; Atk/Full Atk +4 melee





(1d6+2, masterwork shortspear) or +4 ranged (1d4+2, masterwork sling); SA +1 ranged attack with Loamasa weapons, spells; SQ Nature sense, wild empathy (+2), woodland stride; AL NG; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +6; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 7, Int 11, Wis 16, Cha 10.

**Skills and Feats:** Concentration +3, Handle Animal +7, Heal +8, Knowledge (nature) +5, Survival +3 (+5 when above ground); Animal Affinity, Animal Bond (all horses), Endurance.

**Possessions:** Masterwork shortspear, masterwork sling, hide armor, light wooden shield, *potion of bear's endurance*, *potion of cure light wounds*.

**Spells** (4/3; save DC 13 + spell level): As 2nd-level druid.

With his companion, the heavy horse called Rockhoof, Dayn just recently arrived in Legion territory. He's overwhelmed. Always sickly, Dayn is more comfortable with animals than people, and he had never imagined that so many folk could live together. Or that mechs were so very, very big. He's a wide-eyed young man, trying to understand this strange world that his brief druidic training totally fails to explain.

Dayn is quick and strong, but childhood illness has left him with a gaunt frame and persistent cough. His armor's inner layer is the hide of a mighty bison he helped slay, and he occasionally mutters prayers to the spirit of Grandfather Buffalo. Rockhoof is his constant companion, and the big brown horse is quick to nuzzle Dayn's ear when the coughing spells become uncontrollable.

### Jilak, Shar'Stavian Warrior

**Jilak, male human Ftr12:** CR 12; Medium humanoid (human); HD 12d10+12; hp 78; Init +7; Spd 20 ft.; AC 24 (+3 Dex, +7 armor, +3 shield, +1 deflection), touch 14, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +12; Mech Atk +6; Grp+15; Atk +18 melee (1d8+7/19-20/x3, +2 *keen lance*) or +16 ranged (1d6+4/x3, +1 *composite shortbow* [+2 Str]); Full Atk +18/+13/+8 melee (1d8+7/19-20/x3, +2 *keen lance*) or +16/+11/+6 ranged (1d6+4/x3, +1 *composite shortbow* [+2 Str]); SQ Shar'Stavian weapon restrictions; AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +4; Str 16, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 12.

**Skills and Feats:** Handle Animal +15, Ride +18, Spot +6; Animal Affinity, Improved Initiative, Improved Shield Bash, Mounted Combat, Powerful Charge, Quick Draw, Ride-By Attack, Saddle Shield, Spirit Charge, Trample, War Rider, Weapon Focus (lance).

**Possessions:** +2 *keen lance*, +1 *longsword*, +1 *composite shortbow* [+2 Str], +2 *breastplate*, +1

*spiked heavy wooden shield*, *ring of protection* +1.

The warrior Jilak is a demon when mounted. If encountered apart from his dusk devil, he's quiet and rather shy. He is most alive in combat; his skill with lance, bow, and shield has made him an officer in the Legion's mounted corps. Jilak has a wicked streak that manifests as cruelty to his foes. He can hold his temper a long time, but he carries a grudge longer.

Everything about Jilak is sharp. His nose looks like a beak, his mustache ends in waxed points, and his armaments gleam with killing edges. Years of fighting under the sun have left his skin tanned a deep bronze and covered with white scars.

### Iriteki, Legion Recruit

**Iriteki, male human Mcj7:** CR 7; Medium humanoid (human); HD 7d6; hp 27; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (+4 Dex, +5 armor), touch 14, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +5; Mech Atk +7; Grp+6; Atk +11 mech (any mech weapon) or +7 melee (1d6+1/19-20, masterwork short sword) or +10 ranged (1d10, masterwork steam gun); Full Atk +11/+6 mech (any mech weapon) or +7 melee (1d6+1/19-20, masterwork short sword) or +10 ranged (1d10, masterwork steam gun); SQ Patchwork repairs, push the envelope 2/day, roll with the punches 1 increment, Shar'Stavian weapon restrictions; AL CG; SV Fort +2, Ref +10, Will +2; Str 13, Dex 18, Con 11, Int 15, Wis 10, Cha 14.

**Skills and Feats:** Appraise +2 (+4 with mechs), Balance +11, Climb +11, Craft (mechcraft) +14, Intimidate +3, Jump +11, Knowledge (mechs) +12, Knowledge (steam engines) +12, Mech Pilot +16, Ride +4; Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Martial Weapon Proficiency (lance), Mech Menace, Mechidextrous, Mech-walker, Quick Draw, Skill Focus (Mech Pilot), Speed Freak, Weapon Finesse.

**Possessions:** Masterwork short sword, masterwork steam gun, +2 *pilot's armor*, *gloves of dexterity* +2.

Iriteki has turned his back on the traditional tribal ways. He is a mech jockey working his way up through the Legion's forces, but his goal is to become an independent dragon-hunter. To do that, he needs a powerful mech, and he'll happily sign on to any quest or mission that gets him closer to this goal. He has also become an avowed atheist. He scorns the old gods and politely mocks those who belong to holy orders (although he happily welcomes their magic).

A layer of soot and grime usually covers Iriteki. When cleaned up, he's a presentable young man with mischief in his brown eyes.

He spends a great deal of time inside steam-powered mechs, where conversation can be difficult, so he often raises his voice when it isn't necessary.

### Niarli Morningstar, A Lonely Tlan

**Niarli Morningstar, female human Brd14:** CR 14; Medium humanoid (human); HD 14d6+14; hp 63; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 22 (+2 Dex, +7 armor, +3 deflection), touch 15, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +10; Mech Atk +5; Grp+10; Atk +11 melee (1d6+1 plus 1d6 fire, +1 *flaming light mace*) or +13 ranged (1d8/19-20, +1 *light crossbow*); Full Atk +11/+6 melee (1d6+1 plus 1d6 fire, +1 *flaming light mace*) or +13/+8 ranged (1d8/19-20, +1 *light crossbow*); SA Spells; SQ Bardic knowledge +17, countersong, *fascinate*, inspire courage +3, *suggestion*, inspire greatness, *song of freedom*; AL CN; SV Fort +5, Ref +11, Will +8; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 8, Cha 18.

**Skills and Feats:** Bluff +23, Concentration +18, Diplomacy +8 (+9 among friendly or helpful NPCs), Disguise +21 (+23 to act in character), Gather Information +6 (+7 among friendly or helpful NPCs), Intimidate +6, Knowledge (history) +8, Knowledge (local) +8, Perform (acting) +21 (+23 to entertain), Perform (oratory) +21 (+23 to entertain), Perform (sing) +21 (+23 to entertain), Use Magic Device +21; Combat Expertise, Improved Feint, Persuasive, Rapid Reload (light crossbow), Silver Tongue, Storyteller.

**Possessions:** +1 *flaming light mace*, +1 *light crossbow*, +3 *chain shirt*, *ring of protection* +3, *tlaka of disguise* (as *hat of disguise*).

**Languages:** Common, Gnome, Janyuula, Orc.

**Spells** (4/4/4/4/1; save DC 14 + spell level): As 14th-level bard.

Niarli Morningstar is one of the best-loved Tlan, and one of the loneliest. She performs traditional plays and songs of the plains-folk, especially those of her own people, but her ability to shift between characters makes it hard for her to place trust in others. Her many admirers see to it that she never lacks for the things she desires. Her friends, however, are few and scattered. Niarli sometimes disguises herself and goes adventuring, finding that the moments of pain and terror are more real than the comfortable illusions she spins.

Niarli is pretty and charming, and above all she tries to be whatever her associates wish for. Unfortunately, she's never learned how to simply be herself. Niarli often uses magic to alter her appearance, but naturally she's a tall woman with light brown hair that reaches her



shoulders. Her natural grace turns into cat-like ferocity in combat.

### Thelm Gearson, Hidden Stalker

**Thelm Gearson, male half-orc Ftr2/ Stk2:** CR 4; Medium humanoid (half-orc); HD 2d10+2d6; hp 18; Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16 (+2 Dex, +4 armor), touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +3; Mech Atk +1; Grp+5; Atk +6 melee (1d8+2/x3, masterwork warhammer) or +5 ranged (1d6+2, throwing axe); Full Atk +4 melee (1d8+2/x3, masterwork warhammer) and +3 melee (1d6+2, throwing axe) or +5 ranged (1d6+2, throwing axe); SA Sneak attack +1d6; SQ Evasion, trapfinding; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 14.

**Skills and Feats:** Balance +4, Bluff +3, Climb +4, Diplomacy +3, Disable Device +10, Disguise +9, Knowledge (mechs) +6, Hide +6, Jump +4, Open Lock +9, Move Silently +4; Blended Features, Combat Reflexes, Gearstride, Two-Weapon Fighting.

**Possessions:** Masterwork warhammer, throwing axes (x3), tanglefoot bags (x2), masterwork scale mail, masterwork thieves' tools.

The unwanted child of a Legion soldier and an orcish raider, Thelm was hidden away in Rebirth's gear forest for fear that his paternal side would be obvious. Fortunately for him, he looks quite human. His youth was spent learning about the inner workings of mechs, and also about the prejudice that undergirds Legion society. Now he moves from one mech to another, never staying long, always looking for a way to secure his place in the world.

Thelm looks like a broad-shouldered human with a prominent jaw. It takes an expert to detect his orcish blood. His armor resembles gearmail, as it has many gears worked into its structure, but it is actually scale mail. His warhammer also resembles a tool as much as a weapon.

### Aodo, Usni Snoop

**Aodo, male human Cog5:** CR 5; Medium humanoid (human); HD 5d4+10; hp 24; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+2 Dex, +1 armor), touch 12, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +2; Mech Atk +1; Grp+1; Atk/Full Atk +2 melee (1d6-1, masterwork club) or +5 ranged (1d8/19-20, masterwork repeating light crossbow); SQ Integrated parts, machine empathy; AL LE; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 9, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 11, Cha 11.

**Skills and Feats:** Appraise +2 (+4 for either blacksmithing or mechs), Craft (blacksmithing) +10, Craft (mechcraft) +25, Disable

Device +13, Gather Information +6, Knowledge (local) +10, Knowledge (mechs) +17, Knowledge (steam engines) +15, Listen +10, Mech Pilot +10, Sense Motive +4, Spot +2; Alertness, Craft Steam Gear, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (flame nozzle, repeating light crossbow, steam gun), Gearhead, Mech Weapon Proficiency (Forester, Stormblade), Skill Focus (Craft [mech]).

**Possessions:** Heavy prybar (treat as masterwork club), masterwork repeating light crossbow, padded armor, stethoscope, masterwork coglayer's tools (+2 to Disable Device and Craft [mechcraft] checks).

**Steam Powers:** Iron Arm with Voice Command, Igemaker with Wavemaker, Optical Orb with Wavemaker (3x).

Aodo knows everything happening aboard his mech. Snooping and spying are his greatest joy. He has a regular technical job, which he uses as an excuse to place his combined optical orb/wavemaker devices in interesting locations. His intent isn't exactly malicious, but he feels no shame about ferreting out the secrets of others – or using that knowledge for his own benefit.

Aodo is a portly man who shaves his head to hide his gradual baldness. He is usually swaddled in thick clothes with many pockets. An iron arm rests on his shoulder, responding to Aodo's voice and handling tasks that require more strength than finesse.

### Aksasan, Modern Monk

**Aksasan, female human Mnk10/Smb4:** CR 14; Medium humanoid (human); HD 14d8+42; hp 105; Init +4; Spd 60 ft.; AC 22 (+4 Dex, +1 armor, +3 deflection, +2 Wis, +2 bonus), touch 21, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +10; Mech Atk +5; Grp+13; Atk +15 melee (2d6+4, steel hand) or +14 ranged (1d10, steam gun); Full Atk +15/+15/+9 melee (2d6+4, steel hand) or +14 ranged (1d10, steam gun); SA Stunning fist (11/day, DC 19); SQ Evasion, improved evasion, still mind, *ki* strike (magic and lawful), slow fall 50 ft., purity of body, wholeness of body (20 hp), steam engine, lose self; AL N; SV Fort +11, Ref +8, Will +11; Str 16, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 12.

**Skills and Feats:** Balance +8, Climb +16, Concentration +10, Craft (blacksmithing) +2, Escape Artist +19, Heal +10, Knowledge (steam engines) +8, Jump +20, Profession (engineer) +10, Tumble +21, Use Rope +4 (+6 with bindings); Acrobatic, Agile, Combat Reflexes, Craft Steam Gear, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain), Improved Disarm, Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike,

Mobility, Stunning Fist.

**Possessions:** Masterwork spiked chain, steam gun, +1 *shuriken* (4), *ring of protection* +3, *amulet of mighty fists* +2.

**Artificial Parts:** Steel hand (2d6 unarmed damage), subdermal armor (+1 AC).

Aksasan is unusual even among the eccentric Usni. After years of quiet contemplation, she turned her back on the monk's life and became a steamborg. The truth is that she believes Dotrak is talking to her, and she seeks communion with this strange force. She's entirely sane, but to say that her worldview is unusual is an understatement.

Aksasan is angular, and her movements are always deliberate. Her right hand has been replaced with a piston-powered steel equivalent. The plates under her skin give her an odd, almost lumpy appearance. She wears monk's robes festooned with small tools and engine parts.

### Crogaan the Red, Zhekmir Virtue

**Crogaan the Red, male human Brb5/ Virtue5:** CR 10; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 5d12+5d8+30; hp 87; Init +6; Spd 50 ft.; AC 16 (+1 Dex, +5 armor), touch 11, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +10; Grp+13; Atk +14 melee (2d6+3+1d3, adamantite chattersword) or +12 ranged (1d8+3/x3, masterwork composite longbow [+3 Str]); Full Atk +14/+9 melee (2d6+3+1d3, adamantite chattersword) or +12/+7 ranged (1d8+3/x3, masterwork composite longbow [+3 Str]); SQ DR 2/–, rage 3/day, uncanny dodge, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +1, Ferocity, Honor, Speed, Strength, resist fear and intimidation; AL N; SV Fort +11, Ref +6, Will +4; Str 17, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 10.

**Skills and Feats:** Bluff +2, Craft (sewing) +3, Intimidate +16, Listen +12, Ride +11, Sense Motive +1, Survival +8, Spot +5; Exotic Weapon Proficiency (chattersword), Improved Initiative, Inquisitor, Iron Will, Persuasive, Track, True Believer (arcane magic is innately evil).

**Possessions:** Adamantine chattersword, adamantite breastplate, masterwork longsword, masterwork handaxe, masterwork dagger, masterwork composite longbow [+3 Str], 10 silvered arrows, 10 cold iron arrows.

Crogaan is one of the senior Virtues, and while he has little interest in command, he is often found at the forefront of a conflict. Often he helped create the conflict. His savagery is tempered by his Virtue training, and Shar Thizdic uses him as a living weapon.





Always suspicious of magic, Crogaan has recently decided that arcane spells are evil, and he now refuses to use anything touched by arcane magic. He mistrusts wizards and their ilk. Shar Thizdic might turn him loose against the L'arile Nation soon; otherwise, this feisty barbarian might create more problems than he solves.

Crogan is called "the Red" because his wild hair and bushy beard are the color of sunset. He once carried magic items, but he now shuns them in favor of steam-driven ones. His chatersword is a particular favorite. Crogan takes one scrap of cloth from every enemy who falls to him in melee, and he always wears a patchwork cloak made from these pieces.

### Donlea Sunprayer, Lunar Hunter

**Donlea Sunprayer, female human Clr8:** CR 8; Medium humanoid (human); HD 8d8+8; hp 45; Init -3; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17 (-2 Dex, +9 armor), touch 8, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +6; Mech Atk +3; Grp+8; Atk +9 melee (1d10+4/x3, +1 halberd of bane [lunar]) or +5 ranged (1d4+2, masterwork sling); Full Atk +9/+4 melee (1d10+4/x3, +1 halberd of bane [lunar]) or +5/+0 ranged (1d4+2, masterwork sling); SA Spells; SQ Turn undead, spontaneous casting; AL LG; SV Fort +7, Ref +0, Will +10; Str 15, Dex 6, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 19, Cha 16.

**Skills and Feats:** Concentration +13, Heal +16, Knowledge (religion) +13, Spellcraft +13; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, Moonwatcher, Still Spell.

**Possessions:** +1 halberd of bane (lunar), masterwork dagger, masterwork sling, +1 full plate, ring of protection +1, perapt of wisdom +2.

**Spells** (6/4+1/3+1/3+1/2+1; save DC 14 + spell level): As 8th-level cleric. Domains: Earth, Protection.

As a child, Donlea was briefly taken over by a lunar skinsteler. She has feared and hunted lunar creatures ever since. All the people of the endless plains are her congregation, and she preaches the gospel of humanity's inevitable victory over the moon's monsters. She is also a wise and patient soul who sees herself as a servant of anyone in need. Unfortunately, her insight is matched by her clumsiness.

Donlea moves slowly, because if she goes faster she may well stumble over something. Her expression is usually kind, but it twists into fury if she finds evidence of lunar monsters. The halberd she carries is carved with runes and charms that spell death to such creatures. As her symbol, she wears an amulet with the image of a gate at the base of a mountain.

## MECHS OF THE LEGION

Humans have no gearwright heritage, so the Legion's mechs are a strange mixture. Their engineering and construction are not as advanced as those of the dwarves. But human designers are also free of restrictive traditions, and with Shar Thizdic's enthusiastic backing, the Legion has planned mechs unlike those known anywhere else on Highpoint. If the success of Haven is any indication, soon Legion designs could be as feared as those of the Stenians — perhaps more so.

### FORESTER

**Size:** Gargantuan  
**Power Source:** Clockwork  
**Payload Units:** 14 (extra weapon mounts)  
**Height:** 27 ft.  
**Space/Reach:** 10 ft. by 10 ft./10 ft.  
**Crew:** 2 (weapons: 3)  
**Firing Ports:** 14  
**Hit Dice:** 24  
**Hit Points:** 132  
**Critical Thresholds:** Green, Yellow 66, Orange 33, Red 13  
**Base Initiative:** +3  
**Speed:** 50 ft.  
**Maneuverability:** Good  
**AC:** 6  
**Hardness:** 8 (stone)  
**Base melee attack:** +4  
**Base ranged attack:** +3  
**Unarmed damage:** 1d10+8  
**Trample:** largest Medium; safe Small; damage 3d6  
**Saves:** Fort -2, Ref +2, Will -  
**Abilities:** Str 26, Dex 16, Con -, Int -, Wis -, Cha -  
**Mechcraft DC:** 48  
**Base Planning Time:** 96 days  
**Base Cost:** 3,303 gp  
**Total Cost:** 9,385 gp  
**Labor Time:** 3,840 man-hours  
**Construction Time:** 48 days (10 average

laborers plus 1 overseer)

**Options:** Extra weapon mounts (+4 PU)

#### PAYLOAD USAGE

PU	Use
2	Crew
12	Onboard weaponry
14	Total

The forester is a second-generation Legion mech, updating the common steam-driven woodsman model. Although more expensive than its predecessor, the forester is also far more effective, demonstrating the Legion's increasingly sophisticated understanding of mechs.

It resembles a dead tree, with its wood-like armor and knobby limbs, and this is no accident. The forester was designed after the Legion learned several lessons from the elven mechs of the L'arile Nation. Chief among them was the value of stealth. With its bark-like exterior and its lack of smoke, a motionless forester is easy to mistake for an oak or maple, especially when it's among a clump of real trees.

This suits its origins as a timber harvester. The old woodsman was a steam-powered mech of similar size wielding an axe in either hand. It was an adequate combat model, and its armament was handy when Legion forces were gathering lumber for the frames and furnaces of its larger mechs.

A simple design, the woodsman was also used to train new mech jockeys in the field. One such novice was Shar Thizdic himself. The Legion's leader put himself through the same instruction that his mech pilots did — and proved quite skilled, by all accounts — during which time he operated a woodsman. Ever one to think of new solutions, Shar Thizdic saw untapped potential in this basic mech, and within three weeks his coglayers were drawing up plans for what would become the forester.

One axe was replaced with a buzzsaw, enhancing the mech's ability to fight larger opponents. Torso space that had been used for cargo was given over to a modified version of the common flame nozzle. At first glance it might seem unwise for a wooden mech to carry a flame nozzle, but the forester's armor is actually cunningly crafted stone. Colored to match bark, these seamed plates allow the mech to pass for a tree under the right conditions.

TABLE 2-1: MECHS OF THE LEGION

MECH NAME	FACTION	SIZE	POWER	PRICE (GP)
Forester	Legion	Gargantuan	Clockwork	9,385
Rook	Legion	Colossal	Steam	11,089
Stormblade	Legion	Colossal II	Steam	23,975



The forester is starting to see widespread use throughout the Legion's mech fleet, but is most commonly deployed to areas where its camouflage is of use. This has included a handful of timber raids in the northern forests belonging to the L'arile Nation. The forester is as fast and maneuverable as an animated mech of similar size, thanks to its clockwork construction, and if the two nations should clash, the Forester is capable of felling L'arile mechs like so much dead wood.

## Special Rules

**Focused Flame Nozzle:** This enhanced design doubles the range of a standard flame nozzle and increases its canister size to hold 20 shots. It also triples the price of the unit, although refueling still only costs one-quarter the price of a standard flame nozzle. Because of its unusual construction, a focused

flame nozzle consumes four times the usual amount of fuel when running at full blaze.

**Camouflage Armor:** When motionless, the Forester can be mistaken for a tree. At a distance of 50 feet, observers must succeed at a Spot check against DC 10 to recognize the mech for what it is. The DC for this check increases by 2 for every extra 50 feet between observer and mech, and rises by an additional +4 if the forester is standing among other trees. Closer than 50 feet, the mech's true nature becomes apparent — its weapons are visible, and its clockwork engine produces an audible ticking.

## ROOK

**Size:** Colossal  
**Power Source:** Steam  
**Payload Units:** 16  
**Height:** 30 ft.  
**Space/Reach:** 15 ft. by 15 ft./15 ft.  
**Crew:** 2 (weapons: 4)  
**Firing Ports:** 12  
**Hit Dice:** 48  
**Hit Points:** 264  
**Critical Thresholds:** Green, Yellow 132,  
Orange 66, Red 26  
**Base Initiative:** -1  
**Speed:** 40 ft.  
**Maneuverability:** Average  
**AC:** 2  
**Hardness:** 15 (steel, Colossal, armor plating)  
**Base melee attack:** +4  
**Base ranged attack:** -1  
**Unarmed damage:** 1d12+12  
**Trample:** largest Large; safe Large; damage  
4d6  
**Saves:** Fort +0, Ref -4, Will -

**Abilities:** Str 34, Dex 8, Con –, Int –, Wis –, Cha –

Mechcraft DC: 39

**Base Planning Time:** 78 days

**Base Cost:** 3,278 gp

**Total Cost:** 11,089 gp

**Labor Time:** 4,480 man-hours

**Construction Time:** 28 days (20 average laborers and 2 overseers)

**Options:** Armor plating, leg anchors, steady feet

## PAYLOAD USAGE

PU	Use
2	Crew
2	Gunners/passengers
12	Onboard weaponry
<b>16</b>	<b>Total</b>

The Legion is supposedly building mechs to fight lunar dragons. Some doubt that this is the truth, but nobody can deny that the rook mech was created for that purpose. Named for Shar Thizdic's fallen home city, the rook is a mech that must be operated by the bravest of pilots, for it battles these monsters without a single offensive weapon.

Each rook carries two binder barbs, a new kind of device developed for dragon-fighting. These wide-muzzled tubes hurl massive bundles of barbed chain at their targets. Each bundle resembles an enormous net made of the same kind of chain found in a chain tentacle. Used properly, these bundles are capable of hopelessly entangling their target.

However, the binder barb can't reel its target in like a chain tentacle can. The steam-driven winch that retracts the bundle is too weak to pull greater weights along with it. A rook's target is often too tangled to move, but if not, the rook has to hold it in place. For this

**TABLE 2-2: ONBOARD WEAPONRY – LEGION**

Location	Arc of Fire	Weapon (Damage, Range in ft., Other)	PU	Crew
<b>Forester Onboard Weaponry</b>				
Right arm	Melee	Huge buzzsaw (2d8/19-20/x3, ignores hardness)	4	1
Left arm	Melee	Huge axe blade (2d8+8/x3)	4	1
Torso	180° forward	Huge focused flame nozzle (2d8/x2, 60 ft.)	4	1
<b>Total</b>			<b>12</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Rook Onboard Weaponry</b>				
Torso	180° forward	Gargantuan binder barbs (2d6, 100 ft., entangles)	8	2
Right arm	180° right	Huge binder barbs (1d8, 100 ft., entangles)	4	2
<b>Total</b>			<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Stormblade Onboard Weaponry</b>				
Right arm	180° forward	Gargantuan steam cannon w/ explosive shells (4dl0/x3, 950 ft., explosive)	8	2
Left arm	Melee	Gargantuan sword blade (2dl2+12/19-20/x3)	8	1
Torso	180° forward	Gargantuan steam cannon (3dl0/x3, 950 ft.)	8	2
<b>Total</b>			<b>24</b>	<b>5</b>



TABLE 2-3: NEW MECH WEAPONS – LEGION

WEAPON	COST	DAMAGE	CRITICAL	RANGE	WEIGHT	TYPE	CREW	PU
Flame Nozzle, Focused	x3	Same	Same	x2	x4	Same	Same	Same
Binder Barb								
Huge	1,500 gp	1d8	x2	100 ft.	200 lbs.	Piercing/Special	2	4
Gargantuan	3,000 gp	2d6	x2	100 ft.	300 lbs.	Piercing/Special	2	8
Colossal	4,500 gp	2d8	x2	100 ft.	400 lbs.	Piercing/Special	3	16

reason, rooks are stronger than most mechs of their size, and they have specially anchored legs as well. In fact, a rook looks comical at first glance, with its immensely wide legs and splayed feet supporting a cylindrical body.

The rook also can't do much to a target caught by its binder barbs. Its unarmed strikes aren't particularly impressive, and as the rook is almost always fighting one or more lunar dragons, it is better off staying at some distance. For this reason, rooks are always deployed as part of a mech squadron, preferably one with two or more powerful melee fighters. Such mechs can charge a snared dragon and hack it to pieces while ranged combatants fire from a safe distance. All the rook has to do is hold on.

### Special Rules

**Leg Anchors:** These stout metal poles unfold from a mech's legs and bury their barbed heads deep in the ground. This makes the mech harder to knock down, giving it a +8

bonus on all attempts to avoid being tripped. It also gives a +4 bonus on any Strength check related to holding a target or pulling something closer, as the mech is securely anchored. However, a mech who has deployed its leg anchors cannot move from the spot it's anchored to. Leg anchors increase a mech's cost by 5% of the base cost.

**Binder Barbs:** This unorthodox weapon looks like a bizarre mating between a chain tentacle, a javelin rack, and a steam gun with a freakishly wide muzzle. Its back half is the powerful steam engine that propels its chain bundle forward and the winch that draws it up again. The front half is a huge open pipe leading to an intricate system of tubes that keep the weapon's many barbed chains separate from each other.

A binder barb's bundle is centered around a heavy iron sphere that resembles a steam cannon's ball. Many barbed chains are attached to this sphere; when fired, they trail behind the sphere like streamers. This slows its flight, limiting the weapon's range and damage. When the sphere strikes a target, the chains whip around it and dig in. Two other chains connect the whole bundle to the weapon so it can be drawn back inside after firing.

Due to its unusual nature, firing a binder barb is considered a touch attack — the weapon's purpose is not to do damage, and as long as the sphere strikes the target somewhere, its chains should have enough velocity to entangle. If the attack roll exceeds the target's normal AC, the target also takes damage from the barbs, but even an attack that fails to best the target's AC can still entangle if it beats the target's touch AC.

A target hit by a binder barb is considered entangled. Normally this means they suffer a –2 penalty to attack rolls and a –4 penalty to Dexterity, can move at only half speed, and cannot charge or run. Targets three or more size increments smaller than the weapon are too small to be affected by its chains, and targets three or more increments larger aren't unaffected, as the chains are too short to totally tie them down.

The chains can be broken by a DC 34 Strength check, and can be escaped by a DC 26 Escape Artist check.

Rewinding a binder barb's bundle takes some time. Withdrawing the sphere and its chains takes 3 rounds for every range increment the weapon was fired across (so one that traveled 250 feet requires 9 rounds to return to the mech). Separating the chains so they will fly normally also takes time, even though an automatic steam-powered mechanism handles the chore. Once the bundle is returned, this separation process takes 10 rounds (2 minutes).

The firing mechanism for a binder barb is modeled after that of a javelin rack, and so it is only available in the three sizes that javelin racks are. Statistics are given below. The cost for a binder barb is 150% that of a similarly sized javelin rack. Its other statistics are identical except where given.

### STORMBLADE

**Size:** Colossal II

**Power Source:** Steam

**Payload Units:** 32

**Height:** 50 ft.

**Space/Reach:** 25 ft. by 25 ft./25 ft.

**Crew:** 8 (weapons: 5)

**Firing Ports:** 20

**Hit Dice:** 96

**Hit Points:** 528

**Critical Thresholds:** Green, Yellow 264,

Orange 132, Red 52

**Base Initiative:** –2

**Speed:** 50 ft.

**Maneuverability:** Average

**AC:** 2

**Hardness:** 14 (steel, Colossal II)

**Base melee attack:** +4

**Base ranged attack:** –2

**Unarmed damage:** 3d6+12

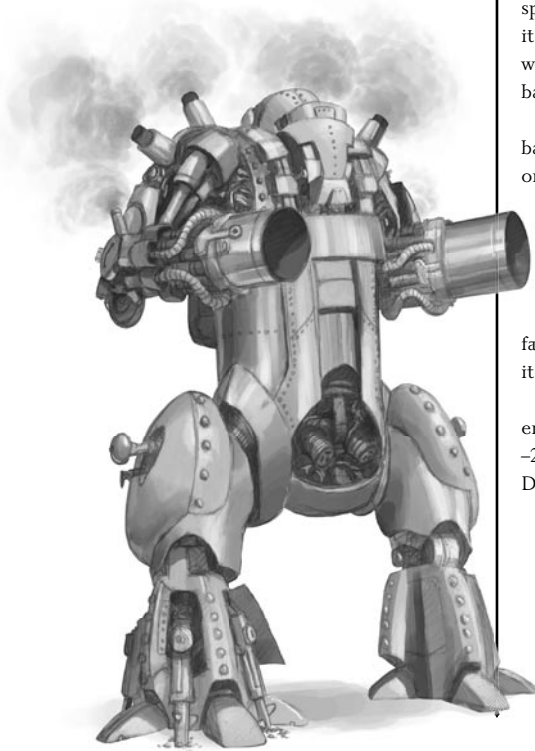
**Trample:** largest Huge; safe Medium; damage 5d6

**Saves:** Fort +0, Ref –4, Will –

**Abilities:** Str 34, Dex 6, Con –, Int –, Wis –, Cha –

**Mechcraft DC:** 42

**Base Planning Time:** 84 days



**Base Cost:** 5,725 gp  
**Total Cost:** 23,975 gp  
**Labor Time:** 7,680 man-hours  
**Construction Time:** 48 days (20 average laborers plus 2 overseers)

#### Payload Usage

PU	Use
8	Crew
24	Onboard weapons
<b>32</b>	<b>Total</b>

The stormblade was designed to be an entire mech detachment by itself. It costs roughly twice what other steam-powered mechs of its size do, but when properly deployed it more than justifies its cost. It can battle other mechs on an equal footing, and it mows down foot soldiers like wheat before the reaper.

Each stormblade is an imposing steel-clad figure with bright banners flying from its shoulders and elbows. The left hand grips an enormous sword, the mech's only melee weapon. Ideally, the stormblade will never need this blade. Its entire lower right arm has been replaced with a hulking steam cannon, one specially designed to fire explosive ammunition, and this is the mech's true main weapon.

The thundering sound of this ammunition gives the mech its name. Shar Thizdic originally wanted to call it the valorous defender, but after seeing it in action he agreed that a more exciting name was called for. This arm cannon exacts a terrible toll on infantry. Only one or

two shots are needed to break a line of enemy footmen. Given the cannon's range, many more shots are possible before infantry can approach closely enough to be dangerous. Against such targets, even an inexperienced mech gunner can inflict severe damage.

A second steam cannon is mounted in the torso. This provides extra power when facing enemy mechs or creatures like lunar dragons. It also means the stormblade is more effective in ranged combat than in melee. Stormblade pilots prefer to strike from a distance, hitting other mechs from two or three range increments away. Weaker targets are even easier to strike at a distance, thanks to the explosive shells, meaning that few cannon blasts truly miss when attacking a massed foe.

Not wanting to waste a possible advantage, the Legion's mech corps has quietly spread disinformation about the stormblade. They would have other mech pilots believe that the stormblade's sword is something special as well, and that enemy mechs only increase the danger to themselves as they approach. It is uncertain how well this tactic is working, as any competent mech pilot should be able to figure out the stormblade's tactics by observing it, but as Shar Thizdic can attest, people believe what they wish to believe. Some stormblade crews have commissioned exotic-looking swords to enhance this deception, ranging from barbed blades to ones fashioned in the shape of lightning bolts.

It's worth noting that the Legion's mech pilots also refer to the stormblade as "two balls and a big blade."

**Crew:** 2,056 (weapons: 57)  
**Firing Ports:** 986  
**Hit Dice:** 718  
**Hit Points:** 3,949  
**Critical Thresholds:** Green, Yellow 1,974, Orange 987, Red 394  
**Base Initiative:** -5  
**Speed:** 180 ft.  
**Maneuverability:** Clumsy  
**AC:** 2  
**Hardness:** 26 (stone, City-mech E)  
**Base melee attack:** +20  
**Base ranged attack:** -5  
**Unarmed damage:** 11d6+28  
**Trample:** largest City-mech B; safe Colossal V; damage 13d6  
**Saves:** Fort -2, Ref -8, Will -  
**Abilities:** Str 66, Dex 0, Con -, Int -, Wis -, Cha -  
**Mechcraft DC:** 80  
**Base Planning Time:** 160 days  
**Base Cost:** 1,342,669 gp  
**Total Cost:** 1,416,003 gp (does not include weapons)  
**Labor Time:** 1,966,080 man-hours  
**Construction Time:** 125 days (1,970 average laborers and 197 overseers)  
**Options:** Hangar (128 PU), secure crew quarters (32 PU plus 2 doors)

### Combat Tactics

Anyone attacking a city-mech is either immensely powerful or hopelessly crazy. Haven has a variety of weapons in its upper body for the former, and several nasty surprises in its legs for the latter. It also has a complement of smaller mechs, either in its hangar or traveling underfoot, to say nothing of the thousands of nomads trailing in a loose circle around its path.

Boarders and other human-sized invaders are the main problem faced by a city-mech. Each of Haven's legs has a large ballista and larger steam cannon for punching holes in anything that looks tough, and a pair of independently moving flame nozzles to discourage everyone else. Each leg also has a pair of bomb launchers. These are reasonably useful against large numbers of infantry, but their true value is deterrence. Few attackers are willing to spend time prying open an access hatch while in range of a weapon that hurls pressure bombs in random arcs.

The smaller mechs and various tribesfolk circling Haven also have a part to play in its defense. Aside from their obvious help in repelling invaders, they patrol the area around Haven for several miles. Anyone unusual they



### CITY-MECH HAVEN

Rebirth is the Legion city-mech that everyone knows, but Haven is the one that deserves attention. It is a superior design, fixing many of Rebirth's mistakes, and after Tananliel it is undoubtedly the mightiest mech currently walking the endless plains. Even so, Shar Thizdic sees it as little more than a stepping stone toward the Legion's next goals. Haven is home to the Loyalty chapter, currently providing housing for more than 3,500 of its members.

#### Stats

**Size:** City-mech E  
**Power Source:** Steam  
**Payload Units:** 8,224  
**Height:** 1,300 ft.  
**Space/Reach:** 650 ft. by 650 ft./650 ft.



find is pulled aside for questioning, and those who can't give a good reason for their presence are moved along (or worse). Haven is not as friendly to visitors as some of the dwarven city-mechs.

Menaces larger than a foot soldier have much to fear from Haven itself. Like many Legion mechs, it carries a lance, reflecting the mechdom's origin among horse-riding cultures. This weapon is itself larger than most mechs, and if Haven charges, this weapon does an unbelievable amount of damage (14d12+56). More than one lunar dragon, battered by volleys from Haven's steam cannons, has ended its life at the point of this weapon.

The lance isn't useful at close range, so Haven has several other weapons that are. Its left arm terminates in a large buzzsaw suitable for close range fighting. That limb also has a pair of chain tentacles with linked firing mechanisms, to help ensure that the target won't be able to get away before Haven and its followers deal with it. This combination is frequently used against large monsters, but it is also useful against other mechs, few of which are strong enough to escape two chain tentacles in time. In addition to the lance, Haven's right fist has a bore puncher that is used for boarding situations.

Further, the mech is ringed with a roughly symmetrical distribution of ranged weapons. Several large steam cannons let it carry out combat at range, augmented by a few ballistas for closer targets. Each shoulder has a side-mounted javelin rack to deter airborne

**TABLE 2-4: HAVEN PAYLOAD USAGE**

PU	Use
7,000	Moderate living and working space for 3,000 people
800	Extensive space for 200 people, including 32 PU of secure crew quarters
32	Foundry for building mechs of Colossal size or smaller
128	Hangar space for mech fleet
264	Onboard weaponry
<b>8,224</b>	<b>Total</b>

attackers.

Haven's armor is stone, which is unusual in a mech of its size. This was a concession to reality — the Legion doesn't have access to huge amounts of metal, while the mountains that once sheltered Rook are still a viable source of quality stone. In practical terms it makes little difference, as city-mechs are mostly protected by their size, but it alters the dynamic of combat slightly. Rust bombs aren't as effective against Haven's exterior, and ferrovores will find little to snack on outside. Stone is harder to repair than metal, and Haven's exterior is covered in cracks and seams, especially around the feet.

### Appearance

Outside: Haven is enormous, taller even than Nedderpik. Shar Thizdic deliberately wants the Legion's city-mechs to be built on human frames. He hasn't entirely gotten his wish, as



**TABLE 2-5: HAVEN ONBOARD WEAPONS**

LOCATION	ARC OF FIRE	WEAPON (DAMAGE, RANGE IN FT., OTHER)	PU	CREW
Right arm	Melee	Colossal III lance (7d12+28/x3)	64	1
		Colossal bore puncher (4d6, ignore hardness)	16	2
Right shoulder	180° right	Gargantuan javelin rack (x5) (2d8, 200 ft.)	8	2
Left arm	Melee	Colossal buzzsaw (3d12/19-20/x3, ignore hardness)	16	1
	180° forward	2x linked chain tentacles (2d8, 100 ft.)	16	3
Left shoulder	180° left	Gargantuan javelin rack (x5) (2d8, 200 ft.)	8	2
Torso	180° forward	4x Gargantuan steam cannons (3d10/x3, 950 ft.)	32	8
		2x Huge ballistas (3d6/x3, 120 ft.)	8	4
	45° backward	4x Gargantuan steam cannons (3d10/x3, 950 ft.)	32	8
		2x Huge ballistas (3d6/x3, 120 ft.)	8	4
Right leg*	360°	2x Huge flame nozzles (2d8, 30 ft., fire)	8	2
		Huge ballista (3d6/x3, 120 ft.)	4	2
		Gargantuan steam cannon (3d10/x3, 950 ft.)	8	2
		2x bomb launcher (varies, 40 ft.)	8	2
Left leg*	360°	2x Huge flame nozzles (2d8, 30 ft., fire)	8	2
		Huge ballista (3d6/x3, 120 ft.)	4	2
		Gargantuan steam cannon (3d10/x3, 950 ft.)	8	2
		2x bomb launcher (varies, 40 ft.)	8	2

\* THESE WEAPONS ARE MOUNTED ON ROTATING TRACKS. THEY CAN SHIFT FACING BY 45 DEGREES PER TURN. UNLESS NOTED, THESE WEAPONS ARE NOT LINKED.





mech physics dictate a bulky shape for such huge constructs, but Haven is obviously not a dwarven creation.

As noted, the city-mech's stone armor is difficult to repair neatly. When possible, broken sections are replaced entirely, but Haven is rarely near a convenient quarry. The mech's armor was originally crafted in huge slabs that were secured to its frame. Damaged slabs tend to crack further over time, and have even been known to shatter entirely from the force of Haven's footfalls.

To fix this problem, Haven's repair crew (a group known as the Rock Eaters) have taken to chipping out the entire broken area of a given slab and patching the hole with the sturdiest bricks available. These patches are not as sturdy as the original stone, but will usually hold invaders off long enough for Haven's other defenses to take care of the problem.

At higher levels, Haven is dotted with cluster of glass windows. None of them are large enough for a human to pass through, and all of them are secured by iron bars on the inside. They permit some light to enter the mech's outer levels while being reasonably secure against boarders.

On one occasion a team of gnome saboteurs managed to climb the mech's exterior to the third tier of windows. They were caught while sawing through the interior grating, hauled before the Iron Words, and sentenced to leave they way the arrived. That bank of windows is now known as Gnome's Lookout. One of the saboteurs, apparently a bard, managed to use *feather fall* to slow her descent. She escaped bowshot from the enraged Iron Words, but ironically she landed just underneath Haven's feet as it took a new step, ending her career as a mech boarder.

**Interior:** Haven is not as dark and cramped as one would expect a city-mech to be, especially on the upper levels just beneath the mech's armor. The halls and rooms are sized for humans, with ceilings ranging from 6 to 8 feet in most places, which is a relief for larger visitors. Internal surfaces are built from a variety of materials, mostly wood and iron.

One important lesson learned from Rebirth was that a human city-mech can't have too much light inside. Early experiments with regular gas-powered lanterns proved disastrous, leaving several Usni crafters with severe burns, but Legion designers resolved to keep trying. A few sections of Rebirth still use the experimental gas flame system, mostly in the older levels of the lower torso and upper legs.

Most other areas are forced to rely on mundane torches and low-level magic. Open flame

inside a mech is always risky, as flammables are many and exits are few, so the crew of Haven strive to keep buckets of sand available near major residential intersections. This has also proven handy with those nomads who, having trouble adapting to life aboard a city-mech, insist on having campfires in their quarters.

Important areas and busy thoroughfares are lit by steel *continual flame* rods that have been fused to the steel bulkheads. At first *continual flame* torches were used out of a sense of tradition, but they were routinely stolen by residents to brighten their dark homes. Harsh fines were imposed on these thieves when they were discovered, but this proved so unpopular that it almost led to riots. Now Legion agents routinely visit such distant places as Edge and Glatek looking for rubies that can be used to cast this necessary spell.

Natural light is more common on the upper levels, thanks to the regular clusters of windows found there. Most of these windows open up on long hallways, allowing any light they catch to shine down the length of the space. The quarters for Haven's elite residents also have small porthole-sized windows.

Residential areas of Haven are drab and functional. No decoration is permitted in halls or the smaller common areas. Most living quarters share a communal kitchen and sitting area, which sits like a courtyard at the center of six or more sleeping modules. These areas have grown increasingly cramped over time. Haven originally housed roughly 2,000 plainsfolk in relative comfort. That number has increased by 50% as more nomads have been drawn to the Legion. Although his coglayers say another 500 people could be placed on Haven before it fills up, Shar Thizdic has ordered that no new citizens be added for now, as he tries to balance the safety of his people with their need for individual space.

Larger common areas, like markets and meeting halls, are well-lit and colorfully decorated. Banners celebrating the Legion, portraits of Shar Thizdic, and decorative weapons are hung on the walls. Many of these areas are circular, allowing vital mechanisms and support pillars to be secured behind the "corners" where they will be harder to sabotage. It also reduces the number of byways where clandestine meetings can take place.

### Life on Board

Haven is a military mech first and foremost. Most people on board are part of the Legion's troops or their immediate family. Even the coglayers and laborers who keep the mech

running are considered to be soldiers. Order and discipline are the rule of the day.

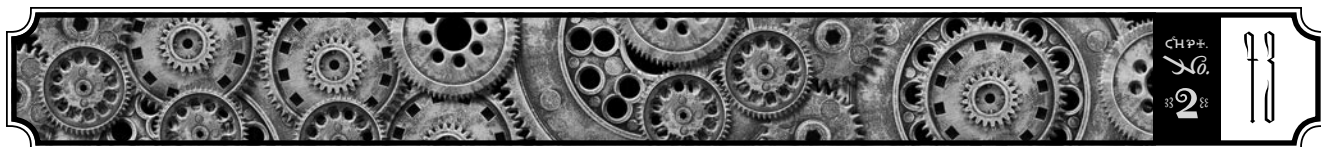
Of course, this order is imposed across a broad swath of humanity, many of whom are recent converts to the Legion's way of thinking. Although they have given up their tribal traditions in favor of the new path to human glory, many of their old habits remain. Former alliances and rivalries are largely set aside, but the smaller ways of belief and action have been carried on board.

This gives Haven an interesting culture. Its common areas and military spaces are efficient and quiet, but behind the closed doors of a family sleeping area, a lively blend of songs and foods and stories can be found. These two cultures overlap in the shared courtyards. A grim *jajanya* patriarch will sit and listen impassively to the stories of a well-traveled Tlan soldier, while a coglayer from some minor tribe cooks a pungent stew for her family and fidgets with the courtyard's water supply.

Everyone's main duty is to keep Haven running. All adult residents are expected to contribute to the mech's operation and defense, and the word "adult" is interpreted loosely. Anyone over the age of 14 will probably have a job to do. Most of these tasks are given by the Mech Commander, as a majority of Haven's residents are needed just to keep the mech running. The Guard Commander technically has authority over the other people on board, but is often occupied with the affairs of the many Loyalty chapter members who dwell outside the city-mech, so the Mech Commander frequently takes charge of these Haven residents, too.

Life on Haven is more regimented than in the rest of the Legion. Given the mech's large population and impressive combat power, the leadership of the Loyalty chapter wants to make sure nothing goes wrong. Shar Thizdic is very attentive to happenings aboard his second city-mech, which increases the scrutiny at every level.

The mech's residential areas are divided into 20 wards, each one housing approximately 150 people. Wards are subdivided into courts — units composed of the shared courtyards and their attached quarters. A ward can have anything from 4 to 15 courts, but 7 is the most common number. Each ward is overseen by a Ward Officer, a member of the mech's military crew who reports to the three commanders. The Ward Officer is more of a liaison than a leader, finding solutions to problems and directing people to the things they need. Ward Officers also have regular military duties, and many wards have little contact with their officer.



Every resident of Haven has a numbered identity disk, an idea that Legion agents brought back after a visit to Nedderpik. This thick bronze disk is the size of a coin, with Shar Thizdic's face on one side; it is presumably struck on the coinage anvils located on Rebirth. The other side bears the word "Haven" and a number. Key mech crew and military officers get numbers 1 through 499, and the remainder of the numbers go to everyone else. Its sides have been trimmed to make it a square so that it won't easily be mistaken for a regular coin.

This disk must be shown whenever an individual boards Haven, and again when entering important areas such as the main market or key upper-level corridors. If a Haven resident loses their disk, they are to report it immediately to the Iron Words, bringing with them another Haven resident who will vouch for their identity. The old number is struck from circulation, and until a new one is forged, the poor soul will have to find shelter outside Haven.

Visitors to Haven are issued disks of their own. These are large medallion-sized pieces of bronze, squared like their smaller counterparts, and must be worn around the neck on a chain or cord at all times. The word "VISITOR" is emblazoned on each one, along with a number between 1 and 200. Failure to have a visitor disk visible is a crime. The most merciful Iron Words immediately confiscate all the offender's possessions and escort him off the mech, and more creative penalties are certainly possible; it pays to keep track of one's disk. These disks must be returned when the visitor exits Haven, and a stay in the brig is common for those who fail to have their disk handy when trying to depart.

One rule that visitors and natives both run afoul of is the ban on weapons. Haven is a military mech, and Legion soldiers are permitted to carry their normal armament while on duty. Under all other circumstances, all ranged weapons and any melee weapons more than a foot long are forbidden outside one's sleeping area and courtyard. Smaller melee weapons are permitted, although anything other than a dagger is likely to draw unwelcome attention. In practical terms, this means that only light melee weapons can be carried aboard Haven. Anything else leads to permanent confiscation of the weapon and a week or two in the brig.

This rule is lifted if the mech is in combat. At any time when the Battle Commander assumes command, Haven's residents are permitted to arm themselves as a precaution. All adult residents are assigned battle stations, and if the mech enters combat, residents who aren't part of the mech's active crew are expected to man



their posts. Some stations are firing ports in the feet and legs, others are near exterior hatches and spots likely to draw boarders. Haven has never yet been breached by outside attackers, which is a point of pride among its citizens.

## Getting on Board

Everyone living on Haven is assigned to be there by the Legion's leadership. Shar Thizdic personally approves all members of the command crew, and their spouses and children become residents as well. Shar, his advisers, and the command crew shared the task of choosing the rest of Haven's citizens when the mech was built. The commanders are transferred on a regular basis, as are military officers and people in certain sensitive positions, but the majority of Haven's residents are members of the Loyalty chapter who have been there for some time.

Anyone who wants on board must apply to the mech's commanders and their aides. The Legion has an application process, complete with forms that must be filled out and witnessed. Each applicant must also have a personal interview with one of the mech's command staff (often a junior-level assistant to the Guard Commander), wherein the hopeful person explains exactly how they will make life aboard Haven better for everyone.

For a long time, this process was merely a formality. All applicants were rejected on the grounds that Haven didn't have enough space. The tide of would-be residents turned into a flood, however, and eventually Shar Thizdic relented. The mech's population cap has been increased twice from its original 2,000 residents, adding 500 people each time. Its command staff has remained constant at roughly 200 individuals.

Now it is possible for someone to become

a new Haven resident by following the process above. Most of the 1,000 new positions have been taken, but a few are still open. Only members of the Loyalty chapter can become residents, and the requirements are both very strict and very poorly defined. Some command staff are inclined to approve residency for a wide range of individuals, provided they seem competent and compliant, while others will only consider it if the mech's commanders (or Shar Thizdic) apply personal pressure.

If a Haven citizen wants to leave, the process is simpler. She notifies her Ward Officer, fills out some paperwork, and waits. It takes between three and seven days to process the papers, and the Iron Words will usually look at their files to make certain that those who leave aren't doing so for suspicious reasons. Assuming no complications, the person leaving turns in her identity disk and departs the next time Haven stops.

Visitors don't face as much hassle to get temporary admittance, but their movements are monitored very closely. The Legion is striving to be self-sufficient, so traders and mercenaries are not as welcome on Haven as they are on other city-mechs. Paperwork is again involved — for an oral culture, the people of the Legion have learned a lot about bureaucracy — and a fee must be paid. The fee is generally 20 gp, plus 2 gp for every night spent aboard Haven, but it can vary depending on the mood of the officers handling the papers.

If a visitor provides a good justification for their presence and has the necessary gold in advance, they will be issued a visitor disk and told which areas of Haven they are allowed to be in. This is usually restricted to the main market, the two smaller markets on the levels below, and all passageways needed for travel. Those who will be staying overnight are given quarters in one of the cramped, dingy guest courts near the smaller markets. All of these areas are guarded, and the soldiers keep a close eye on visitors at all times. The guest courts are watched 24 hours a day, and visitors who try to leave after the markets close will wish they had stayed put.

## Government and Major Factions

Haven is run by a triumvirate of commanders. On most mechs these positions would be filled by powerful men and women who attempt to turn them into lifetime appointments. However, Shar Thizdic believes that the Legion benefits when its officers are transferred regularly. None of Haven's leaders have been in command for a full twelve months,

and the same is true of their immediate sub-commanders.

This leaves a surprising amount of power in the hands of junior officers. Few members of the upper command staff originated in the Loyalty chapter, while most of the junior officers did. They are a cohesive bunch, working together for what they see as the chapter's best interest, which occasionally puts them at odds with the senior staff. No open conflict has broken out yet, but situations often resolve themselves to match the junior staff's wishes.

The triumvirate consists of Mech Commander Filatii Thunderfoot (one of Shar Thizdic's advisers), Guard Commander Balan Juvta, and Battle Commander Togloo Kel. The three have a cordial relationship, but none of them are friends. Part of it is that senior officers are ultimately rivals for promotion, and each of the three hopes for a permanent post on either Haven or Rebirth. The overlapping nature of their duties is also a source of regular tension. Filatii and Togloo spar over who should assume command and when. These debates often draw in Balan, who is quite busy just administering the needs of the Loyalty members not living on Haven.

Haven's senior Iron Word is Chora Mulabanth, a member of the Loyalty chapter for seven years now. She is the informal leader of the junior staff, and she is careful to rein them in when necessary. Haven's law-abiding citizens respect her a great deal, as she measures out fair but harsh punishment to anyone caught breaking the Legion's laws. She is the most important mech official that characters aboard Haven are likely to meet. It is whispered that she aspires to hold a command position, but in public she seems content with her current lot.

Beyond this, Haven has little room for the politics of control. As a military mech, it is subject to commands from Shar Thizdic and his inner circle, but beyond that the word of the three commanders is final. Legion laws apply, of course, but their interpretation and execution is at the discretion of the mech's crew under most circumstances. The only way for Haven's government to change is for Shar Thizdic to change it. It does seem likely that at least one of the commanders will be transferred soon, perhaps making room for Chora to finally ascend.

Below the society's surface one can find the usual mess of petty intrigue and rivalry, but the non-governmental factions aren't as powerful on Haven as on many city-mechs, thanks to Shar Thizdic's policy of blending the various tribes together. Old structures have been broken apart and new ones have not yet arisen to take their place. The mech has no formal thieves guild, for

## CHORA MULABANTH, SENIOR IRON WORD

Law enforcement in the Legion is handled within each chapter by a group called the Iron Words, each of whom is a combination of town guard and judge. Chora Mulabanth is the senior Iron Word of Haven, and she is completely devoted to the goals of the Legion. Humanity will rise and become strong, and she will do her part to make that happen. Since becoming an Iron Word, her old loyalties to family and tribe have fallen away, replaced by an almost luminous faith in Shar Thizdic's vision.

She also has her practical side. Chora has a good grasp of human nature, and she's been on both ends of a sword before, so she handles herself well in and out of combat. It's rare that she even has to don armor and weapons these days, as her duties consist of passing judgment on the cases before her subordinate Iron Words. That suits her just fine. As she says, "The law is a more efficient weapon than a thousand spears, and a more just one than some warlord's will."

If danger should threaten, she carries a heavy crossbow for intimidation and a short sword for practicality. Small melee weapons are easier to use in the tight quarters of a mech. Her blade was a gift from Shar Thizdic (technically, it was presented to her by one of his advisers) given when she assumed her current post. She treasures it more than anything, and has named it Truth because it cuts to the heart of matters.

**Chora Mulabanth, senior Iron Word of Haven, human Ftr5/Exp4:** CR 8; Medium humanoid (human); HD 5d10+4d6+16; hp 70; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+1 Dex, +5 armor), touch 11, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +8; Mech Atk +4; Grp +10; Atk +12 melee (1d6+5/17-20, +1 keen short sword) or +11 ranged (1d10/19-20, masterwork heavy crossbow); Full Atk +12/+7 melee (1d6+5/17-20, +1 keen short sword) or +11 ranged (1d10/19-20, masterwork heavy crossbow); AL LN; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +8; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 10.

**Skills and Feats:** Climb +7 (+6 in armor), Diplomacy +8, Gather Information +11, Intimidate +5, Jump +7 (+6 in armor), Knowledge (local) +5, Listen +10, Profession (judge) +9, Search +10, Sense Motive +10, Spot +12, Survival (when following tracks) +5; Alertness, Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative, Investigator, Rapid Reload, Weapon Focus (short sword), Weapon Focus (heavy crossbow), Weapon Specialization (short sword).

**Possessions:** +1 chain shirt, +1 keen short sword, masterwork heavy crossbow, 20 bolts.



example, just a handful of robbery and extortion rackets preying on the common laborers. On a regimented mech like Haven, criminals have trouble hiding.

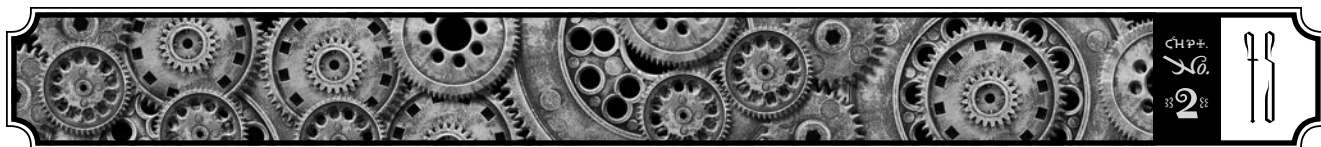
Finally, everything that happens on Haven is reviewed by Shar Thizdic and his deputies. They rarely counter any of the commanders' orders, but they often have firm suggestions for future action. Commanders ignore this advice at their peril. The mech's first Battle Commander, Minna Faireye of the obscure Hemlacma tribe, frequently took control of Haven on the slightest pretext and led the city-mech and its troops on wild raids against anything that moved. After six weeks of this, she simply vanished one night. A new Battle Commander arrived in the middle of the next day and nobody ever asked what happened.

## Society

The military is Haven's dominant force, and its members receive better treatment than anyone else aboard. While most of the city-mech's residents are technically part of the Legion's armed forces, pride of place goes to those who actually have combat duty. This includes mech pilots and gunners.

As is common, the most prestigious placement is in Haven's head. Its neck and shoulders are also used to house individuals of some status. Common folk are in the lower torso and upper legs. A handful of soldiers sleep in small bunkrooms near the entrances to the limbs and head, but these are short-term assignments.

The citizens of Haven don't compete for space the way residents of less regimented city-



mechs do. The biggest and best quarters go to ranking officers and daring warriors, and this seems fair. Instead, the Havenites tend to draw lines along old tribal affiliations. Shar Thizdic has worked to quash this with some success, as the last thing Haven needs is for its residents to turn on each other over some centuries-old grudge.

## Economy

Haven's economy is linked to the rest of the Loyalty chapter, much of which is traveling in its wake. The nomads are resourceful and can live off the land more easily than one might suppose. Much of their effort goes to feeding the thousands who live aboard Haven and the larger members of its escort, and the Gur tribes have been invaluable with this. The Loyalty chapter is spread across a swath of land along the Legion's northwest border, and where possible this land is being farmed.

As mentioned earlier, travelers through Legion territory aren't always made to feel welcome. This means that Haven doesn't receive as many traders and other interesting visitors as some city-mechs. The ones who do arrive are watched by the Legion's soldiers and welcomed enthusiastically by Haven's residents.

Docking aboard the city-mech is costly. A Huge mech results in a fee of 20 gp, with the cost doubling for every size increment up to the maximum of Colossal II. Between this fee and the tight scrutiny, many merchants increase their prices while trading on Haven. In turn, the Legion has instituted a tax on sales, taking 5% of each merchant's revenues before they leave the city-mech. This has not been a popular move with merchants traveling in Legion territory, but the clever ones have realized they can simply increase their own prices and pass the cost along to Haven's residents.

Space is limited on a city-mech, and Legion coinage is commonly used here. Barter has proven impractical because few families have the space for large possessions, and the herds of domesticated animals that were once the plains' economic backbone are thinned by lunar bombardment.

## Organizations

Most of the groups aboard Haven are known to its commanders. It has proven difficult to build an organization in secret, and harder still to make it last. Such groups have a way of falling apart, often because their leaders disappear. None of Highpoint's major power groups have an organized presence on Haven,

although the Gearwrights Guild would like to get a closer look at the first effective human city-mech.

The groups that operate here include:

**The Lancers:** One of the most renowned positions on Haven is that of Lance Captain. This honorific is applied to everyone who is assigned to operate the massive lance that forms the backbone of Haven's offensive power. The boarding parties who wait by the bore puncher in Haven's right arm bask in a little of this reflected glory. Those who have actually participated in boarding an enemy mech call themselves the Lancers. They have a strong bond, and a Lancer will almost always help another Lancer without asking questions. The Lancers wear small brass lance brooch pinned to their clothing somewhere. However, when boarding a mech they use more practical weapons — axes, daggers, and crossbows.

**Rock Eaters:** In response to the swaggering bravado of the Lancers, a group of Haven's coglayers and technicians created a society of their own. They called it the Rock Eaters. Haven's stone armor inspired this name, as anyone spending a shift patching its exterior will swallow enough grit to gag a dust devil. This is a far less exclusive group than the Lancers. Anyone who has worked on the city-mech's exterior is entitled to call himself a Rock Eater. After a fierce skirmish with a pack of rust riders using heavy catapults, anyone who has fixed catapult damage is welcome to adopt the name as well. The only real benefit of Rock Eater membership is the shared feeling that non-combat personnel are important to Haven, too.

**The Way of Nine:** The existence of the Virtue training program, as well as the presence of a few Living Virtue clerics, has inspired great hope in the masses. A handful of people aboard Haven have taken it farther. Adopting an air of mystery, the followers of the Way of Nine are engaged in an unauthorized attempt to train themselves to become Virtues. Those with the ability are following the monk's path. Other members content themselves with exercising, meditating, and praying to Shar Thizdic for guidance. More information on the Virtue prestige class is provided below.

The Way of Nine is a secret organization, in no small part because secrecy makes them feel special. If the commanders of Haven discovered its existence, they would likely order it to disband, on the general principle that unauthorized groups are a threat to Legion stability. The Way of Nine is a loose consensus-driven democracy, and members are free to invite others who show sufficient reverence for Shar Thizdic and his Fighting Virtues to join.

**Hidalgez's Children:** This secret organization is not nearly so fond of Shar Thizdic. Composed of tribe members who dislike their heavily regimented lives, the Children plot to wrest control of the Legion away from Shar Thizdic and return to some semblance of their traditional ways. The group is a mixture of bitter clan elders and surly young warriors. They understand the value of secrecy, and right or not, they suspect everyone around them of being informers. So far they have been quietly stockpiling weapons and scouting out the back corners of Haven.

Aside from the threat of a violent dissolution if they are discovered, the Children are working against two obstacles. First, few of them are skilled with mechs. Second, their membership so far is limited to residents of Haven. They seek to overcome these latter two problems, and will be very interested in recruiting anyone who can help them — provided the person in question is obviously not a Legion supporter.

## MECH ORGANIZATION IN THE LEGION

The Legion's mechs are divided into ten groups. Nine are the much-referenced chapters, and the tenth is Rebirth and its escort. Shar Thizdic adds whatever mechs he needs to his personal complement, changing the makeup of his guard as he sees fit. Unusual or experimental mechs are usually part of this group, including such designs as the self-propelled flying mech called the Falcon (see page 19 of the **Mech Manual**).

Each chapter is the equal of the others, so their mech fleets are similar. The people of Loyalty live aboard Haven, the Legion's second city-mech, while other chapters spread their population among several smaller mechs and vast crowds of trailing followers. Otherwise, all the chapters handle their mech fleets similarly. Their exact composition isn't identical across the Legion, but it is structured similarly. This also helps officers and others who are regularly transferred from one chapter to another. When a Battle Commander moves from Honor to Speed, for example, she will already be mostly familiar with the forces available.

All the mechs assigned to a chapter are known as a fleet, which is divided into companies and then squadrons. Each fleet is a self-sufficient unit with enough mechs for ranged combat, melee combat, civilian housing, and miscellaneous duties. That's how it works in



theory; in practice, mechs for civilian housing are often lacking compared to those assigned to combat duties. Companies are specialized at one task or another — the Third Company of the Strength chapter, for example, is a ranged combat unit that supplements its regular crew with manpowered mechs rowed by Legion prisoners. Squadrons are smaller, and they train together so that the various mech pilots know how to work with each other.

A typical chapter fleet is made up of six companies. The number of mechs in a fleet varies, depending on both the products of Legion foundries and the number of mechs destroyed in battle, but the ideal fleet has sixty mechs overall. Each squadron should have at least three functioning mechs at all times. The six types of company are as follows:

**Patrol:** A light, swift company of mechs whose task is to scout the area around the chapter. Patrol companies are usually a mixture of light ranged combatants and fast-moving melee mechs. They are also equipped with a variety of signal flares and specialized flags. If it is not deployed on reconnaissance missions, the patrol company can be used to supplement the assault mechs or to provide extra security for the housing mechs. The forester is a good patrol mech, although an expensive one.

**Main Assault:** These mechs are the main troops used in combat. Most chapters have two different main assault companies, each with a mixture of melee and ranged mechs. Individual squadrons are either all melee or all ranged. Main assault companies are usually the largest in a chapter fleet, as they are useful in many ways, from combat to keeping the peace to intimidating enemies with their mere presence. The stormblade is well equipped to serve in a main assault company.

**Heavy Assault:** When a threat looms, the heavy assault company looms right back. A chapter's largest mechs are usually found in this company. Although a typical heavy assault group has half the mechs of a main assault company, those mechs can give and take much more damage. Unusual mechs are also found in heavy assault companies, as these are the groups that must deal with unusual threats like lunar dragons. The rook is almost always attached to such a company, as its specialty is restraining unusual threats.

**Command:** Ideally this chapter is composed of the most impressive mechs available, making it comparable in combat to a heavy assault group. In reality, it has been difficult for the Legion to field a second unit of such hard-hitting mechs, so the command company is a blend of powerful fighters and expendable

skirmishers. A few housing mechs are found here as well, providing quarters for the families of the command staff.

**Housing:** Until every chapter has its own city-mech, Legion members are spread out among the mechdom's larger constructions. The housing chapter consists of all the mechs intended to carry people rather than weaponry. If faced with danger, most housing mechs will retreat, as they are rarely armed to deal with threats their own size. Housing companies always travel with either a main assault company or the command company.

It should be remembered that most of a chapter's members are still living outside of its mechs. There simply aren't enough mechs to house everyone. Many of them are incorporated into the mechdom's military as well. They report to the chapter's Guard Commander under most circumstances. These soldiers serve as scouts, guards, and infantry support for mech operations. Most infantry companies are assigned to support a particular mech company, and their leaders try to coordinate with the mech captains.

## TACTICS OF THE LEGION

The Legion's tactical philosophy is simple: Use overwhelming force to attack your opponents at their weakest points. The chapter structure means that mechs are always concentrated together, so it isn't difficult to muster a great deal of power against threats inside Legion territory.

Regardless of their goal, Legion forces show their nomadic heritage in their fighting style. Most of their mechs will move across the battlefield as the fight progresses; many of the Legion's biggest mechs are designed to charge enemies with a lance. Pincer formations and other sweeping maneuvers are common. The Legion's mech jockeys enjoy their newfound mobility. It also makes good tactical sense, as a cluster of small mechs can often surround a large target and bring it down before the foe can destroy any of them.

If the Legion forces have a chance to prepare for battle, they will attempt to array their troops so that their melee units can close with the enemy well before any hostile entities approach the Legion's ranged attackers. The usual Legion pattern is for melee mechs to race toward their target while ranged-fire mechs hang back at some distance. Once the battle is joined, ranged mechs will move closer to reduce range penalties while melee mechs

double- or triple-team their targets.

Foot troops play an important role in Legion mech combat. First and foremost, they are to screen hostile forces away from the Legion's non-melee mechs. If enough infantry and cavalry can be spared from this task, they will be sent to sweep across the flanks of the enemy forces, harassing them and breaking their ranks while Legion mechs complete their work.

Above all, the Legion's military is disciplined, whether mechs or humans. Every squad has its role to play. The mech jockey who disobeys orders and puts her fellow troops at risk will be punished, even if her actions destroy an imposing enemy (which can lead to a reward, assuming she survives her punishment). Soliders are to obey their commanders and trust that the Legion has a plan.

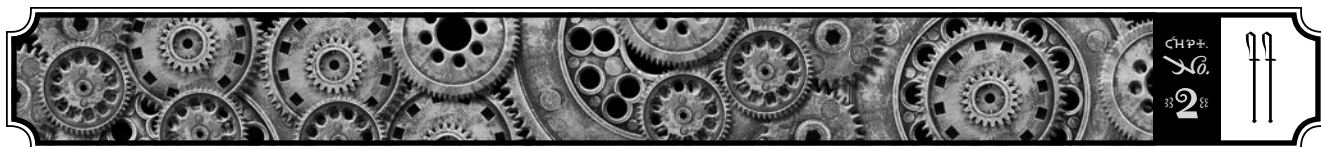
Good communications are critical to military operations, and the Legion makes heavy use of two different methods to send information. The first is a language called Drumtalk (see Languages below). It has the advantage of being audible over long distances, and it has a surprisingly extensive vocabulary. The noise generated by large steam-powered mechs (or almost any man-powered versions) drowns out any attempt at sending or hearing Drumtalk messages, so this is mostly used by forces that have no mech larger than Gargantuan.

The Legion also has an extensive array of flags. No special proficiency is required to understand them, but it does require instruction. Nearly thirty flags are in common use, and more are reserved for special units. Large mechs will have a signal crew whose job is to make sure the right flag is flying, based on the commander's orders and the mech's battle status.

Whichever mech has the ranking Legion officer in the area will have a special banner flying to indicate that its commands are paramount. All other mechs are to follow the instructions indicated by these flags, using their own to indicate damage level, the presence of enemies, and so on. Some Legion enemies have figured out the meaning of this special pennant and apply extra force to mechs carrying it. In response, some Legion commanders now order a lower-ranking officer to fly the banner instead.







## LIFE AMONG THE LEGION

Citizens of the Legion lead disciplined lives. Once nomads wandering over vast territories, they now go where they are told and do what they are commanded to. The traditional ways and freedoms have been sacrificed in return for security, technology, and perhaps most importantly, a new sense of purpose. The Legion is run like an army, even among its civilian members, and like all armies it rewards duty and loyalty.

### LANGUAGES

Most tribes of the endless plains speak a recognizable dialect of Common as their first language. Some of the slang-like idioms are different, but they have little difficulty communicating with each other or with outsiders. Of the major Legion tribes, only the Jajanya use another language. These dour plainsmen speak Common for daily life, but many of them are also familiar with their ancestral tongue, a fluid-sounding language they call Janyuula.

Over time, a nonverbal form of communication emerged on the plains, and Shar Thizdic has adapted it to the Legion's use. It is known as Drumtalk, because it involves using portable tom-toms to communicate over long distances. Drumtalk has a smaller vocabulary than spoken languages, so it cannot be taken as a character's primary language. It has no way of conveying abstract ideas like mood or philosophy, but it has a robust selection of nouns and verbs, making it ideal for military and trading uses. With clear weather and well-maintained instruments, Drumtalk can be heard as far as five miles away.

Anyone who understands Drumtalk is capable of "speaking" it, given appropriate drums; no performance skills are needed. However, anyone with 5 or more ranks in Perform (percussion instruments) gets a +2 synergy bonus on any skill roll related to conveying or understanding information with Drumtalk. This language has no written form.

The languages of other races are known among Legion members, although they have little daily value. Orc is not uncommon, especially among well-traveled individuals, as the orc hordes roaming the endless plains have

lived next to humanity for uncounted years. A fair number of people also know Elven. Several tribes once had elves and half-elves among their number, especially those from the northern Gur.

The nomadic tribes were an oral culture, relying on speaking and remembering rather than the written word. So many people have died in the last century, taking with them priceless memories, that those who remain have begun to practice literacy. However, even today some plainsdwellers only have the writing skills of urban children. Player characters are assumed to be literate, unless they begin the game as barbarians.

### CALENDAR

The tribes that now compose the Legion have always used a wide variety of calendar systems, ranging from none at all (for the most freewheeling nomads) to detailed agricultural calendars (for the Gur). Shar Thizdic now imposes his own invented calendar upon the Legion, which is based on his nine Fighting Virtues. There are nine months, each 28 days long, named after the virtues: Discipline, Ferocity, Friendship, Honor, Insight, Loyalty, Speed, Strength, and Valor. Each month has one holiday, on which workers are supposed to ponder the meaning of that month's virtue. In reality, these holidays don't mean any cessation in work; instead, they usually mean extra time spent listening to Shar's lieutenants preaching about the virtues, on top of a normal workload.

The Legion's calendar lines up perfectly with the 252-day year of the Stenian Confederacy, though the details are drastically different — for starters, its weeks have seven days versus six for the Confederacy. Each 28-day month is divided into four seven-day weeks. Shar worked with advisors and tribal leaders for some time in an attempt to come up with week or day names that tied back to the names of the tribes or great human accomplishments on the endless plains, but every attempt failed. One tribe would complain that another tribe came first; certain tribes attached significance to sacred numbers and insisted their day fall on the day of that number (or avoid it); and so on. In the end, the only solution was to name the days of each week in the most simple manner: firstday, secondday, thirdday, fourthday, fifthday, sixthday, and seventhday. Now, with the creation of his city-mechs, Shar has changed the names of the first two days of the week to Rebirthday and Havenday, with the goal of eventually having

enough city-mechs to fill not just a week but a whole month.

### RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

While ancestor worship once held sway across the endless plains, it has receded into the past. Scattered individuals still pray to their forebears for aid, but few wish to follow the path of a shaman any more. The same goes for spirits of nature and weather. Once belief in them was widespread, but now they are little more than memories, left over from the days before the lunar rain changed everything.

Deliberately or otherwise, Shar Thizdic has stepped into this gap. The common folk of the Legion already see him as an equal of their legendary heroes. He has saved them, he has inspired them, he has lifted them up from the ruins of their old life and shown them the path to something greater. Some of them have taken a leap of faith, saying that perhaps Shar Thizdic is himself a god.

He has done nothing to discourage such talk. All nine chapters now have groups of worshippers who meet openly and preach a gospel of self-improvement and the joys of loyalty. The only restrictions Shar has placed on them are that they should teach reverence for the nine Fighting Virtues and that they speak the truth about his origins. Therefore, they call themselves the Living Virtues. Some of them believe that Shar is a mortal who is on the path toward godhood, while others think he is a great ancestor spirit who returned to the mortal world in this time of peril. Still others say that the gods have chosen him as a savior, and they have infused him with their power. All these factions agree that he must somehow be divine. Otherwise, how could he have rallied the plainsfolk to accomplish the things they have done?

Interestingly, a handful of Virtues have manifested clerical power. These individuals are quickly promoted into the Legion's officer corps, even if they have a civilian background, and serve aboard important mechs. They can choose two of the domains of Luck, Protection, Strength, and Travel. The existence of these Virtue clerics is a cause of wonder and awe among the common people.

Other kinds of holy folk are found among the Legion, although not in great numbers. Between the mobile life of a mechdom and the value of support magic to the troops, clerics and their ilk are often moved from chapter to chapter. Few of them manage to establish a following. Those who still follow the ancestor



spirits receive two domains to draw upon, but a given ancestor always offers the same two choices to its clerics. Common choices are any two of Animal, Luck, Plant, Protection, Strength, and Travel. Two new domains, Ancestors and The Hunt, are also seen among some of these clerics. These are described in the Rules Information section.

Finally, a handful of ancient plains deities are still remembered. Few worship them these days, but loremasters recall their names, and occasionally an elder will offer up a few words of prayer to them. At one time, they were revered across the plains, until their cults were replaced by ancestor worship. Most nomads believe these gods have now been destroyed by the lunar rain, or that they were murdered by the vile deities of the moon. Either way their followers are rare.

The ancient deities are Sathada the Lord of Grassland (Earth, Plant, Travel), Mishkar the Angry Cloud (Air, Destruction, Fire), Hrwoul the Beast (Animal, Strength), Peshana the Lady of Rivers (Water, Protection), and Filatii the Maker (Knowledge, Luck, Trickery).

## COMMERCE

Although those who dwell on the endless plains are familiar with money, until recently they had little use for it among themselves. Barter and trade formed the bulk of the nomads' economy. Minting their own coinage was not practical, as a mobile people with few precious metals have no way to easily create money. The coins of Highpoint's city-states were only of interest to traders and peddlers.

As with so many other things, Shar Thizdic has changed this. A unified people need a reliable means of exchange. Not content to use coins made by other cultures, the Legion has begun minting its own.

Their current monetary system is familiar — copper, silver, gold, and platinum coins, each type worth ten of the one below it. But it has taken some time to get enough precious metals to make this work. Originally, the Legion used two different sizes of copper coin. The small copper occupied its current place at the bottom of the list, while the large copper was worth five smalls. Steel pieces replaced silver, silver had the same value as gold commonly does, and neither gold nor platinum coins were minted.

Although this system has changed to the familiar model used by most other countries, some of the old Legion coins are still around. A large copper is now worth two smalls, and a steel piece is worth five smalls. Outside the Legion these coins have little value. The only people who will take them are those who do business with the Legion on a regular basis.

The Legion's coins are minted in the usual way — molten metal is poured onto an anvil with a special pattern, and an engraved metal plate is pressed on top of it. The result is a coin with Shar Thizdic's face on one side (the anvil's pattern is his profile) and the crude outline of a Legion mech on the other. More valuable coins get better mechs, and these engraved plates are changed regularly to thwart counterfitting. It is believed that the Legion currently has three coin-making anvils, and that they are all kept on the city-mech Rebirth.

However, barter still plays an important role in the Legion's daily life. It's the system people have always known. As more people are drawn into the mechdom's military and therefore are being paid with its money, coinage has become common. But many people still prefer trading. A coin is just a shiny piece of metal, whereas a chicken will keep giving you eggs for years. Money is primarily used by the military and by the younger generation, as they have an easier time understanding it.

## SOCIAL STRUCTURE

These days, the core family (parents and their young children) forms the building block of Legion society. Before Shar Thizdic came, this role was taken by the tribe, a loose grouping of families united by common ancestry. Several tribes drew together to form a tribe which shared a unique dialect, a way of living and traveling, and often several ancestors who were believed to belong to everyone.

In the Legion, tribal identity is not as important. Young people are still raised in certain ways and they learn particular skills, but now they are taught to give their allegiance to Shar Thizdic rather than to tribal elders. Most of the Legion's citizens like it this way. Before he came, they were a ragtag bunch of wanderers at the mercy of everything Highpoint and its moon could throw at them. Shar Thizdic has made them strong. He has given them mechs.

He is guiding them as they carve out a secure homeland.

Indeed, many families look on him as a surrogate father. Sculptures or drawings of him occupy honored places in the family dwelling. Male children are often named Shar, while females are called Shara or Sharri.

Some parts of the old tribal structure can still be found, especially among the Legion citizens who don't dwell on a mech. Tribal elders might judge disputes for members of their extended families. Healing and counseling are provided by the dwindling number of clerics (or adepts). Wandering bards serve to stitch the fragmented tribes together, exchanging news and messages, occasionally supplementing the healing prowess of other classes.

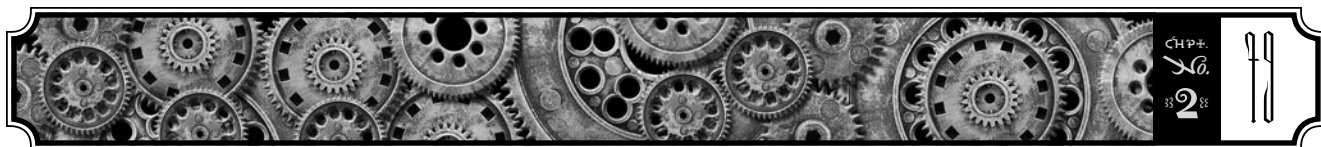
## VALUES

Twenty years ago, before the Legion was even a dream in Shar Thizdic's head, the tribes of the plains had two main values: tradition and freedom. The exact nature of these traditions varied from tribe to tribe, and sometimes among the various clans that made up a larger tribe. But everyone had a set of traditions that had been handed down since the dawn of memory.

Outside the restrictions imposed by these customs, the nomads wanted freedom. The endless plains didn't get their name by accident; they offer the space to pursue your own goals and desires. Again, while different tribes and clans wanted different things, all of them prized their freedom to pursue those things. Indeed, one reason why so few human cities existed here is because the people of the plains had no desire to tie themselves to a given plot of land.

Today the situation is different. The Legion demands obedience and gets it. It calls for loyalty, and the outpouring from the nomads is like a flood washing over a dam. Shar Thizdic has cast aside the remains of tribal tradition, even scattering clan members across several chapters, and he is praised for it. What happened?

In short, the lunar rain washed away the old customs. Twenty or even fifty years ago, the nomadic tribes were already an exhausted people. The traditions that had sustained them for so long no longer helped, as every night's bombardment crushed a little more of the world they had been designed for. People clung to the old ways because they had no more energy to find new ones. And while they enjoyed as



much freedom as ever, it was now a freedom to scratch for a living in the cratered earth, and a freedom to be eaten by horrible creatures that fell from the sky.

Into this bleak picture stepped Shar Thizdic, with his tragic story and bold plans. He was saying things the tribes needed to hear. They could fight back, he told them. They could build a new life. The old ways might have failed, but humanity had not. New ways were coming, and if everyone worked together, this new life would have greatness unlike anything they had imagined.

The tribes were willing to trust him for a time, long enough for the first human-built mechs to stride the plains. With this solid proof of his words, Shar Thizdic was able to convince ever more people that his vision showed the right path to follow. Faced with the success of this new way, people set aside their old habits.

Today the people of the Legion value cooperation and order. They aren't mindless drones, and they haven't forgotten what life in the saddle is like. But they have seen how working together allows them to do things that individual tribes never could. Times have changed, and the humans of the endless plains have changed with them.

The best way to motivate a member of the Legion is by appealing to their sense of shared purpose. If what they're doing is for the good of humanity, or will strike a blow in the battle to free the endless plains, their support is assured.

Newcomers to Legion territory often think all they have to do is drop Shar Thizdic's name and the natives will bow and scrape. Not true. While they respect and revere the man, Legion members aren't mindless slaves. They also aren't usually dumb enough to think that some nameless foreigner is actually one of Shar Thizdic's close associates, as more than one interloper has discovered too late.

## Law and Justice

The Legion has an efficient justice system. Outsiders might call it rapid and even brutal. Rules are simple, but enforcement is strict and punishments are designed to deter future offenders. The same rules apply to Legion citizens and human non-citizens; nonhumans will find themselves subjected to sterner inquiries.

Law enforcement is handled within each chapter by a group called the Iron Words, called thus because their decisions are strong and unbending. Each corps of Iron Words is a combination of town guard and judge. They patrol the chapter, inside and outside its mechs, keep-

ing the peace and putting lawbreakers on trial. Under normal circumstances the Iron Words report to their own officers, who in turn report to a senior officer. This person is an assistant to the chapter's Guard Commander. During combat, they are instead under the command of that chapter's Battle Commander for the length of the hostilities.

Each Iron Word has broad powers, including the ability to immediately stage a trial and, if needed, an execution. But they rarely perform this on-the-spot judging. Iron Words are also required to report and justify every action they take to their officers, and those who show more zeal than wisdom are stripped of their office. At times, problematic Iron Words have been turned over to the mercy of their victims' families; this thought is enough to deter most rogue justice.

On a normal day, an Iron Word will spend several hours patrolling some portion of their chapter. Often this means getting out among the crowds following the big mechs, although a complete internal patrol of such a mech can be a day's work in itself. Regular Iron Words wear a special tabard with the corps' insignia on it so that Legion citizens can find them if needed. A regular Iron Word breaks up fights and judges small disputes, keeping careful records of all their actions for review by their officers.

These Iron Words are usually posted to a chapter's main mechs. They handle more complicated legal issues — disputes over large amounts of property, trials for crimes like treason and murder, and the like. Their rulings are final, and the guidelines for punishment are stern. Under the Legion's system, an accused person is presumed guilty if an Iron Word brings them to trial.

The rulings of an Iron Word take effect immediately. An appeal can be filed with the chapter's senior Iron Word by the accused or their immediate family. If the accused was on active military duty, their commanding officer can also appeal. Neither category of appeal is common, given the presumption of guilt, and most senior Iron Words turn down the bulk of the appeals they receive.

All major decisions made by any member of the Iron Word corps are reviewed on a regular basis by those above them in the hierarchy. If a mistake is discovered, any citizens affected are immediately compensated appropriately and freed if necessary; if the citizen is no longer alive, this compensation is instead made to their immediate family. At times, a Guard Commander will overturn a senior Iron Word's decision, and stories are told that Shar Thizdic himself occasionally involves himself in legal

affairs. When he does, it is said, he always rules mercifully.

In the Legion, punishments fit crimes. A thief will be deprived of their own property, which sometimes goes to the victim and sometimes fills the Legion's coffers, depending on need. Someone who injures or murders others will likely be flogged near (or past) the point of death. Punishments are usually more severe than the original crimes, on the grounds that a criminal should be made to suffer past what he or she made others suffer. More complicated frauds and injuries are not yet common in the Legion, given its cash-free past and its strong sense of citizenship.

One interesting alternate punishment is becoming popular for all sorts of crimes. The Legion has developed a series of prison mechs, most notably the Just Retribution series (see page 23 of the **Mech Manual**), which use prisoners' labor as a power source. These mechs are rarely more comfortable than the orcish designs which inspired them. However, they allow convicts a chance to redeem themselves in the service of law-abiding Legion members.

Such mechs always serve supporting roles within larger mech fleets — the Just Retribution provides fire support, while the cinder-heart model is a basic coal hauler. This reduces the risk of a prisoner revolt turning into a successful escape. Former convicts who served on prison mechs are now sought after by some chapter commanders, as they are used to hard work and often have experience at maintaining battered mechs.

## Nonhumans

Obviously, the Legion is not a welcoming place for nonhumans. As Shar Thizdic has pointed out time and again, other races were not there to help humanity when the lunar rain began. Now that humans have begun winning back their territory, they have no desire to aid the races that have ignored them for the last hundred years.

That said, being nonhuman isn't a death sentence in Legion territory. Other races still have the protection of Legion law. But the law, and the larger society around it, definitely see nonhumans as a lower class of being. Few of them linger inside the borders of this mechmod.

Shar Thizdic's fiery speeches about the injustices that humans have suffered under the lunar rain have filled most Legion members with righteous anger toward other races. Humans have been kicked around and ignored for long enough. And now that they've built something of their own, they certainly don't want any for-

eign spies trying to steal or sabotage it.

So nonhuman travelers probably won't be invited in for dinner and a night's shelter. In fact, they won't be allowed on Legion mechs at all. Only citizens are permitted aboard, and only humans can be Legion citizens. This rule is sometimes waived for important humans from other places, but never for nonhumans. The reason is that nonhumans are more likely to be acting on behalf of other powers — elven magic, dwarven gold, and orcish threats have all been used to undermine the Legion's progress before.

Nonhumans will also find that the punishments for breaking Legion rules are especially harsh. Legion authorities want to make sure that criminals from other races understand that the day of pushing humanity around is over. Also, such individuals may well be spies. Additional treason charges are often leveled against these criminals, and in the absence of exonerating evidence, they usually stick.

So most nonhumans who encounter Legion forces are polite, honest, and brief in their speech. Someone who's obviously traveling is likely to be left alone after a thorough questioning, although their movements will be tracked for some time. But anyone who gets belligerent or seems secretive can expect to be confined under heavy guard until the nearest Iron Word is summoned.

## Relations with Others

None of the other mechdoms trust the Legion, and the feeling is mutual. Given the Legion's strong pro-human stance, the other mechdoms are concerned about Shar Thizdic's long-term plans. And given the other races' failure to shelter humans when the lunar rain began, Shar Thizdic has no love for them either.

The L'arile Nation is geographically closest to Legion territory, but it is also the major mechdom that interacts least with Legion forces. The elves seem content to remain in their forests. Not many humans dwell there, so the Legion has no pressing interests that far north. Occasionally mechs will trade ballista bolts while Legion troops are gathering lumber along the forest edge, but the elves usually retreat instead of risking conflict.

One recent incident has soured relations between the two powers. A mutinous Legion officer named Aeron Duamphyar was executed for treason, and a handful of his followers fled the Legion with their mechs. These deserters reached the northern forest and asked for asylum, which the L'arile granted. Although the

mechs are stolen Legion property, they now patrol the forest borders in service of the elves (see the description of the Aeron's Ally mech on page 39 of the **Mech Manual**). To date, the Legion has not elected to take direct action over the situation. However, Shar Thizdic himself announced a bounty on the heads of the deserters, as well as an officer's commission for anyone who brings them back alive.

The Stenian Confederacy is separated from the Legion by the cliffs and badlands that divide the flatlands from the endless plains. But the two powers are constantly aware of each other. As they expand, their territories are bound to overlap. Already several border skirmishes have taken place, mostly when one mechdom's forces are in pursuit of a third party (often an Irontooth on the run) and stray too far afield.

Stenian mechs are valuable to the Legion. Not only are more mechs always welcome, the dwarves' constructs are often built with technologies that human engineers have not yet discovered. While the Legion never goes deliberately hunting for dwarven mechs, of course, they are willing to commandeer one that ventures outside Stenian range. After all, the dwarves are so far as unwilling to share gearwright skills as they were reluctant to open their underground homes. This time, Shar Thizdic doesn't intend to wait for them to change their minds.

In return, the Stenians have been known to evict human traders and other wanderers from their territory, claiming that the individuals were actually Legion spies. The Legion hotly denies that any such spying takes place. Indeed, they point to it as proof that other races have a blatant anti-human stance, justifying the Legion's wary attitude toward them. (Naturally, if a "well-meaning citizen" came to the Legion with information stolen from a Stenian city-mech, it would be rude to turn that person away.)

The mechdom that causes the most trouble for the Legion is the Irontooth Clans. Their forces are found on the endless plains as well as the flatlands, and they're always ready to raid. Legion troops are disciplined and their morale is high, but the Irontooth have a savage edge that makes them formidable foes.

The Irontooth are also more than willing to prey on poorly defended targets such as mechless nomads. Legion patrols of the western border have had to increase both their size and

their scope, as Irontooth mechs have stepped up their raids on Legion territory in the last year. So far Shar Thizdic has shown patience, but he is said to have ordered a massive counterstroke. If rumors are true, two entire chapters will be sent into the flatlands to root out any Irontooth they can find. This would take them into Stenian territory, causing obvious complications.

As ever, the orc hordes of the endless plains are a regular problem for Legion forces. Although the orcs aren't as organized or as well-armed as any of the major mechdoms, their raids are still very dangerous. Shar Thizdic has ordered an increase in patrols through known orcish territory. His plan is to disable or capture one of their largest mechs, which will hopefully daunt the strength-respecting orcs. While this has not yet happened, orc raids have been less frequent of late.

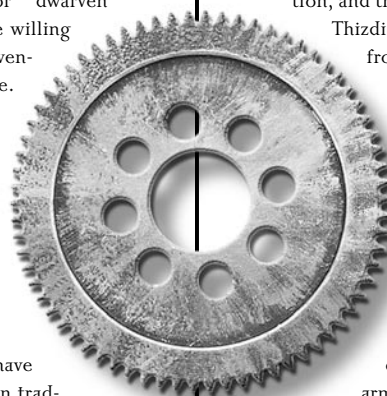
It is known that the city-state of Chemak has made diplomatic overtures to the Legion. The people of Chemak have a strong military tradition, and they too battle the orcs. Shar

Thizdic listened to the proposals from Chemak's generals but sent the messengers away without an answer. Chemak has tried to expand its influence across the plains before, and if they want an alliance, that would undoubtedly be their goal.

Shar Thizdic seems unlikely to change his course and put the Legion's army in the service of Chemak.

But his conversation with their messengers have apparently sparked some line of thought in him. Legion scouts are traveling farther east these days. And anyone who happens to have visited Chemak, or who is skilled at stonework and siegecraft, is being invited to sit with Legion officers and discuss their experiences.

Another city-state that interests Shar Thizdic is Glatek. Although it is farther west than the Legion's current boundaries, the city is a major hub of trade and therefore would make a rich prize. Diplomatic overtures to the city, asking for special trading considerations in return for Legion military protection, have been rejected. This has not deterred Shar Thizdic. The L'arile Nation has a close relationship with Glatek, and the Stenian Confederacy is obviously interested in a stronger presence there, so he continues to look for a way to assert Legion influence.



## Family Life

The tribe and the clan have dwindled, and the basic family unit has taken their place. This is a radical shift in the culture of the endless plains, and it would cause more disruption if not for the many other sweeping alterations Shar Thizdic has wrought.

Parents and grandparents have begun to assume the role once held by clan elders and tribal leaders. Decisions that were once made by these elders, or on the basis of long-standing tradition, are now coming from the oldest member of the immediate family. It is rare for more than three generations to live together in the Legion, even outside its mechs.

Nowhere is this change more obvious than in marriage. A few years ago, marriages were arranged by tribal leaders, often to unite (or divide) certain clans. Marriage across tribal boundaries was rare. And most nomads were wedded while in their late teens or early twenties.

The splintering of the tribal structure, combined with the Legion's strict hierarchy, has altered the old system. Tribal elders do not have the authority to force marriages upon others. Only a Legion Iron Word or one of its commanders can officiate at a wedding. The number of unsanctioned traditional marriages dropped dramatically when Tlan patriarch Ves Kaolh was found guilty of arranging marriages. His punishment was to have his knees shattered and then to be left in the midst of a herd of bison during their mating season.

Moreover, the plainsfolk are now exposed to each other more readily than in days gone by. A Zhekmir lad and a Gur lass who would never have encountered each other before might well be deployed to the same mech crew, working side by side for months on end. Cross-tribal marriage is increasing dramatically. Traditionalists shake their heads and mourn the loss of tribal identity, but many young people have a more pragmatic view. Shar Thizdic sees a future where humanity is united, so why not unite with the person you desire?

Family size is also increasing. The life of a nomad can be harsh, and aside from the Gur, no tribe could rely on a stable food source. This reduced the number of children living to adulthood. But the Legion offers a steady food supply, along with protection from the lunar rain and defense from enemies. More children are being born, and Shar Thizdic is thought to be creating an educational system of some kind for them.



## Tales

The tribes of the endless plains have always maintained a strong oral tradition, and storytelling is a part of that. Once upon a time, the stories found upon the endless plains were as varied as the tribes themselves. Even today many of these traditional tales are remembered. But since the founding of the Legion, stories of the old ways are becoming children's fare. The tales that adults share are of their own deeds. Humanity's glorious rebirth is already the stuff of legend.

One set of stories that still lives are those of the mist goblins. Most of the major tribes have tales about these short, nasty creatures who live in the darkness and hunt strays. Their usual prey is animals that wander away from their herders, but (grandmothers lean in and whisper) they will happily steal children who sneak away from the campfire after dark. Nobody knows what the mist goblins do with those they catch, but not even the bones are ever found.

These legendary monsters get their name from their greatest weakness. The endless plains are often shrouded in mist at dawn and sunset, thanks to Highpoint's plentiful water. Mist goblins cannot leave this fog, if the stories are to be believed, and so they must either hope

that travelers enter it or they lure them in by imitating human voices. Some even say a great mist goblin king lives in a cave above a subterranean river. His greatest servants, it is said, are creatures composed of living mist who drain the blood of mortals.

At times, adventurers will claim to have seen mist goblins. However, none have returned with a body or even a mist goblin weapon, and those who spread such tales are roundly disbelieved. The world is dangerous enough without pretending that children's stories are true.

Another common set of tales are those of the great hero Hidalgez. All tribes agree that he was the greatest rider, archer, and spearman of the ancient days. Many claim some form of descent from him, including the small but notable tribe that has taken his name.

Hidalgez, the stories say, was the first member of the mortal races to ever tame a horse. According to legend, horses had been flesh-eating monsters that raced across the land and terrorized all they encountered. But Hidalgez tricked the grandfather of horses into letting the hero sit astride him, and then further persuaded the horse to accept a bit in his mouth. Once this was done, the race of horses was bound to serve others and forsake their flesh-eating ways.





Another story of Hidalgezth tells of how the race of orcs came to exist on the plains. Once upon a time a huge and terrible demon strode across the land. Its name was Mish-Gar-Mok, and it was determined to kill all the people of the plains. Mish-Gar-Mok was the son of the hateful moon, and his parent had given him the blessing that no weapon forged of metal could hurt him.

And so Mish-Gar-Mok rampaged across the land, taking what he wished and killing whomever he found. He was a terrible sight, with a fierce boar-like head and a shaggy pelt, his hands holding a wicked axe. But Hidalgezth rode against him, and the hero bore no weapon. The two clashed along a riverbank near a stand of trees, and the hero slew the monster with an improvised spear — the entire trunk of a mighty tree that Mish-Gar-Mok had uprooted.

The spear's wooden tip was thrust right into Mish-Gar-Mok's heart, and even as the monster keeled over into the river, his foul blood poured forth. Hidalgezth tried to catch it before it could poison the land or work other mischief, but a few drops escaped him and raced downstream, and these became the ancestors of the orcish race.

## RULES INFORMATION

Characters from the Legion are often connected with its military forces — officers on patrol, special units on secret assignments, deserters looking for a way to stay alive. Many characters are also from a strong tribal background. Indeed, given the many tribes that compose the Legion, almost any kind of character can be found in this region.

Of course, almost all Legion characters are human. Other races have been removed from Legion territory, and they are not permitted to join with humanity. This has posed some small problems, as a few tribes had some measure of non-human population, but those individuals have withdrawn to the west and north, where their races are found in greater numbers. A handful of half-elves and half-orcs have attempted to pass as full humans within the Legion, but they have been exiled once discovered.

Certain character classes tend to come from particular areas. Wizards and constructors are almost always members of the vast Gur tribe, whose extensive farming allows them the

stable life necessary for arcane study. While most tribes have some barbarians in their ranks, the most savage and furious ones are said to be from the dark-hearted Jajanya tribe. Interestingly, the Jajanya also produce a relatively large number of druids. From the Shar'Stavians are drawn some of the Legion's best mech jockeys.

### TRIBAL HERITAGE

Where other groups have particular kinds of magic or technology, the Legion excels in diversity. Several dozen tribes of all sizes are united under its banner. Each has its own way of living, riding, and fighting. Shar Thizdic has divided these tribes up among the chapters, so that all humanity can share its knowledge, but many individuals are still trained in their traditional ways.

At 1st level, a Legion character can choose to be a member of one tribe described below. This choice cannot be changed, and a character can only take the special abilities of one particular tribe. Each tribal package offers certain benefits such as skill bonuses or extra feats. In exchange, tribal characters have certain social obligations and limitations. Any limitations are described in each tribe's entry, while the social obligations are discussed afterward.

These are a few of the Legion's largest, most important, or most distinctive tribes. They include:

**Gur:** The most settled nomads have seen the benefits of Legion membership. Many of their clans have either moved north to Legion territory or offered to trade their food for Legion protection. Members of the Gur tribe have helped increase food production aboard mechs, and even those with other interests often keep small gardens when possible.

Farming is deeply rooted in Gur society, and all members of it treat Knowledge (nature) as a class skill regardless of profession. Most Gur go on to become agricultural experts, while a handful instead devote themselves to arcane study. Accordingly, Gur characters can choose one of two benefits. Most have a +2 bonus to all Profession skill checks connected to agriculture and to their Knowledge (nature) skill checks. The rest receive a +1 bonus to all Knowledge (arcana) and Spellcraft skill checks.

This focus on non-martial arts has a small price. Gur are slightly uncomfortable in armor, as their training with it is poorer than average. When a Gur takes a class level that grants a new armor proficiency, she takes an extra -1 to her

armor check penalty with all new armor types. This penalty goes away when she reaches her next level. For example, a 1st-level Gur rogue will suffer the extra -1 while wearing any light armor. If she becomes a fighter when she advances a level, she loses the penalty to light armor but gains it while wearing medium and heavy armor. When she reaches her 3rd character level, all such penalties go away.

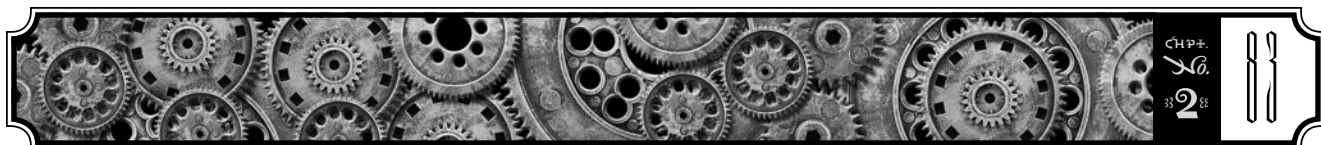
**Hidalgezth:** Known for their claims of greatness, this small tribe has only reluctantly joined the Legion. The Hidalgezth claim to be descended from the great hero of the same name. The legendary warrior, they say, once united all the tribes of the plains and drove the orcs so far back that they almost drowned in the eastern sea. Afterward, however, the other tribes grew jealous and deserted him, and he was hewn down in an orcish ambush.

Thanks to the legends, the Hidalgezth believe they are the rightful rulers of all the plains. They have never managed to convince anyone else, however, and their regular battles against other tribes and the hated orcs have whittled their numbers down. When a large meteor storm killed their war chief and their eldest shaman in the same night, the tribe almost fell apart. Instead, an emissary from Shar Thizdic convinced them to meet with him, and he persuaded them that such a noble and vital tribe should help lead humanity to greatness.

One thing that helps the Hidalgezth claim to superiority is that they have a great many members who enter the Reborn prestige class (described on page 86). A Hidalgezth character may ignore any one prerequisite for joining that class. Their tireless hatred of orcs also allows them to treat orcs and half-orcs as favored enemies, as if the Hidalgezth were a 1st level ranger; this grants a +2 bonus to all Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot, and Survival rolls used against them. It also applies to weapon damage rolls. It does not stack with the ranger's class feature, and in fact all Hidalgezth rangers must take humanoid (orc) as their first favored enemy. In this case the bonus applies against half-orcs as well.

**Jajanya:** The bogeymen of the endless plains, the Jajanya have a well-deserved reputation for stealth and savagery. Before the lunar rain, they were the greatest menace found here, frightening orc and human alike with their violent cunning. They swept across the land, raiding and killing as they wished.

Times have changed. The Jajanya are still a dangerous and warlike people, but in the last hundred years, they have apparently realized the value of cooperation. Their raids on other human tribes declined (orcs were not



so lucky) and they began trading rather than raiding. Some of their traditions have remained alive — they still speak the language known as Janyuula among themselves, and many of them still follow the bloody religion they call the Old Way — but since they joined the Legion they have been loyal members.

The Jajanya are often soldiers and mech gunners. They are a violent people, resolving disputes with ritual combat or even midnight ambushes, and these roles suit them well. The Old Way itself is a macabre form of ancestor worship, involving the sacrifice of enemies (whole or in part) to the greatest warriors of antiquity. Rumor even has it that the Old Way involves cannibalism. Under no circumstances will the Jajanya share the details of their faith with outsiders, as it is a sacred matter between them and their ancestors, and members of other tribes are as mystified by it as anyone else.

Given their warlike heritage, each Jajanya receives one free weapon, armor, or shield proficiency. They also treat Intimidate as a class skill regardless of profession, and they gain Janyuula as a bonus language. However, this focus on tradition has its price. Jajanya do not receive the 4 extra skill points usually awarded to human characters at 1st level, and their racial bonus feat at this level must be drawn from the list of fighter bonus feats. Jajanya still receive the human's additional skill point for each level after 1st.

**Loamasa:** Traveling fast and light, the Loamasa are a tribe who share their few possessions among themselves. They have explored the entire length of the endless plains and even portions of the flatlands. And because the tribe keeps few horses, they have done it all on foot.

The Loamasa are a spiritual tribe, and they believe that material goods are a burden that you will drag behind you once this life is done. This belief is no longer held so literally, as the lunar gods push the Loamasa's ancestor deities into retreat, but it remains a powerful cultural force. The Loamasa live simply, speak carefully, and fight ferociously. They are especially fond of spears and slings, weapons which are light to carry and easy to use.

All Loamasa gain the Endurance feat for free. A Loamasa who is proficient with any of their traditional weapons (shortspear, spear, javelin, sling) at 1st level gets a +1 competence bonus on ranged attack rolls made with that weapon. A character only gets this bonus for the weapon(s) she is proficient in at this level, even if she learns to use the others later. However, the simple and communal nature of Loamasa life means that adventurers have less money to start with. All Loamasa receive 5d4 gold to buy

starting equipment regardless of class.

**Shar'Stavians:** An offshoot of the famed Stavians, this group decided that the best hope for keeping their traditional life alive was to join Shar Thizdic. Many of them now serve in the Legion's military. Some of the most daring mech pilots on the endless plains are Shar'Stavians using their riding instincts to direct a fifty-ton steed. Rumor has it that small groups of Shar'Stavian youth go to spend a season or two with the Irontooth clans. Others ride their dusk devils and serve as scouts for their chapters.

All Shar'Stavians treat Ride as a class skill regardless of their profession and receive a +1 bonus to all Ride checks. The military life of the Legion has given them a slightly different set of weapon skills than ordinary Stavians. They do not gain proficiency with most Large weapons regardless of their class features, as even the most militarized of them spend a great deal of time in the saddle. But all Shar'Stavians automatically gain martial weapon proficiency with the lance. Those who begin in a class offering proficiency with all martial weapons automatically receive the feat Weapon Focus (lance).

**Tlan:** This large tribe is also one of the most colorful. They are noted travelers, storytellers, singers and, some would say, enchanters and thieves. In truth, the Tlan are nothing more than a tribe with a flair for the spoken word. Many of the greatest bards of the plains have come from the Tlan, and no tribe has a keener sense of history than they do.

They are also noted for their bright and complicated style of dress. Many Tlan are experts with leather and beadwork, and even their mundane garments are created in a variety of colors and materials. Most Tlan wear the *tlaka*, a leather vest covered in rows and rows of colored beads. The patterns used in a *tlaka* often indicate a wearer's status among the Tlan, although the younger clan members are moving away from this tradition as they adapt to life in the Legion.

Given their love of the spoken word, all Tlan receive a +1 bonus to their Bluff and Diplomacy checks. They often serve as spokespeople and mediators among the tribes of the endless

plains. Tlan also suffer no multiclassing penalty for their bard levels regardless of how uneven their levels are. As a result, many experienced Tlan have picked up a level or two of bard on top of whatever else they know.

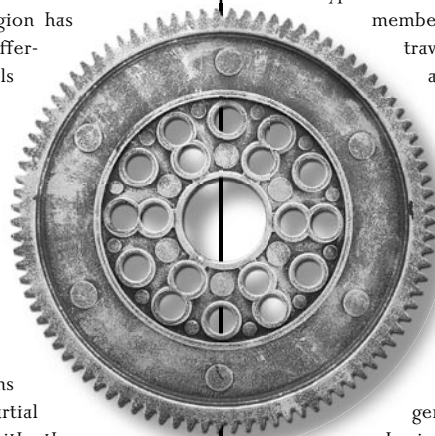
**Usni:** Quiet but proud, the clever Usni have finally come into their own with the advent of the mech. They have always been experts in strange arts including alchemy and the magic of the adept class. Usni crafters have also created a number of pre-steam mechanical devices. This formerly small tribe has exploded in numbers recently as other clans marry into their ranks in hopes of learning the Usni's secrets.

This is not always easy. Most of the Usni lead typical lives for plainsfolk and Legion members, riding their steeds or traveling with mechs. Only a handful of the Usni are initiated into the traditional mysteries of the tribe. In days gone by, this was given to those with great wisdom or some aptitude for spell-casting. The advents of mechs has led the Usni to appreciate cleverness and intelligence as well. Many of the Legion's coglayers are Usni.

An Usni character receives a +2 bonus with one Craft skill of their choice, thanks to the tribe's tradition of creation and invention. An Usni with a score of 13 in either Intelligence or Wisdom also receives a free exotic weapon proficiency of their choice as part of this training. Most Usni choose ranged weapons, particularly the bola or repeating crossbow, though in modern times the steam gun has also become popular.

**Zhekmir:** A loud and reckless tribe, the Zhekmir disdain personal safety. Individual courage is what they prize. A person's battle prowess is not as important as his bravery, which to the Zhekmir means attacking the enemy regardless of the risk. They fight intelligently and use clever tactics, but a Zhekmir would sooner shout a challenge to a dozen ogres than sneak among them and stab their leader while he slept.

Zhekmir play as hard as they fight. Their sport of *kugha* is played with a large wooden ball and several solid quarterstaves wrapped in blankets. The object of *kugha* is for a team to advance the ball across the field to a goal, all the while dodging the swinging staves of the other team. The weapons are swaddled to make



the damage non-lethal, but even so bloody noses and broken bones are routine.

All Zhekmir receive a +4 to resist Intimidation attempts, and a +1 bonus to saving throws against fear. They enjoy fighting with two-handed weapons and they see shields as cowardly, so a Zhekmir who receives one or more new shield proficiencies as a result of taking a class level will instead get that many proficiencies with two-handed melee weapons of his choice.

**Limitations:** Being steeped in tribal tradition has its drawbacks. Even in the Legion's militarized society, loyalty to one's tribe is important. The special training described above also makes it easier for others to find weaknesses in tribal fighting styles, or even in their crafting styles.

Some of these limits are a matter of role-playing. A barbarian steeped in the Iajanya's traditions will likely be "asked" (read: ordered) to undertake various tasks by that tribe's proud leaders. An Usni alchemist will be pressured to give her finished goods away to other Usni for free, or at best for their cost of manufacture. Such limits are a matter for the DM's discretion.

Other limits are mechanical in nature. Cer-

tain tribal packages that give combat abilities (Iajanya, Loamasa, Shar'Stavian, Zhekmir) also impart a distinctive fighting style to their possessors. Anyone witnessing such an individual in combat can make a Knowledge (local) skill check to recognize that style; if successful, the person making the check gains a +2 dodge bonus to AC for the duration of the encounter. The DC of the check is 10 plus twice the target's class level (for example, recognizing the style of a 6th-level Loamasa would be a DC 22). This check is a standard action and it can only be attempted once per foe per encounter.

The limit above becomes less of a problem as a character advances, as it is assumed that characters develop more personal fighting styles over time.

## FEATS OF THE LEGION

The Legion is a melting pot, combining the traditions of dozens of unique cultures. Many have brought with them unusual abilities. In game terms, these are expressed as the following near feats.

### Animal Bond (General)

You have an unusual ability to understand and control an individual animal (or potentially an animal species) of your choice.

**Benefit:** Select an individual animal, such as Bilfro the pony or Shadow the wolf. You receive a +4 bonus to all uses of the Handle Animal, Heal, and Ride skills with this particular animal; you also receive a +2 bonus to any use of wild empathy with this animal. These bonuses only apply to this specific creature and cannot be transferred to another. You must have had daily contact with the chosen animal for at least one month prior to selecting this feat, and you must see the animal for at least one hour a week to maintain the feat's benefits. If you do not keep such contact, you do not receive the bonuses until you resume regular contact, at which point they return.

You can instead select a category of animals as the target of this feat, with your DM's permission. Possible categories include: felines, canines, birds of prey, burrowing mammals, horses and ponies, dinosaurs, or ursoids. This feat cannot apply to magical beasts, vermin, or any other type of creature. You receive a +1 to all uses of the Handle Animal, Heal, and Ride

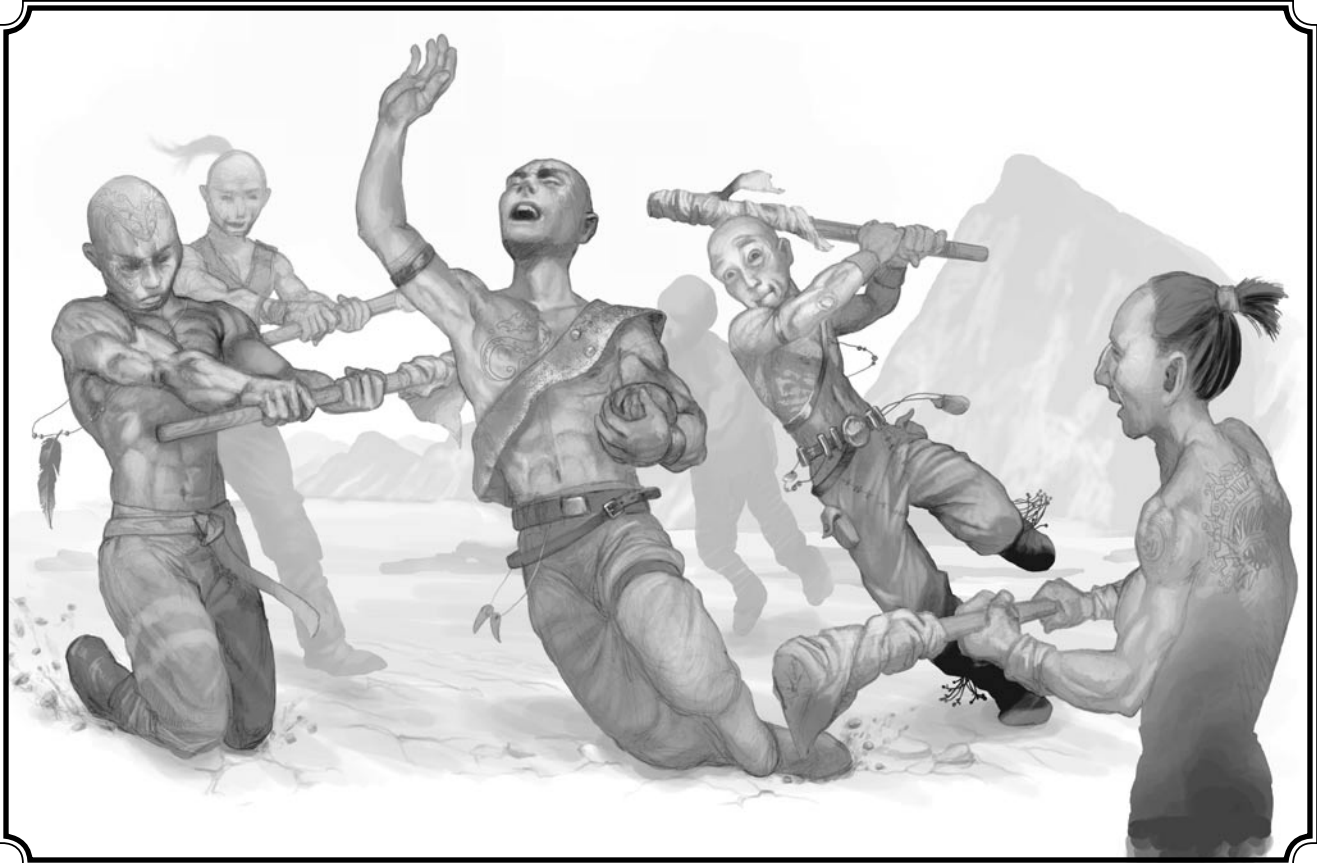




TABLE 2-6: LEGION FEATS

FEATS	PREREQUISITE	BENEFIT
Animal Bond	–	Bonus to Handle Animal, Heal, and Ride for specific animal or general category
Blended Features	Half-orc, half-elf, etc.	Can pass as another race
Mech Menace <sup>1</sup>	Intimidate 1 rank, Mech Pilot 5 ranks	Can intimidate opponents with mech
Plains Runner	Con 13, Endurance	Can run for extended periods
Plains Stare	–	Reduce concealment miss chances by 5%
Saddle Shield <sup>2</sup>	Dex 13, Mounted Combat	+4 to Ride check to use mount as cover
Silent Rider <sup>2</sup>	Move Silently 1 rank, Ride 1 rank	Use your Move Silently ranks for your mount
Silver Tongue	Negotiator or Persuasive	+2 bonus to Bluff and Diplomacy checks
Sprint	Con 11, Run	Sprint at 6x speed for 1+ rounds per day
Storyteller	–	+2 to certain checks for Perform, Diplomacy, and Gather Information
True Believer	–	+4 to one check or attack roll per day
Understand Dialects	–	+1 to certain checks for Disguise, Bluff, Sense Motive, and Perform (oratory)
War Rider <sup>2</sup>	Mounted Combat	+4 to Ride in combat situations

<sup>1</sup> THESE FEATS MAY BE SELECTED BY A LEGION MECH JOCKEY AS BONUS FEATS, PROVIDED ALL PREREQUISITES ARE MET.

<sup>2</sup> THESE FEATS MAY BE SELECTED BY A LEGION FIGHTER AS BONUS FEATS, PROVIDED ALL PREREQUISITES ARE MET.

skills with animals in this category.

**Special:** This feat can be taken multiple times. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new individual or category. Its effects do not stack, unless you have the feat for both an individual (such as Bilfro) and its category (horses and ponies).

### Blended Features (General)

You resemble one of your ancestral races more than another, allowing you to pass as a member of it. This race does not necessarily have to be human.

**Prerequisite:** Evenly mixed racial ancestry, such as half-elf or half-orc

**Benefit:** Select one of your ancestral races. To a casual observer, you look like a member of that race. You also suffer no penalty when the Disguise skill is used to make you look like a member of that race.

### Mech Menace (Mech)

You can use your mech to frighten your foes.

**Prerequisites:** Intimidate 1 rank, Mech Pilot 5 ranks

**Benefit:** While piloting a mech, you can use your Intimidate skill to demoralize opponents as explained in that skill's description. When using this skill, your size is considered to be the size of your mech. If you attempt to demoralize a target on another mech, that person is considered to be the size of their mech for the purpose of resisting the effect.

### Plains Runner (General)

You have learned to run at a steady pace that lets you go for long periods without tiring.

**Prerequisites:** Con 13, Endurance

**Benefit:** You can run at a slow lope (only while wearing light or no armor and carrying

no more than a light load), moving three times your normal speed. The normal rules for running found in Chapter 8 of the *PHB* apply, with the following exceptions. You can run at this speed for a number of rounds equal to 10 times your Constitution score, and once this period passes, you must make a Constitution check every 10 rounds or stop running. A character who has run to his limit must rest for 10 minutes (100 rounds) before running again. This feat is common among the Loamasa tribe.

### Plains Stare (General)

Living among the tall grass has taught you to see through a foe's concealment.

**Benefit:** The chance to miss an opponent because of concealment is reduced by 5%. For example, when you target a foe who has ordinary concealment, your strike only has a 15% chance of missing due to concealment.

### Saddle Shield (General)

You can ride so that your mount provides you with cover.

**Prerequisite:** Dex 13, Mounted Combat

**Benefit:** You get a +4 bonus to your Ride skill check when attempting to use your mount as cover, per the Mounted Combat feat. This is a Stavian feat that the Shar'Stavians have perfected.

### Silent Rider (General)

You can direct your mount to move quietly.

**Prerequisites:** Move Silently 1 rank, Ride 1 rank

**Benefit:** As a standard action, you can guide your mount to walk softly, allowing you to use your ranks in Move Silently for your mount's movement. This skill check uses your mount's Dexterity modifier, and is unaffected by most

magic items and spells that enhance your personal Move Silently checks. This feat does not apply to flying mounts unless they are moving entirely on the ground.

### Silver Tongue (General)

You have the gift of saying exactly what others want to hear. You are also easier to fool, thanks to your strained relationship with the truth.

**Prerequisite:** Either Negotiator or Persuasive

**Benefit:** You get a +2 bonus to Bluff and Diplomacy checks. Some fanciful members of the Tlan have this advantage.

### Sprint (General)

You can put on an extra burst of speed to cover short distances.

**Prerequisite:** Con 11, Run

**Benefit:** You can run at six times your normal speed (if wearing light or no armor and carrying no more than a light load) or five times your normal speed (under all other circumstances) for a short time. This can be done for 1 round every day, plus 1 round for every point of your Constitution bonus. These sprints can be used all at once, or divided however you wish. You lose your Dexterity bonus to AC while sprinting.

### Storyteller (General)

You know how to tell an entertaining story, and you also understand the rhythm and structure of drama.

**Benefit:** You get a +2 bonus to any Perform check made for the purpose of entertaining (i.e., not for bardic music or other special abilities). You also get a +1 to any Diplomacy or Gather Information check made among NPCs whose attitude is friendly or helpful.



### True Believer (General)

You fervently believe in a group or a cause, and this belief allows you to do extraordinary things. It also distances you from others who don't share your zeal.

**Benefit:** Once per day, you get a +4 bonus to one skill check, ability check, or attack roll of your choice. This bonus must be applied to a check that somehow furthers the cause of your character's beliefs and goals. The DM has final say over which checks you can apply this bonus to.

**Special:** Check with your DM before selecting this feat.

### Understand Dialects (General)

You speak many variants of the languages you know.

**Benefits:** You know several cultural and regional differences in the way languages are spoken, and can speak like a native of many different areas. This also allows you to shade meanings and makes it easier to pass secret messages. While using one of the accepted languages below, you gain a +1 bonus to any Disguise check that involves impersonating a specific person, a +1 bonus to any Bluff check made for sending a secret message, a +1 bonus to any Sense Motive check made for understanding a secret message, and a +1 bonus to Perform (oratory) for the purpose of storytelling. This feat applies to the following languages: Common, Dwarven, Elven, Gnome, Goblin, Gnoll, Halfling, Orc. Other languages can be added to this list only with the GM's permission.

### War Rider (General)

You are a seasoned mounted warrior, able to control your steed even in the thickest fighting.

**Prerequisites:** Mounted Combat

**Benefit:** You get a +4 bonus to the Ride skill when attempting to guide your steed with your knees, fight with a warhorse (or other battle-trained riding animal), or control your mount in battle.

## REBORN (NEW PRESTIGE CLASS)

The tribes of the endless plains revere their ancestors. Once upon a time, many of them even held that their ancestor spirits became divine beings who guided and guarded their descendants. This belief has been shaken by the events of the last century, but it has also been strengthened by the presence of the Reborn.

These remarkable individuals seem to be their great ancestors reincarnated. They possess the abilities that made their forebears legendary, and they have knowledge that only those who have passed beyond could share. The Reborn often become great leaders or counselors among their tribes. With the rise of the Legion, some say that the old ways should be discarded, but even so the Reborn continue to appear among the tribes of the endless plains, ready to advise and protect their people.

One unusual situation that the Reborn must occasionally face is when the ancestor that they embody is actually returned from the dead. Although a rare occurrence, it has happened. In every known case, the Reborn retained her powers while her resurrected ancestor was apparently unaware of his descendent's activities. Such theologians as are found on the endless plains find this a fascinating situation, but the encroachment of the lunar gods has made it even rarer than it once was.

This class is only available to those who practice divine magic. Most of those who follow it are clerics, and they are often awed at the thought of embodying one of the ancestors they worship. Paladins and rangers both take this path as a way of broadening their skills and magical prowess. Some druids end up as Reborn, but it is rare. A handful of other character types come into this class, all from the Hidalgezth tribe as described above. Hidalgezth characters who cannot cast divine spells and bypass that requirement may not reap the full benefits of this class.

**Hit Die:** d8

### REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become Reborn, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria:

**Region:** Endless plains of Highpoint. Any race dwelling here can be Reborn, although it almost always manifests among humans.

**BAB:** +5

**Spellcasting:** Ability to cast 2nd-level divine spells

**Skills:** Knowledge (history) 4 ranks

**Other:** The character must be descended from a long-dead hero or sage of the endless plains. This great ancestor's identity can be created by the player, but must be approved by the GM.

### CLASS SKILLS

The Reborn's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Craft (Int), Knowledge (Int), Profession (Wis), and several others determined by the character's choice of epic ability (see below).

**Skill Points at Each Additional Level:** 4 + Int modifier.

### CLASS FEATURES

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** A Reborn gains proficiency with light and medium armor, shields, all simple weapons, lance, and short-bow. These are the traditional armaments of the endless plains.

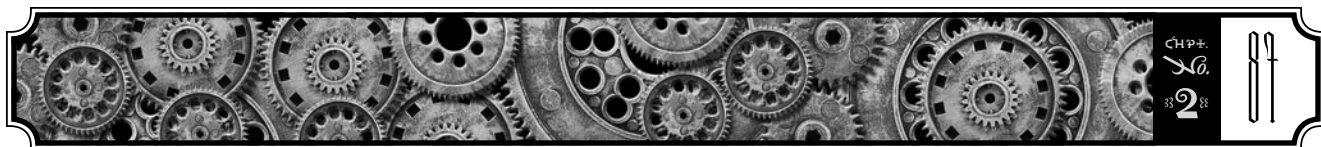
**Epic Ability:** Choose one of your six abilities (Str, Dex, Con, Int, Wis, or Cha). Your ancestor was known for feats connected to this ability, and you will be, too. You recover all damage to your epic ability at twice the normal rate. Once this ability is chosen, it cannot be changed.

**Inner Knowledge:** All skills that use your epic ability as their key ability are considered Reborn class skills for you. If this gives you less than four new class skills, select enough skills to make it four. For example, if your epic ability is Strength, then you get Climb, Jump, and Swim as Reborn class skills, and you can pick any one other skill to round it out.

**Spells Per Day:** You gain new spells per day as if you had gained a level in one divine spell-

TABLE 2-7: REBORN

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL	SPELLS
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Epic ability, inner knowledge, old soul	+1 level
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	Legendary ability +1, insight 1/day, divinely anchored	+1 level
3	+2	+1	+1	+3	Epic resistance, personal legend	+1 level
4	+3	+1	+1	+4	Legendary ability +2, insight 2/day	
5	+3	+1	+1	+3	Epic vitality, insight 3/day, ancient memory	



casting class you belonged to before becoming Reborn (if any). You do not gain any other benefits of advancing in that class.

**Old Soul:** Your connection to the worlds beyond death makes it difficult for others to restore you to life. If anyone attempts to return you from death using *raise dead*, *reincarnation*, *resurrection*, or similar abilities, you suffer a penalty to the Will save described on page 64 of the **DragonMech** core book. This penalty is equal to double your Reborn class levels.

**Legendary Ability:** The greatness of your ancestor manifests in you. You get a +1 inherent bonus to your epic ability. Note that a character may only have a total +5 inherent bonus to an ability, regardless of source. At 4th level, this bonus increases to +2.

**Insight (Su):** You can hear the whispers of your fabled ancestor guiding and encouraging you. Once per day, you may add a special bonus to one skill check, ability check, or attack roll that uses your epic ability. The total of this bonus is equal to your Reborn class level. Using this ability is a free action, but it must be declared before the dice are rolled. At 4th level, you can begin using this ability twice per day, and you can use it three times per day at 5th level.

**Divinely Anchored:** Your connection to the world beyond death has grown strong indeed. As a result, you are no longer able to select spells that return creatures from the dead (*raise dead*, *reincarnation*, *resurrection*, etc.) as part of your daily allotment. You can still use magic items or supernatural abilities that return creatures to life, but your link to your late ancestor prevents you from gaining these spells directly.

**Epic Resistance:** You are able to shrug off damage to your epic ability. You gain DR 2/—against any ability damage or ability drain that affects your epic ability.

**Personal Legend:** The Reborn are always held in high esteem, and tales of their lives travel across the endless plains. You are seen as a powerful hero by the common folk of the plains whether or not your deeds have earned that level of regard. When they deal with you, their default attitude is friendly rather than indifferent, modified by circumstances as usual. This benefit applies to your direct interactions, although those traveling with you will likely be given the benefit of the doubt. You also get a +2 bonus to any Diplomacy check made with the people of the endless plains.

**Epic Vitality:** Your epic ability is so powerful that even the most powerful forces cannot permanently harm it. Any ability drain you suffer to this ability is treated as ability damage instead.

TABLE 2-8: VIRTUE

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+2	+2	+0	Bonus feat
2	+2	+3	+3	+0	Virtue training
3	+3	+3	+3	+1	Virtue training
4	+4	+4	+4	+1	Virtue training
5	+5	+4	+4	+1	Virtue training
6	+6	+5	+5	+2	Virtue training
7	+7	+5	+5	+2	Virtue training
8	+8	+6	+6	+2	Virtue training
9	+9	+6	+6	+3	Virtue training
10	+10	+7	+7	+3	Virtue training

**Ancient Memory (Su):** You gain a limited ability to consult your ancestor directly, allowing you to answer questions and receive insight on matters beyond mortal ken. Having been kept alive in the memories of the plainsfolk, your ancestor is even able to provide wisdom on matters that he or she never knew about in life. This ability is identical to the spell *legend lore*, except that it can be used a maximum of one time per week. All other limitations on its use apply, including the need for expensive components.

## VIRTUE (NEW PRESTIGE CLASS)

As part of his attempt to place the Legion first in the hearts of his followers, Shar Thizdic has drawn together a small fighting force designed to represent his nine Fighting Virtues: Discipline, Ferocity, Friendship, Honor, Insight, Loyalty, Speed, Strength, and Valor. At first this was a squad of nine fighters, one from each of the nine largest tribes, but then Shar Thizdic noticed something. These warriors were learning from each other. In a short time, each one had picked up techniques from several of his fellows, turning himself into an increasingly versatile and deadly opponent.

Not one to miss an opportunity, Shar Thizdic quickly expanded the size of the squad. He drew on the battle skills of many tribes to create a system that would produce more of these skilled warriors. These warriors have been dubbed the Virtues, for their training makes them living embodiments of Shar Thizdic's nine pillars.

Virtues can be found anywhere the Legion has influence (or where it wishes it did). Every Virtue is a member of the Legion's military, but a Virtue's existence is usually less structured than that of a conventional officer. Shar Thizdic wants these living ideals to be visible, so they

travel the breadth of Legion territory and beyond, performing special assignments and acting as troubleshooters. They travel alone, or as part of a small team incorporating people with a variety of skills and abilities. The Virtues are expected to report to the commanders of whichever chapter is closest to them, but their ultimate leader is Shar Thizdic.

Fighters, barbarians, and monks find that the Virtue is a good way to augment their combat skill. Rogues and bards benefit from the skill bonuses offered. Classes that rely on spells can become stronger casters while following the Virtue's training at first, although the class is geared toward more physical pursuits.

This class is only available to citizens of the Legion, as so far this training system has not been taught elsewhere. Participants must be invited (or ordered) to join. The instructors look for skilled combatants with great determination and a slightly menacing manner. All training takes place on Rebirth under Shar Thizdic's direct supervision.

**Hit Die:** d8.

### REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Virtue, a character must meet all of the following criteria.

**Race:** Human.

**Base Attack Bonus:** +5

**Skills:** Intimidate 4 ranks

**Feats:** Iron Will

**Other:** Every person who becomes a Virtue must swear a personal oath of loyalty to Shar Thizdic. Virtues are also expected to follow orders and engage in regular training.

### CLASS SKILLS

The Virtue's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Ride (Dex), Spot (Wis), and Swim (Str).

**Skill Points at Each Additional Level:** 2 + Int modifier.



## CLASS FEATURES

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** A Virtue gains proficiency with all simple and martial weapons, all types of armor, and shields.

**Bonus Feat:** At 1st level, the Virtue chooses a free feat from the following list, provided they meet all prerequisites: Alertness, Dodge, Endurance, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Run, Toughness.

**Virtue Training:** At each subsequent level, the Virtue gains abilities connected to one of the nine Fighting Virtues. The player selects which virtue is gained at each level. No virtue can be selected more than once. The nine kinds of training are:

**Discipline:** You can keep your wits about you while others cannot, and that is a potent weapon. Select 3 skills. When making a skill check with one of the chosen skills, you may take 10 even under circumstances that normally prohibit it. You also gain new spells per day as if you had gained a level in one spellcasting class you belonged to before becoming a Virtue (if any). You do not gain any other benefits of advancing in that class.

**Ferocity:** All people have fury inside, and you have learned to wield yours as a weapon. You gain the ability to rage 1/day, as the barbarian class feature. If you already have this ability, you can rage one extra time per day.

**Friendship:** The best way to disarm someone is with a friendly smile. You gain a +2 competence bonus on all Charisma skill checks. Furthermore, all Charisma skills are considered class skills for you when gaining a new level as a Virtue.

**Honor:** A promise should be harder to break than the finest steel. Your word is worth more than gold, and so you have an easier time getting the things you need. You gain a +2 bonus on any attempt to influence reactions with a common citizen or low-ranking soldier of the Legion. Once per week, you can also make a special Charisma check and, if successful, temporarily gain the use of equipment or services belonging to the Legion's military.

You must visit a large Legion mech to do so (Colossal II or bigger, at the GM's discretion). You can request up to 250 gp worth of equipment per your levels in the Virtue class. The DC of the check is 15, and you add your levels of Virtue as a bonus. However, for every 1,000 gp of the item's value, you take a -1 penalty. Your GM has final say over what items can be requested in this fashion. Note that mechs are considered items for the purpose of this check. The services of Legion personnel cannot be requested in this fashion, but a high-level Virtue can potentially borrow a mech.

**Insight:** A great warrior sees everything before doing anything. You gain a +2 competence bonus on all Wisdom skill checks. Furthermore, all Wisdom skills are considered class skills for you when gaining a new level as a Virtue. You also gain new spells per day as if you had gained a level in one spellcasting class you belonged to before becoming a Virtue (if any). You do not gain any other benefits of advancing in that class.

**Loyalty:** The greatest service of all is to lead others in the directions they need to go. You gain a single cohort as if you possessed the Leadership feat (described in Chapter 4 of the DMG). The normal modifiers apply, but you are considered to have great renown, special power, and fairness and generosity, granting you a +4 bonus. The cohort must be a citizen of the Legion. This character is in addition to any cohorts you might have from the Leadership feat itself.

**Speed:** The first blow can be the last blow if it is aimed quickly enough. You gain a +1 competence bonus to all initiative checks. Your land speed also increases by +10 feet. Both benefits are lost while you are wearing heavy armor, carrying a heavy load, or doing both.

**Strength:** The foundation of a warrior is strength, for without it all else is smoke in the wind. You gain a +2 competence bonus on all Strength skill checks. You can also perform a mighty feat of strength 2/week. This extraordinary ability gives you a bonus to Strength equal to your Virtue level for 1 round; activating it is a free action. Afterward, you take a -2 penalty to your Dex for an hour due to being tired.

**Valor:** The best armor of all is courage. You gain a +4 bonus to resist all fear-causing effects, and a +2 bonus to resist all other mind-affecting powers, spells, and spell-like abilities. You also gain new spells per day as if you had gained a level in one spellcasting class you belonged to before becoming a Virtue (if any). You do not gain any other benefits of advancing in that class.

## NEW CLERIC DOMAIN: ANCESTORS

This domain calls upon the power of all your ancestors, seeking the wisdom and courage of their spirits to help you with your tasks. It offers several forms of divination, as the ancestors possess knowledge beyond that of the mortal realm. You can also draw upon their strength in battle, sustain yourself with an echo of their own vitality, and even briefly enter dreams, for

the world of dreams and the world of spirits are near one another.

**Granted Power:** You can call upon ancient wisdom to guide you. Once per day, you may add one-half your cleric level (rounding up) to a skill or ability check of your choice. This is a free action.

Ancestors Domain Spells

- 1 *Comprehend languages*
- 2 *False life*
- 3 *Heroism*
- 4 *Tongues*
- 5 *Dream*
- 6 *Heroism, greater*
- 7 *Vision*
- 8 *Moment of prescience*
- 9 *Foresight*

## NEW CLERIC DOMAIN: THE HUNT

The people of the endless plains have always been hunters. Not only in the sense of finding prey for the cooking pot, but also in the way they fight wars, tracking their enemies and attacking without warning. This domain enhances all aspects of the hunt. It allows you to move quickly, strike accurately, and above all to detect your target. It also helps you prevent the target from escaping.

**Granted Power:** You can become a peerless hunter, as if you were a ranger of equivalent level. As a free action, you can designate a specific individual once per day and gain all the bonuses of the ranger's favored enemy ability against that target. For the purpose of this power, assume you have maximized your Favored Enemy against this individual (so a 10th-level cleric would get a +6 bonus). This divine bonus lasts for one hour. It applies to the Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot, and Survival skills, as well as to weapon damage against your chosen target. If you have ranger levels and your chosen target is already in one of your favored enemy categories, these bonuses stack.

The Hunt Domain Spells

- 1 *True strike*
- 2 *Darkvision*
- 3 *Haste*
- 4 *Locate creature*
- 5 *Hold monster*
- 6 *Wind walk*
- 7 *Find the path*
- 8 *Discern location*
- 9 *Hold monster, mass*



## NEW SPELLS OF THE LEGION

The people of the endless plains have developed magic suited to their lives. Their spells help travel and communication, and their bards know new ways of communicating over great distances, including crossing the gulf of death to gain insight. To the north and south, the farmers of the Gur tribe use a handful of agricultural spells that can be helpful to the outside world.

### Ally's Whisper

Transmutation (Air)

**Level:** Brd 1

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Personal

**Area:** 20 ft. radius spread

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 1 round/level

**Saving Throw:** None

**Spell Resistance:** No

You whisper, and spirits of the air carry your words to friendly ears nearby. What you say will be heard by all allies you designate within range, just as if you were whispering to them. This allows your words to be heard over all but the loudest of noises. However, anyone else within the spell's area can overhear your whispers by making a Listen check against DC 20.

### Ancestor's Voice

Enchantment [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** Brd 2

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** Creature touched

**Duration:** 1 minute or until discharged

**Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)

**Spell Resistance:** Yes (harmless)

You draw on the wisdom of your ancestors to guide the spell's recipient, granting that person a +5 insight bonus to the next skill check they make. The bonus increases to +10 if the skill used is a Charisma-based skill.

*Material Component:* A tiny drum whose head is the skin of an animal found on the endless plains. It is rumored that the Jajanya use drums with human skin.

### Augur Weather

Divination

**Level:** Drd 3, Sor/Wiz 4

**Components:** V, S, M/DF

**Casting Time:** 1 minute

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** None

**Spell Resistance:** No

This alternate form of the *augury* spell is widely used by Gur wizards and sorcerers, but it originated among druids of that region. It grants the possessor knowledge of the weather that will befall the area where the spell is cast (a 1-mile radius around the caster's location). The chance for success is rolled by the GM, and is modified depending on how far ahead the forecast goes; the roll also receives a +1% bonus for every level of druid, sorcerer, or wizard you possess. Knowing the weather for the next day starts at 80%; the next week is 60%; the next fortnight (two weeks) is 40%; the next month is 20%. This spell imparts knowledge of all weather that will befall over the chosen time period.

*Arcane Material Component:* A handful of wheat and chaff.

### Bugblight

Necromancy

**Level:**Clr 2, Drd 1, Sor/Wiz 2

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 round

**Range:** See text

**Target or Area:** See text

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

*Bugblight* has different effects depending on which version is chosen:

**Ripple:** Waves of purple energy explode from you, blanketing a 50-foot radius. All vermin in this area take 1d4 damage plus 1 per caster level (maximum +10). The Gur often use this spell to rid a field of troublesome insects.

**Ray:** This is a ranged touch attack with a range of 25 feet plus 5 feet per caster level. Any vermin struck by this ray suffers 1d4 damage for every caster level (maximum 10d4). The Gur use this spell for vermin that shrug off the ripple effect.

### Cold Smoke

Evocation

**Level:** Brd 2, Sor/Wiz 1

**Components:** V, M

**Casting Time:** 1 round

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5/2 caster levels)

**Effect:** Creates column of smoke

**Duration:** 5 minutes/level

**Saving Throw:** No

**Spell Resistance:** None

Smoke rises from the point you specify, as

if generated by a campfire. It is in all respects identical to ordinary smoke. If desired, the caster can alter the color of the smoke at the time the spell is cast with a Spellcraft check (DC 15). Possible colors are: white, black, grey, blue, red, green, yellow, orange, and purple.

*Material Component:* A charred twig from any softwood tree.

### Detect Friends

Divination

**Level:** Brd 1,Clr 1, Rng 1, Sor/Wiz 1

**Components:** V, S, F/DF

**Casting Time:** 1 minute

**Range:** 1 mile/level

**Area:** Cone-shaped emanation

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 minute/level

**Saving Throw:** None

**Spell Resistance:** No

This spell is useful in the age of mechs, when one's home can be walking across the land at a speed of 25 miles per hour. It allows the caster to detect the presence of other living things at a great distance. Although it does not reveal detailed information, many of Highpoint's spellcasters have begun using it to track the movement of their mechdom's forces. It also has some use for tracking enemy forces, although it only gives precise information about groups the caster is personally familiar with. This spell takes longer to use than many other detections, requiring minutes of concentration instead of rounds.

*1st minute:* The presence or absence of other thinking beings within the area of effect.

*2nd minute:* The number of thinking beings within the area that the caster has met at least once before.

*3rd minute:* The approximate location of each such being and their current distance from the caster (within a quarter-mile).

Note that this spell does not give the identity of any being known to the caster.

*Arcane Focus:* A small roll of parchment painted with exotic inks. This tiny simulation of a map costs 50 gp, or can be created with a Craft (mapmaking) skill check against DC 15.

### Faint Passage

Transmutation

**Level:** Drd 3, Rng 3

**Components:** V, S, DF

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Personal

**Targets:** You

**Duration:** 1 hour/level

**Saving Throw:** None

**Spell Resistance:** No



This variation on the *pass without trace* spell allows allies of your choosing to follow your trail. When casting the spell, you can designate up to one individual per caster level; the chosen individuals can follow you normally with the Survival skill, the scent ability, and other such methods. You must designate specific individuals you have personally encountered, such as “the ranger Gryfynwood,” instead of general categories like “any ranger from the Jajanya tribe.”

### Entangle, Greater

Transmutation

**Level:** Drd 3

**Components:** V, S, M, DF

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Long (400 ft. + 40 ft./level)

**Area:** Plants in an 80-ft.-radius spread

**Duration:** 2 rounds/level

**Saving Throw:** Reflex partial

**Spell Resistance:** No

This improved version of the spell *entangle* affects a larger area, has a shorter duration, and is harder to escape. The Strength and Escape Artist checks to counter its effects have a DC of 30.

**Material Component:** A small rope made of knotted vines.

### Grass Blade

Transmutation (Evil)

**Level:** Drd 5

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

**Area:** 40 ft. radius

**Duration:** 1 round/level

**Saving Throw:** Reflex half

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

This spell turns the vegetation in its area of effect into a tangled, sharp-edged, blood-thirsty mass. The plants grow and twist, striking out in all directions with serrated edges and horrible barbed thorns. Anything caught in its area takes 1d4 damage per caster level unless they make a Reflex saving throw for half damage. However, this spell has drawbacks. It only works in areas with sufficient vegetation, as determined by the GM, and it has trouble penetrating armor. Targets with a natural armor bonus of +3 or more, or a total armor bonus of +6 or more, take no damage from this spell even if they fail

their Reflex save.

### Hunter's Nose

Transmutation

**Level:** Rng 2, Sor/Wiz 3

**Components:** S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** Creature touched

**Duration:** 10 minutes/level

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

The recipient of this spell is gifted with the scent ability. This supernatural ability makes the target's sense of smell as keen as a human's sight, allowing her to identify individuals by their scent and to track targets (the full description of scent is given in the glossary found in Chapter 7 of the MM). However, this is disorienting to anyone who otherwise has a normal sense of smell. The target takes a –4 penalty to all Spot and Listen checks for the duration of the spell. This penalty does not affect creatures who innately possess the scent ability.

**Material Component:** Several hairs from a skunk's tail, or a small patch of troglodyte hide.

### Memory

Divination

**Level:** Brd 4, Clr 5

**Components:** V, M

**Casting Time:** 1 minute

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 10 minutes/level or until discharged

**Saving Throw:** None

**Spell Resistance:** No

Mysterious wisdom fills your mind, making it easier for you to recall obscure facts. When this spell is cast, you choose either one Knowledge skill or the bardic knowledge ability.

The first check you make using that skill or ability gains a +1 bonus for every caster level you possess. If you do not make such a check before the spell's duration expires, the bonus is lost. You cannot use this spell multiple times to augment the same skill or ability check, although you can cast it several times in succession to aid multiple different skills. As with all powerful divinations, the GM has final say over the accuracy of any information you gain.

**Material Component:** A fine dust made from silver and platinum, each dose costing 10 gp.

### Memory, Lesser

Divination

**Level:** Brd 2, Clr 2, Pal 2

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Duration:** 1 round/level or until discharged

This spell functions as *memory*, except as noted. It provides a maximum bonus of +5 to a given Knowledge skill check or bardic knowledge check.

**Material Component:** A fine dust made from copper and gold, each dose costing 5 gp.

### Reap

Evocation

**Level:** Sor/Wiz 3

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** 60 ft.

**Area:** Cone-shaped burst

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** No

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

Another Gur spell that eases the farmer's lot, *reap* makes it possible to harvest a field in a hurry. Plants within the spell's area are affected differently depending on their type. Small plants and those with softer stalks (flowers, grains, most agricultural products) are instantly chopped off roughly 6 inches above ground. Large non-mobile plants, such as shrubs and trees, take 1d8 points of damage. Mobile plants, including all monsters with the plant type, take 3d6 damage.

### Smoke Eater

Conjuration (Summoning) (Fire)

**Level:** Clr 1, Sor/Wiz 1

**Components:** V, S, F

**Casting Time:** 1 round

**Range:** Close (25 ft. plus 5 ft./2 levels)

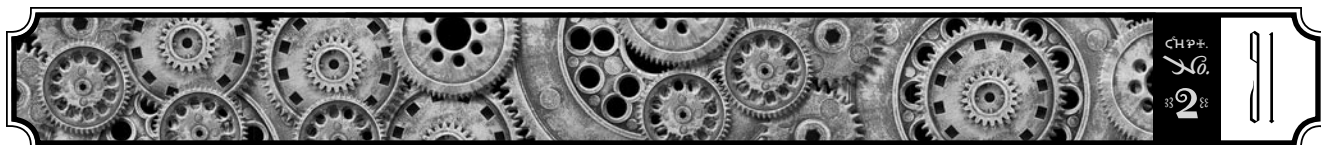
**Effect:** 1 summoned creature

**Duration:** See text

**Saving Throw:** None

**Spell Resistance:** No

This specialized summoning spell brings a smoke eater, a curious denizen of the realms of elemental fire. The creature seems to subsist entirely by eating smoke. It is invaluable for hiding one's presence on the open plains, when a thin column of smoke can give away a camp's location for miles in every direction. The smoke eater is a mottled red and grey creature with warty skin and two bulging red eyes. It has no mouth, sucking up smoke with its stubby trunk as it hovers in the air, its small wings beating furiously. The creature has an AC of 10 and disappears as soon as it takes any sort of damage; otherwise, it will remain for as long as the fire exists. One smoke eater can suck up



all the smoke from a campfire 5 feet across.

**Focus:** This spell can only be cast in the presence of a fire that produces appreciable amounts of smoke, such as a campfire or several smoky torches.

## Warning Shout

Abjuration

**Level:** Brd 3

**Components:** V

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Personal

**Area:** 100 ft. radius

**Targets:** See text

**Duration:** 1 round/level

**Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)

**Spell Resistance:** Yes (harmless)

Your *warning shout* can have one of two effects, neither of which apply to allies who are deaf:

**Many Foes:** You shout the name of a particular type of foe, and all allies within range gain a +2 dodge bonus to AC against that foe's attacks. A broad category of foes can be designated with this spell, all of whom must have an easily identifiable common feature. Typical options include orcs, spearmen, Lancer-class mechs, warriors with red shields.

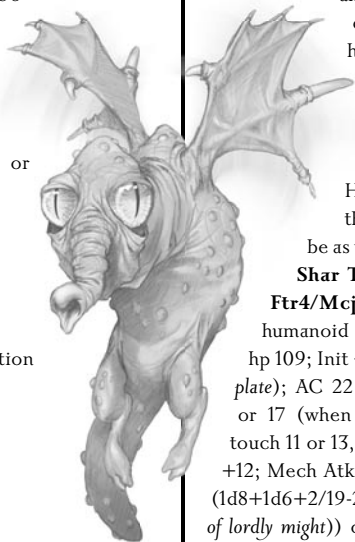
**One Foe:** You shout a warning about one particular foe, and all allies within range gain a dodge bonus against that foe's attacks. The bonus is equal to +1 for every two caster levels you possess. This foe must be a specific individual, such as "the orc captain" or "the Lancer mech with the red pennant."

## SECRETS

### SHAR THIZDIC

The problem with Shar Thizdic is that he actually believes what he says. He has his own agenda, and he is more than willing to lie and cheat and manipulate, but he really is dedicated to the twin goals of eliminating lunar monsters and elevating humanity to a strength it has never known.

Many of his actions seem evil, but he is no worse than many a monarch or merchant prince. He simply believes that his ends absolutely justify his means, and given his



ambitious goals, those means can be ruthless indeed. But he is also a loyal defender of humanity, a man willing to run great risks on behalf of others. His reputation may be sinister in other parts of Highpoint, but the people of the endless plains know him to be as valiant as he is clever.

**Shar Thizdic, male human Exp4/**

**Ftr4/Mcj2/Rog6:** CR 16; Medium humanoid (human); HD 12d6+4d10+32; hp 109; Init +7; Spd 30 ft. (20 ft. in +3 *full plate*); AC 22 (when wearing +3 *full plate*) or 17 (when wearing +1 *studded leather*), touch 11 or 13, flat-footed 21 or 14; Base Atk +12; Mech Atk +7; Grp +13; Atk +14 melee (1d8+1d6+2/19-20, +1 *flaming longsword (rod of lordly might)*) or +15 ranged (1d4+1, sling); Full Atk +14/+9/+4 melee (1d8+1d6+2/19-20, +1 *flaming longsword (rod of lordly might)*) or +15 ranged (1d4+1, sling); SA Sneak attack +3d6; SQ Evasion, extraordinary pilot, mech fingers (warrior instinct), patchwork repairs, trap sense +2, trapfinding, uncanny dodge; AL N; SV Fort +9, Ref +13, Will +12; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 17, Cha 21.

**Skills and Feats:** Bluff +24, Climb +6, Diplomacy +29, Disguise +12 (+14 to act in character), Forgery +7, Gather Information +17, Handle Animal +10, Intimidate +19, Knowledge (local) +10, Knowledge (mechs) +7, Listen +14, Mech Pilot +8, Perform (oratory) +18, Profession (merchant) +8, Profession (shepherd) +8, Ride +5, Sense Motive +18, Speak Language (Common, Drumtalk, Dwarven, Elven, Orc), Spot +13, Survival +9; Deceitful, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Mechwalker, Moonwatcher, Negotiator, Persuasive, Quick Draw, Skill Focus (Bluff), Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Skill Focus (Perform [oratory]), Weapon Finesse.

**Possessions:** Rod of lordly might, +3 *full plate*, +1 *studded leather*, +1 *silvered dagger*, sling.

Shar Thizdic is a shepherd. He is many other things — warlord, orator, philosopher — but his leadership of the Legion is not so different from his early days tending a flock in the mountains around Rook. Humans have always acted like sheep, banding together without any purpose and then scattering as soon as danger appears, using neither their wits nor their weapons to improve their lot. They need to be led.

Fortunately, Shar Thizdic is a man possessed of the cunning, the valor, and the ruthlessness needed to guide humanity into a golden age.

He is modest about his many gifts when talking with others, but in his heart he knows that he will be the defining figure of the current age. Indeed, he may already have become that figure. History will not recall the names of the people who had to rot in his jails and die by his command. It will instead remember how he fought tirelessly for his people, bringing them a safety and strength they had never known.

From his birth, Shar Thizdic was clearly destined for great things. He was as much a diplomat as a shepherd, making friends among many layers of Rook's society. As he grew to manhood, he became a leader. His opinions were sound, his arguments persuasive, and he was always the first to go to work when one of his ideas required effort.

This is why, when the leaders of Rook were going to flee, Shar Thizdic rallied the common folk to stay and fight. They knew he wouldn't ask them to risk more than he would risk himself. For a short time, Shar was the true lord of his city. He spoke, others obeyed, and together they achieved marvelous things.

Memories of that golden moment sustained him as he fled the embers of his home and made his way across the plains. He had tasted the nectar of power, and he knew he was meant to drink deep of it. But how? The friendship of dozens of nomad leaders (and their thousands of followers) was not enough. To gain control, to become the man who would guide them toward greatness, Shar Thizdic needed a cause.

Along came mechs, and the rest is history. They allowed him to draw the threads of loyalty together and begin weaving something new. As he is not a native of the plains, Shar Thizdic feels no particular loyalty to the nomads' traditions. What he is building is better. As he puts it



BKM 2004

when speaking to his closest confidants, "Old ways die hard. Sometimes you have to stab them more than once."

Few people know the true Shar Thizdic. Even among his advisers, he prefers to ask questions rather than state opinions. This doesn't mean that he lacks ideas — quite the contrary. He usually listens to advice, asks for other opinions, and then uses some of the things said to justify the decision he intended to make anyway. If he were cruel or heedless, this would be the end of him, but Shar Thizdic is a clever man and his actions have so far lifted humanity far beyond its wildest dreams.

Of course, as much as he heartens humans, Shar Thizdic frightens other races. His dislike of them is well known. It stems from his life in Rook, when the only other humanoids around were a handful of reclusive dwarves in the nearby mountains and occasional groups of gnomish traders. The dwarves were never pleasant to their neighbors, threatening violence toward Rook's miners more than once, while the mischievous gnomes always seemed sinister to the eyes of a young man unfamiliar with the world.

When Shar Thizdic looks at other races, he sees tight-knit groups with their own homelands and military traditions, groups that defend each other but have never helped humanity. He doesn't necessarily want them destroyed, but they are certainly no more than tools to be used. They stood by and let humanity bear the brunt of the lunar catastrophe, so now they deserve no more than the Legion offers them.

Shar Thizdic likes to travel among his people. Many of them have a fair idea of what he looks like, as his face is on the Legion's coinage, but he is still fond of donning a disguise and walking among the commoners for a time. While on one of his visits, his only company is the solid Benj Dyvent. Benj disapproves of these excursions, but would never dream of complaining.

These travels are an outgrowth of Shar's natural curiosity. This side of his character doesn't come to the fore very often, but he has a great interest in the people around him, from the mightiest clan elder to the weary man stoking a mech's boiler. This curiosity kept him moving around the plains, and it has also propelled him into a variety of occupations. He recently followed it into the command chair of a mech, studying mech piloting with a group of Legion officers. Shar Thizdic has some natural aptitude for the mech jockey's life, and is considering taking a more active role in small-scale mech combat. Benj disapproves of that as well.

Physically, Shar Thizdic is handsome but

not imposing. He stands 6 feet tall and weighs a trim 170 pounds. His eyes are a warm brown and his black hair is curly (although his hairline is beginning to recede). He dresses simply, partly for convenience and partly because he does not wish to appear in the garb of any particular tribe.

As the leader of the Legion, Shar Thizdic has access to almost any magical or steam-powered item he wishes. His favorite weapon is a *rod of lordly might* that was recovered from a roving band of dwarven mercenaries. This rod accompanies him everywhere, as it is a weapon few can match. For a long time, he complemented it with an ornate masterwork dagger that was recovered from Rook, but that was recently replaced with a *+1 silvered dagger* that Olinta Willma gave him. She was insistent that he take her gift and carry it at all times, to symbolize (she said) the bond between Shar and the Tlan. He also carries a shepherd's sling as a reminder of his past.

Armor is not much of a concern for Shar Thizdic. Personal combat is not what he has trained for, and dueling with Shar Thizdic is not the best use of him in an adventure. When it is called for, he wears either practical *+1 studded leather* or an imposing suit of *+3 full plate*. His loyal followers work hard to make sure this armor is never needed.

## THE JAJANYA

Unlike the other tribes of the endless plains, the Jajanya cling to their own identity. They have willingly joined the Legion, but although they are now scattered among its nine chapters, the Jajanya hold on to their old ways. Their language, Janyuula, is still spoken wherever they gather together. And the unusual religion they call the Old Way is still practiced, away from campfires or behind forgotten bulkheads.

At the heart of the Jajanya's dark strangeness is a grim fact. For the last 300 years, their leaders have been werewolves. The T'chnal clan was absorbed by the warlike Jajanya three centuries ago, but the T'chnal were actually a clan of lycanthropes. With their monstrous abilities, they quickly killed or terrorized those who

opposed them, and after a few bloody years they emerged at the head of the tribe that had attempted to absorb them.

The T'chnal ruthlessly purged those with the wit or power to realize their secret. They then set about intermarrying with the other major Jajanya clans, hoping to expand their lycanthropic ranks. This attempt failed to produce any new werewolf-dominated clans, but it did cement the T'chnal at the center of the Jajanya's loose power structure. Different factions have held power over the last 300 years, and great leaders have come and gone, but the T'chnal are always an important voice.

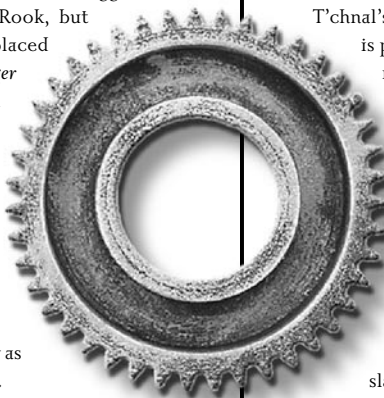
Most of the Jajanya are unaware of the T'chnal's secret. They know that the clan is powerful and ruthless. They don't realize why. This is partly because the leader of the T'chnal three centuries ago, the revered matriarch Shanya, was clever enough to use the Old Way as a shroud to wrap around her family's history.

The T'chnal have always believed themselves to be touched by the gods. They worshiped beings of blood and slaughter, and once they were among the Jajanya, they spread that belief. A few changes were made so that no sign of lycanthropy was obvious, but otherwise the Old Way is really just a set of T'chnal family beliefs that were forced down the throats of those long-dead Jajanya.

The core belief of the Old Way is that ancestors must be "fed" on blood lest they return as hungry ghosts. Animal sacrifices are commonly made to placate the dead. Enemies slain in battle are also considered sacrifices, especially if some part of them or of their equipment is destroyed in a ritual fire. Captured enemies were offered as live sacrifices at one time, although this became less common as the lunar rain forced the tribes of the plains to cooperate more.

Cannibalism is, as rumor suggests, a part of the Old Way as well. In the past, captives were slain and small portions of their flesh were eaten by all the members of the tribe, in hopes that this would steal their foes' strength. The truth is that this provided the T'chnal werewolves with a regular diet of the flesh they craved while giving the practice a cover that the superstitious Jajanya would believe. This is no longer done regularly, but particularly devout Jajanya will still engage in cannibalism if they can do so without being discovered.

Since the advent of Highpoint's lunar





troubles, the fortunes of the T'chnal have waned. They have always had some difficulty breeding a true lycanthropic line, and now only a few wolf-babes are born to each generation. Other voices have become stronger in the clan's politics, and the T'chnal have found themselves compromising or even losing important battles. For instance, they opposed the idea of joining the Legion, but gave in when it became obvious that most Jajanya wanted the safety of mechs.

Fortunately for them, Shar Thizdic seems to have a great liking for one of the remaining T'chnal werewolves. Malam T'chnal is one of his chosen advisers and also acts as one of his chief scouts and trackers. The clan hopes to parlay this into greater control over the Legion, both by placing Jajanya in important positions and by persuading Shar Thizdic to rely on them. Ultimately, the clan is considering turning Shar into a werewolf himself, then using that fact to blackmail him into obeying their wishes.

What they don't realize is that Shar Thizdic is already aware of their plans. He hasn't yet discovered their lycanthropic nature, but he knows that the Jajanya generally are trying to gain influence in his power structure, and that the T'chnal specifically are orchestrating it. None of the Jajanya have his skill with people, and even the T'chnal are not as ruthless when they feel threatened.

Even as they hope to position themselves to use him, he is busy using them. Important and powerful Jajanya are sent on dangerous missions, and many of them don't return. Others are offered great rewards to share even the smallest details of inner Jajanya politics. Shar Thizdic's aim is to discover what the T'chnal are scheming towards. If he finds out in time, the Jajanya will have a new hole in the center of their power structure.

**Malam T'chnal, male human werewolf**  
**Rgr10, human form:** CR 13; Medium humanoid (human, shapechanger), HD 10d8+2d8+12; hp 78; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 20 (+2 Dex, +5 armor, +2 natural armor), touch 12, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +10; Grp +12; Atk +14 melee (1d8+4, +2/+2 *dire flail*) or +13 ranged (1d8+2/x3, +1 *composite longbow* (+2 Str)); Full Atk +12/+12/+7 (1d8+4, +2/+2 *dire flail*) or +13/+8 ranged (1d8+2/x3, +1 *composite longbow* (+2 Str)); SA Curse of lycanthropy, spells; SQ Alternate form, animal companion, combat style (two-weapon fighting), favored enemies (orcs +4, humans +4, dwarves +2), low-light vision, scent, swift tracker, trip, wolf empathy, woodland stride; SV Fort +11, Ref +12, Will +9; AL CE; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 10.

**Skills and Feats:** Handle Animal +13, Hide +19, Knowledge (nature) +15, Listen +17, Move Silently +19, Ride +6, Spot +17, Survival +17 (+19 above ground; additional +4 when tracking by scent); Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Endurance, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Mobility, Stealthy, Track.

**SA – Combat Style (Ex):** Malam T'chnal is treated as though he has the Two-Weapon Fighting feat, as long as he is wearing light or no armor. This is figured into his statistics above.

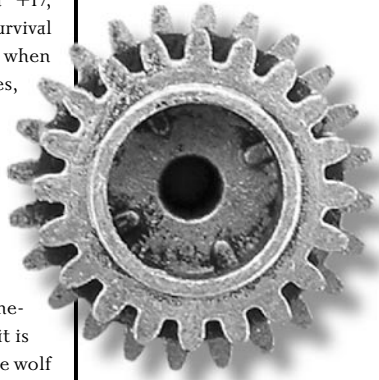
**SA – Animal Companion:** Malam's nameless wolf is from normal stock, although it is whispered that the creature must have dire wolf in its background somewhere. Remember that Malam is effectively 5th level for determining the wolf's abilities, as he is a ranger.

**SA – Spells (2/2; save DC 14 + spell level):** 1st – *hide from animals*, *magic fang*; 2nd – *hold animal*, *snare*.

**Possessions:** +3 *studded leather armor*, +2 *dire flail*, +1 *composite longbow*, masterwork dagger, 20 arrows.

Malam T'chnal is one of Shar Thizdic's closest advisers. A skilled tracker and fearsome hunter, he also performs many special missions for the Legion. He is feared across the endless plains for his stealth, cunning, and ruthlessness. Malam is the strongest leader his clan has produced in many years, and therefore holds a great deal of influence among the Jajanya.

However, his wiles as a hunter and his lycanthropic power have made him overly confident. Malam has known few defeats, and he believes that he is the master of his current situation. He is even toying with the idea of displacing Shar Thizdic and placing a Jajanya dynasty atop the Legion. Intoxicated by his own cleverness,



Malam is blind to the larger forces at play around the Jajanya, including Shar Thizdic's awareness of his ambition.

It is worth noting that Malam has a sister named Shali (Exp3/Rog3), his equal in cleverness if not in combat. She is also a true-bred werewolf and she has a warmer manner than her brother, so she commands the tribe's loyalty in a way he does not. Shali often tries to redirect her brother toward more subtle strategies. These schemes also serve the purpose of strengthening her own power at Malam's expense.

In combat, Malam fights from ambush or at range. Stronger enemies are destroyed before they become aware of his presence. He enjoys using his enchanted *dire flail* (which he calls *Fleshreaver*) to disarm, trip, and otherwise humiliate weak prey. A huge black wolf accompanies Malam. This is his animal companion, a nameless beast that has slain more than its share of humanoids. Shar Thizdic banned the wolf from coming aboard any Legion mechs after an unfortunate incident that cost the lives of two careless engine workers.

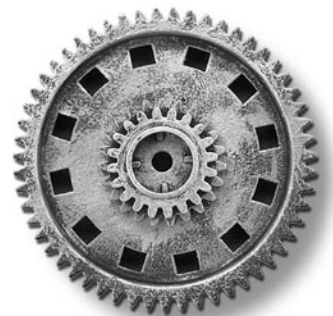
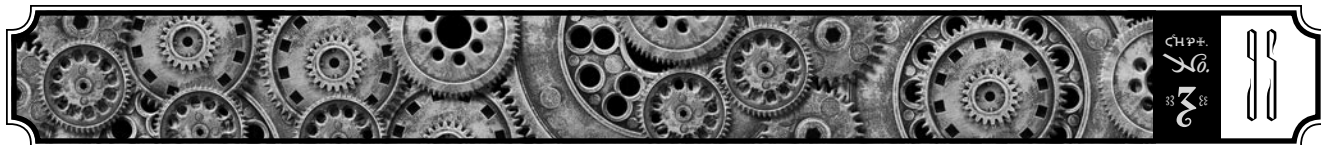






PLATE 4 *The Irontooth believe in the power of the mech, and in the ways of mech fu.*



# THE IRNTOOTH CLANS

## EVERYBODY KNOWS...

THE IRNTOOTH CLANS, A LOOSE CONFEDERATION OF 50 CLAN-BASED FAMILIES, SCOUR THE FLATLANDS AND ENDLESS PLAINS IN SEARCH OF BOOTY WITH WHICH TO BUILD THEIR MIGHTY MECHS. DWARVES WHOSE CLANS WERE DEVASTATED DURING THE EARLY LUNAR RAINS FOUNDED THE IRNTOOTH CLANS. MOST TRIBESMEN WERE ONCE RELATED BY BLOOD TIES, BUT THEIR RANKS NOW ARE FILLED WITH HUMANS, GNOMES, ORCS, AND OTHER RACES: THE IRNTOOTH CLANS ACCEPT ANYONE WHO CAN PROVE HIMSELF COURAGEOUS AND CAPABLE IN A FIGHT. OUTSIDERS ARE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO PROVE THEIR ACCEPTABILITY BY JOUSTING WITH AN IRNTOOTH MECH. TO THE IRNTOOTH, THE JOUSTING TOURNAMENTS ARE THE ULTIMATE PROVING GROUNDS; THEIR YOUNG GROW UP PARTICIPATING IN THESE TOURNAMENTS, AND AT AN EARLY AGE, THEIR PILOTING ABILITY RIVALS THAT OF ADULT PILOTS IN OTHER COMMUNITIES.

The Irontooth believe in the power of the mech ("Power through metal"), and their pilots are skilled in the ways of mech fu, a mech fighting style derived from the Irontooth Clans' monastic beginnings. Their greatest pilots, the mech devils, are feared throughout Highpoint, and they are some of the most disciplined pilots in all the lands.

As a loose confederation, the Irontooth Clans have no centralized government. The various clans, in fact, often fight among themselves, each vying to show who is the mightiest clan, but they always unite against outsiders. Each clan owns numerous mechs, with three to six Colossal or larger mechs, depending on the clan's size. These mechs fly two flags: the Irontooth Clans' flag and one specific to their clan within the Clans. They decorate their mechs with spikes, studs, barbs, and razor-sharp serrated edges, making them some of the most fearsome mechs to behold and battle.

Within each clan, the power generally rests with the dwarves, with the eldest male traditionally ruling the clan, though a few exceptions exist (notably the Jaguar Clan, Clan Batleaxe, and Clan Bugbear, all described later). Even so, the clans treat their non-dwarven members with respect and equality. While the eldest male rules, he generally rules in name only, with real power resting in his strongest

son's hands. As the Irontooth Clans value power above all else, this tradition is beginning to change, and some clans are now led by Mech Lords. Clan Bugbear was the first to topple the standard leadership tradition; instead of an old, weak leader who was little more than a figurehead, they wanted his strongest son to lead them — someone who would lead from the battlefield. The leadership roles thus changed. In such clans, the eldest male often serves as an advisor to the Mech Lord. Now, jousting matches determine the leadership succession of many of the clans. Such jousts also determine when a clansman is worthy to begin a new clan of his own.

The nomadic Irontooth Clans make their living by raiding the weak or forcing protection payments on them. Of course, many of the clans involved in such protection rackets abandon their charges when real danger presents itself. A few clans remain loyal to those they protect, giving their word as their bond. Some of the clans even follow a higher purpose, seeing themselves as saviors of the surface world rather than thieves and scoundrels.

The Irontooth are a diverse group of clans who maintain loyalty to each other in the face of outside adversity. Because they are diverse, they are, as a whole, more difficult to pigeonhole than the Stenian Confederacy,

the Legion, and the L'arile Nation. Some clans are little better than the scavenging rust riders and mech tribes, but others serve more noble goals. Most outsiders are unaware of the individual clans within the Clans, however, so they greet the mere sight of the Irontooth with fear, as the reputation of the deadlier clans has far outstripped that of the more trustworthy or nobler clans.

## HISTORY

Like most dwarves who survived the devastating lunar rains, the people who would become the Irontooth Clans slowly climbed their way out of their underground homes after Parilus, the eldest of the master Gearwrights, taught them to build mechs that could withstand travel in the world above. The dwarves had suffered tremendously when the surface dwellers rushed below to save themselves from the meteor storms and the lunar dragons. As the dwarves' underground cities could not hold such a massive influx of people, they were forced to fight the invading refugees to keep their homes. So much dwarven blood spilled during those years that the dwarves refer to them as the Years of the Blood Rain.

When the dwarves learned the mech-building technology, they saw not only a weapon with which to fight the dragons, but a way to relieve the dwarven kingdoms' population problems: the larger the mech, the more people it could serve as home to. The Gearwrights Guild led the early efforts to build city-mechs for exactly this purpose.

But not all dwarves were comfortable with their leadership. Many of the old warriors grumbled about following a bunch of "gearheads." They doubted the wisdom of the old dwarven ways, but also saw the newly forming Stenian Confederacy as inadequate. The world had changed, they said; whether the clan was led by an elder or a "gearhead," it was obvious that the clan system didn't work. There was little distinction between the Stenian Confederacy and Duerok in the eyes of these rebels. Both were archaic solutions to a changed world.

The range of dissatisfied dwarves was wide, encompassing many different backgrounds, but a certain group found they were united in two firm opinions. First, survival in a changed world required personal power. Only the most powerful individuals had survived the lunar rain and the chaos it brought, and only the most powerful would survive in the years to come.



Second, mechs were the new source of power. That much was obvious.

From the sidelines, these dissatisfied dwarves watched as the Gearwrights Guild led efforts to construct Nedderpik, and the Stenian Confederacy slowly split off from Duerok during this process. The traditionally lawful dwarves were forced to choose sides, but generally remained ordered in the process. But to those on the sidelines, a dire mistake was being made. The Stenian Confederacy would soon succumb to the same problems as the old clans, they said; all this bureaucracy and idealism would soon fall in the face of the lunar disaster, just as the old ways had!

And thus were born the Irontooth Clans. The founding members were lawful monks whose aescetic position outside mainstream dwarf society made it easy to abandon their ancestral clans. Several of the monks had long been habitual tinkerers, and were familiar with the growing body of engineering knowledge. Their monastic talents gave them a firm grounding in the personal power that could be acquired from inner strength. When they decided to build a mech of their own, they sought to make it one that could achieve the same power that they had found with their own inner chi.

The informal leader of these monks was an old dwarf named Bader Irontooth. Bader's construction efforts began with only himself and two dozen other monks. But word of this "other mech" spread throughout the dwarven tunnels, and with news of the mech came talk of Bader's dissident opinions on the city-mechs. Other dissidents began to trickle in, asking to become part of Bader's group. Soon the trickle grew, and Bader had nearly 100 assistants to help him finish his mech.

Bader took in these followers, and they changed the composition of his group. United in a time that would not ordinarily bring such disparate groups together, Bader discovered he was suddenly allied with criminals and malcontents — these new followers shared his views on personal power and the nascent Stenian Confederacy, but from a completely different perspective. In earlier times, the monks would not have associated with such dubious characters, but the changing times forged new alliances.

The first Irontooth clan marched out of the dwarven tunnels in Bader Irontooth's clumsy, steam-belching mech, which was soon abandoned in favor of a juggernaut mech stolen from the Stenians. The legacy of Bader and his monks was a strong shadow over the group, and

the weird hybrid of lawlessness and monasticism that resulted is what gradually gave rise to the strange techniques now known as mech fu.

Other dwarves — and eventually creatures of all races — saw how the "Irontooth clan" was carving out a living on the surface, and they sought out Bader and tried to join his clan. Bader's response was simple: "The old clan ways are over. I am no clan elder. Start your own clan!"

From that came the Irontooth power structure, a loose alliance of disparate clans with disparate peoples and disparate leaders. The "Irontooth clan" was the solution for those dissatisfied with the Stenian Confederacy. Over coming generations, the clan would continue to grow in leaps and bound, until it became known as the Irontooth Clans, eventually rivaling the other mechdoms in reputation — if not in power. For although the individual Irontooth clansmen are indeed some of the best mech pilots on the planet, they are relatively few in number, and disorganized. There are 10,000 Irontooth clansmen spread over a vast area, compared to 100,000 citizens in the Legion and more than 300,000 in the Stenian Confederacy. Without the organization of their competitors, the Irontooth cannot hope to carve out wide swaths of territory. But they can successfully strike fear into the heart of all who would face them, and create a relatively comfortable existence in what would otherwise be a very bleak world.

## RELIGION

There are few rules that apply to all the Irontooth Clans, and religion is one such area. Some clans are religious, while others aren't; some clans follow the old ways, while others embrace the new religion of Dotrak. As always, the answer to the question depends on the clan in question. But of all the Irontooth Clans, three are particularly notable from a religion perspective. The first is the Jaguar Clan, which is home to a Vessel of Dotrak. As the clans rely heavily on the might of their machines, many clansmen have become followers of the cult of Dotrak, the Great Engine. One such adherent spontaneously manifested the mark of Dotrak. Now this Vessel, Gavinrul, has made his home with the Jaguar Clan. The 110 members of this clan constitute Dotrak's largest concentrated following, and are a powerful force for the will

of this new quasi-god.

The Righteous Lancers Clan are strong supporters of the Regenerator cult (described on page 122) and a mysterious deity they call the Righteous. They feel that traditional religion has failed Highpoint's denizens. Instead of placating the impotent deities of old, they have decided that only Highpoint's races can save themselves from the horror that plagues their world. They are currently concentrating their efforts on fighting the lunar dragons and finding a means to rebuild a surface society. To support this ideal, they funnel some of their booty to the city-mech project currently underway by the Clan of the Middle Pass.

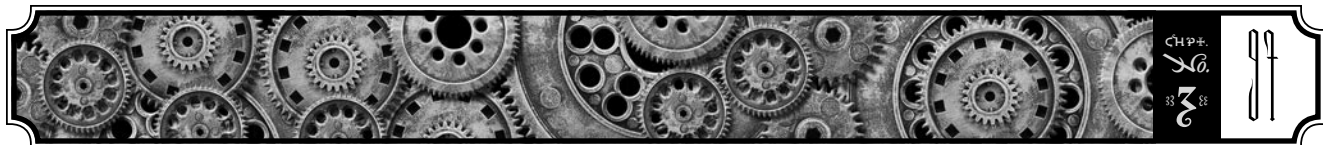
The Shintaji Clan practices a spirit-worshipping religion that is closely tied to their monastic ways. Because the Shintaji are inseparable from their religious beliefs, outsiders refer to their religion as shintaji, as well.

## MAGIC

Overall, magic plays a very minor role in the life of the Irontooth clansmen. Certainly, they value the benefits of magic, including magical weapons, armor, mechs and the fire-power that certain spells provide, but on the whole, the Irontooth do not think much of it. Their attention spans lie firmly on the power of metal and machine. Magic does not allow them to move about the surface world that was once denied them. The advent of steam engines and mechs allowed them to reclaim the flatlands. Machines are what give them a fighting chance against the lunar creatures that plague them. In short, machines are their saviors. Magic is for enhancing the machines.

Because mechs have brought some semblance of life back to them, most tribesmen rarely take the time to study anything other than mechs and steam engines. That being said, a few wizards do make their homes within the Irontooth Clans, though increasingly those wizards are constructors. Generally, the arcane-wielding members of the clans have been gifted with the ability, being sorcerers instead of trained spellcasters. These sorcerers use their abilities to create magical mechs and items useful to the clans, but the priests of the Soul Father create most magical arms and armor used within the clans. Other items the clans possess have likely been "acquired" on their treks.

Should a tribesman desire to pursue wizardry, he would have to locate a wizard among



the clans, or he would likely have to apprentice with the L'arile elves. The North Star Clan is one of the few to focus heavily on magic, and counts many wizards among its numbers. However, true wizardry is becoming scarce, as many wizards abandoned the studious life after the catastrophes. Currently, more and more of them are turning to druidic magic. And, indeed, there may come a day when wizardry becomes a lost study to all but the constructors.

As always, certain clans are exceptions. Magic is strong in the Shintaji Clan, which practices an ancient art of spirit magic. The shintaji spirit sealers are able to imbue mechs with the living soul of a long-dead creature, and they use this ability to build spirit mechs powered by ancient heroes. The shintaji have developed a wide range of spirit magic, which they combine with the gear-driven arts in ways that other mechmods can only dream of.

## DIPLOMACY

The Irontooth Clans rarely involve themselves in politics — political machination is not a skill they cultivate. For the Clans, power comes from might, not pretty talk; he who has the most metal has the most power. And when it comes to problems among the clans, well, those can be solved in the jousts. Their lives are really simple in this regard.

The Irontooth both admire and respect the power that the Stenian Confederacy has accumulated, but they believe the Stenian society to be too stringent and confining for them. The Irontooth enjoy their freedom too much, and they find the rumbling paranoia within the Confederacy disturbing. The Irontooth admit that the Stenians have done some good for Highpoint's inhabitants by providing city-mechs that can hold large populations, thereby protecting them for the lunar rain and the lunar creatures that frequently attack, but they should not attempt to expand their borders.

The Irontooth want to continue their care-free nomadic existence. And they will do everything within their power to make sure they have the right to live how they want.

When it comes to L'arile Nation, the dwarves of the Irontooth Clans envy the elves in that they were able to save some semblance of their former lives above ground by transmuting the trees of their forests into traveling mechs. Yet, they also find it sad because it means the elves have not been able to let go of the past as easily as the dwarves and other races.

For the most part, the Irontooth Clans don't give much thought to the elves. Time has erased much of the racial strife between the elves and the dwarves — at least in the Irontooth Clans' eyes (maybe not so to the Stenian Confederacy). The Irontooth know the catastrophes hurt all the races equally. Now, each struggles to remake a new life in the face of the aftermath as best they can.

To the Irontooth, the past is the past. They have forgiven the humans and other races who invaded their homes during the Years of Blood and Rain (for what real choice did the surface worlders have?), and they have tossed aside their differences with the elves of L'arile. Today, the Irontooth hold no racial prejudices; they accept any and all races into their clans, but acceptance is based on the individual's proven usefulness to the clan — utility is more important than race in these chaotic times on Highpoint.

The Irontooth Clans try to maintain neutral relations with the L'arile, as they believe they may one day need their assistance in standing against the growing threat that is the Legion. Therefore, they do not go out of their way to attack them.

The Legion and its human leader Shar Thizdic have earned the grudging respect of the Irontooth, for Shar has managed to carve a growing mechdom out of the chaos, much like Bader Irontooth did for the Irontooth dwarves so long ago. They admire his growing military might, but they fear it at the same time, for Shar's Legion wants to unite the continent under one rule.

Many Irontooth clans share the endless plains with the Legion, and they've come in contact quite often. The Legion members enjoy telling tales of a golden age in which humans ruled, and it appears that they would like it to be so again. As the Irontooth believe that all races are needed to survive the lunar crisis and the harassing lunar creatures, they do not like hearing such pro-human propaganda. Shar Thizdic's utopian vision no doubt will exclude all non-humans, and as the Legion is a growing military threat, the Irontooth believe they will someday be forced to confront them or be annihilated. The Irontooth have heard rumors that the elves feel the same way.

## GEOGRAPHY

The Irontooth Clans are not limited by geography. Unlike any other mechdom,

they roam freely wherever they choose. Most of them find their homes in the flatland and endless plains, but a very few have ventured as far west as the roughlands. All the tribes are nomadic, so it's hard to say where they might be at any given time. When a great joust is scheduled, word travels fast about where and when, so the clans know where to converge. But once it's over, they scatter again. Some return to fruitful raiding grounds of the past; others travel to old areas to see friends; others take up in a new direction to see what there is to see. Clans with similar migration patterns can be seen in the same locations year after year, but others might make an appearance in a given area only very rarely. In general, the greatest concentration of Irontooth Clans is on the flatlands, for it was there that they first broke from Duerok. But there are many clans still scattered around the endless plains as well, and the great cliffs that separate the two regions are hardly a challenge for the mech devils of the Irontooth Clans.

## FACIONS

The Irontooth Clans are a loose confederation of families. Some families are truly blood kin; others use the term more loosely. Currently there are around 50 clans, though new ones occasionally rise up under new powerful Mech Lords, who win the right of clan formation in the annual Great Joust. Ten of the mightiest clan families are detailed below. An eleventh clan, the Lost Clan, or Moonwatchers Clan, is discussed in the Secrets section on page 135.

Many Irontooth clansmen are independent, not really living with any one clan for any length of time. These clansmen move from clan to clan over the months or years, pairing up with whomever they're currently having the most fun with. As long as they contribute to the clan, they're welcomed, but inevitably they move on at some point, whether due to wanderlust, bickerings, or simply a change in mood. One of the most famous such group of wanderers is a band of mech jockeys known as The Clash, though there are many others. With all of the clan descriptions that follow, it's quite possible that independent groups may have taken up residence with them at any given time.

If there is such a thing as the "typical" Irontooth clan, it would resemble a smaller version of the Hawk clans. But there are many rowdy clans that emulate the Battleaxe and Bugbear



clans, and it is these groups and their nefarious activities that give the Irontooth Clans their reputation. Overall, the Irontooth Clans tend toward neutral alignments, but of course there are many exceptions.



## CLAN BATTLEAXE

Under the leadership of Mech Lord Drok-Naju, a half-orc barbarian, Clan Battleaxe spends most of its time pursuing the riches gained through the protection-racket business, using the proceeds to fund their mech building. Like Clan Bugbear, Clan Battleaxe is one of the rowdiest of the Irontooth Clans. Their favorite pastimes include drinking, fighting, and intimidating others.

This clan owns two kabutos (see page 30 of the **Mech Manual**), roaming villages filled to capacity, and one smaller kabutoshi. Their unusual kabutos looks like fierce landsharks made of obsidian with metal reinforcements. They stand just over 240 feet tall.

The Battleaxe Clan contains an unusually large number of gnomes. Forty years ago, the clan forcibly integrated a gnomish mech tribe into their fold after hearing the tribe had some of the best coglayers in the area among its number. The rest of the tribe is dwarves and half-orcs. There are presently no humans among them, but they are not averse to allowing them into the clan.

The clan owns four mothers and six daughter mechs, along with two iron maidens. They paint their mechs black with silver battleaxes on their chest region. When not running protection rackets, the clan likes to stalk prey, attacking them at night, where their dark mechs give them some advantage.

Elder Eljo Waziji advises Mech Lord Drok-Naju, and even though he's an old dwarf, he's usually found in the midst of any fighting, as he loves a good brawl.

**Leader:** Mech Lord Drok-Naju

**Clan Flag:** Silver battleaxe on a black background.

**Mech Resources:** Ashigaru (6), barbagula

(14), ch'i'rin (2), daughter (6), fangbiter (3), incinerator (4), iron maiden (2), juggernaut (3), kabuto (2), kabutoshi (1), kusari (3), mother (4), sensei (1), viper (2), wakizashi (2).

Package value: 996,413 gp.

**Clan Size:** 360

**Composition:** 65% dwarf, 25% gnome, 10% half-orc

**Alignment:** Chaotic neutral

**Religion:** While not a particularly religious clan, many members do worship the Soul Father.



## Drok-Naju, Clan Battleaxe Mech Lord

**Drok-Naju, Irontooth Clan Battleaxe Mech Lord, male half-orc Bbn14:** CR 14; Medium humanoid (half-orc); HD 14d12+28; hp 124; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 20 (+1 Dex, +9 armor), touch 11, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +14; Mech Atk +14 (certain mechs); Grp +20; Atk +23 melee (1d10+12/x3, +3 greataxe) or +17 ranged (1d8/x2, +2 steam gun) or +15 mech (on proficient mechs); Full Atk +23/+18/+13 melee (1d10+12/x3, +3 greataxe) or +17/+12/+7 ranged (1d8/x2, +2 steam gun) or +15/+10/+5 mech (on proficient mechs); SA Greater rage, rage 4/day; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., damage reduction 3/—, fast movement, half-orc traits, improved uncanny dodge, indomitable will, trap sense +4, uncanny dodge; AL CN; SV Fort +13, Ref +5, Will +4; Str 22, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 10.

**Skills and Feats:** Climb +11, Craft (blacksmithing) +8, Intimidate +10, Jump +11, Ride +11, Survival +10, Swim +11; Exotic Weapon Proficiency (chattersword, steam gun), Great Fortitude, Mech Hardened (ashigaru, barbagula, iron maiden, raptor), Power Attack.

**Possessions:** +3 banded mail, +3 greataxe, chat-

tersword, +2 steam gun, potion of cure serious wounds (x4), pouch.

**Languages:** Common, Orc.

Drok-Naju is a tall, stout half-orc of middle years. Born to a human mother, Drok-Naju grew up in the endless plains, roaming the territory with the nomadic humans of the lands and avoiding the lunar dragons. He spent much time hiding in areas with boulders, hills, forests, and caves, places that offered protection from the rain and the creatures dropping from the sky. When his particular tribe decided to find an underground home for itself, Drok-Naju, tired of hiding, went in search of the famed mech warriors who had the power to withstand the rains, bring battle to the invading monsters, and survive the land's numerous raiders.

His travels brought him into contact with Clan Battleaxe, and Drok-Naju proved his worth to the clan, earning fame as a fierce mech boarder. During his years with the tribe, the clan's leadership changed hands numerous times, for clansman after clansman challenged the Mech Lord for his position via the normal Clan Battleaxe way: hand-to-hand combat. In time, Drok-Naju grew to covet the Mech Lord position for himself, and he went out and earned it. He has defended his right to lead for the last five years.

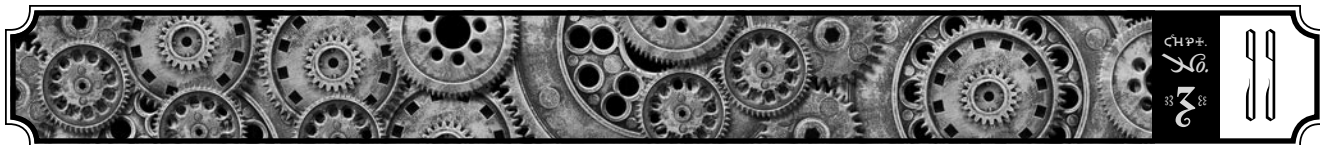
Drok-Naju is a strong leader and a formidable warrior. He is not known for grand plans, but he keeps his clansmen well stocked in gold and food — and that's what matters most to them.

## Eljo Waziji, Clan Battleaxe Advisor

**Eljo Waziji, Irontooth Clan Battleaxe, male dwarf Brd12:** CR 12; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 12d6; hp 44; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 14 (+1 Dex, +3 armor), touch 11, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +9; Mech Atk +4; Grp +8; Atk +8 melee (1d8-1/19-20, longsword) or +10 ranged (1d6/19-20, shortbow) or +1 mech (any mech weapon); Full Atk +8/+3 melee (1d8-1/19-20, longsword) or +10/+9 ranged (1d6/19-20, shortbow) or +1 mech (any mech weapon); SA Countersong, fascinate, inspire competence, inspire courage +2, inspire greatness, song of freedom, suggestion; SQ Bardic knowledge (+2 bonus), bardic music, darkvision 60 ft., dwarf traits; AL CN; SV Fort +4, Ref +9, Will +12; Str 9, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 17, Wis 19, Cha 21.

**Skills and Feats:** Bluff +10, Concentration +10, Craft (alchemy) +13, Craft (mechcraft) +22, Diplomacy +11, Escape Artist +5, Gather Information +17, Hide +10, Knowledge





(arcana) +13, Knowledge (history) +13, Knowledge (local) +13, Knowledge (mechcraft) +8, Knowledge (steam engines) +10, Move Silently +5, Perform (oratory) +15, Spellcraft +10; Craft Magical Mech, Craft Powered Mech, Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Scribe Scroll.

**Possessions:** Studded leather armor, longsword, +2 dagger, short bow, cloak of charisma +2, eyes of charming, wand of hold person (20 charges).

**Languages:** Common, Dwarven, Elven, Gnome, Orc.

**Spells Known** (3/4/4/4/2; DC 14 + spell level): 0—daze, detect magic, flare, know direction, light, mending, message; 1st—charm person, cure light wounds, hypnotism, summon monster I; 2nd—blur, cat's grace, eagle's splendor, hold person; 3rd—blink, gaseous form, good hope, haste; 4th—hallucinatory terrain, silence, whispering wind.



**E**ljo Waziji is an 220-year-old dwarf with a white beard that extends just below his knees. His body is very thin, not like a dwarf, and he has a long face (often red from drinking) with a large nose. Although not terribly strong, the venerable dwarf is surprisingly spry for his age.

A native of the Stenian Confederacy, Eljo left the confines of the great city-mechs to study the fascinating Irontooth Clans, intrigued by what led his fellow dwarves to seek such a chaotic existence. That was decades ago, and though Eljo prefers the finer Stenian clothing, he finds he does not prefer their outlook on life. Eljo has taken to the nomadic life like a bird to the air. He wouldn't have it any other way.

While Eljo spends a great deal of time drinking and card playing, his real passion is collect-

ing stories about the Irontooth Clans. He is not a member of any particular clan, though he calls himself an Irontooth now, and he is welcome among any clan. Indeed, he has spent time among them all, even with the mysterious Moonwatcher Clan (now called the Lost Clan), that disappeared without a trace over a century ago. Eljo likes talking about the Moonwatchers to anyone who cares to listen or ask. He also likes upstart young adventurers. At his age, he's seen a lot of heroes come and go, but their stories never cease to bore him.

Eljo has been with the Battleaxe Clan for a little over a decade. Although he's not a clan member, when Drok-Naju became Mech Lord, he invited him to be the Battleaxe's elder, for he enjoys the man's stories and finds him quite wise. The two are close friends and drinking companions.

## Wren Pazpemec, Clan Battleaxe Constructor

**Wren Pazpemec, Irontooth Clan Battleaxe, female gnome Con8:** CR 8; Medium humanoid (gnome); HD 8d4+16; hp 37; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 14 (+1 Dex, +2 armor, +1 size), touch 14, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +4; Mech Atk +2; Grp +0; Atk/Full Atk +7 melee (1d4+2, +2 quarterstaff) or +5 ranged (1d6/19-20, light crossbow) or -2 mech (any mech weapon); SA Spells; SQ Gnome traits, low-light vision, summon familiar; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +7; Str 10, Dex 11, Con 15, Int 19, Wis 13, Cha 13.

**Skills and Feats:** Concentration +7, Craft (alchemy) +17, Disable Device +9, Hide +8, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (mechs) +9, Knowledge (planes) +9, Knowledge (steam engines) +14, Listen +5, Profession (engineer) +9, Spellcraft +15 (+17 Constructor spells), Spot +3; Alertness, Craft Construct, Craft



Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Steamgear, Craft Wondrous Item, Scribe Scroll.

**Possessions:** +2 quarterstaff, light crossbow, dagger, bracers of armor +2, pouch, spell components, spellbook.

**Languages:** Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Giant, Gnome, Goblin.

**Constructor Spells Prepared:** (4/6/5/5/4; DC 14 + spell level); 0—acid splash, detect poison, detect magic, read magic, daze, mending; 1st—animate rope, construct friendship\*, detect clockworks, enginemaker's grasp, magic weapon, speak with construct; 2nd—cat's grace, fox's cunning, clockwork messenger\*, hold construct, make whole; 3rd—control gears\*, diminish gears, gear shape, greater magic weapon; tick tock knock; 4th—gear stride\*, rebuild soul, rusting grasp, stone shape.

\*Indicates specialist spell.

**Spellbook:** 0—acid splash, dancing lights, daze, detect poison, detect magic, read magic, daze, light, mending, ray of frost, resistance, touch of fatigue; 1—animate rope, charm person, construct friendship\*, detect clockworks, enginemaker's grasp, hold portal, identify, magic weapon, shocking grasp, speak with construct, summon monster I, true strike; 2—blur, cat's grace, detect thoughts, fox's cunning, clockwork messenger\*, hold construct, make whole, protection from arrows, summon swarm, web; 3—control gears\*, diminish gears, dispel magic, fireball, gear shape, greater magic weapon, lightning bolt, protection from energy, tick tock knock, tongues; 4—gear stride\*, ice storm, rebuild soul, rusting grasp, stone shape, stone-skin, wall of ice.

**W**ren, a 60-year-old gnome, was a member of the mech tribe absorbed into Clan Battleaxe 40 years ago. She and her tribe didn't mind becoming members of the Irontooth Clans, however, as their assimilation brought them a large degree of security, something lacking on the harsh continent of Highpoint, especially for mech tribes.

Wren has always been fascinated with constructs and magic, and she has fueled this fascination by becoming a constructor, something she seems born to. She studies her trade fastidiously, and she occasionally trains others who show promise to follow her path.

Wren is a quiet, bookish person. She spends most of her time reading, experimenting, and creating.





## CLAN BUGBEAR

The rowdiest of the Irontooth Clans, Clan Bugbear enjoys killing as much as raiding — and they aren't very choosy about whom they kill, though they've yet to kill other Irontooth clansmen. This clan, in particular, has given the Irontooth a bad name among Highpoint's inhabitants, who run in fear upon sight of their clan flag. When members of Clan Bugbear participate in the famous Irontooth jousts, they often cajole their opponents into fighting "to the pain," meaning they don't power down their mechs: The damage is very real. It is difficult for another clan to refuse this challenge without being seen as cowardly. For this reason, most clans dread it when Clan Bugbear shows up to a jousting match.

Clan Bugbear was one of the first to break with tradition and eschew leadership by the eldest dwarf. As Clan Bugbear only appreciates power, their leader is the strongest dwarf among them, as proven by hand-to-hand arena fighting. This often leaves leadership out of the mech jockey's hands; the leader is always a true warrior through and through (usually a barbarian).

Clan Bugbear is known for fleecing Highpoint's inhabitants for exorbitant protection payments (protection from the clan, that is). Sometimes they abide by the agreements, though sometimes they grow bored and raid their protectees anyway. They rarely let other groups pillage or hurt their charges, as it that would give them the reputation of being weak — something they could not abide. Those who attempt to steal or disrupt their business soon find themselves at the wrong end of a mech cannon.

This clan has no other immediate goals than to continue its protection-racket business and its joyful raiding. The Bugbears do not care about politics, and they do not fear the Stenian Confederacy. They generally remain on working terms with the other Irontooth Clans, as their blood has mixed into the various tribes, and they won't attack "family."

**Leader:** Mech Lord Rodorr Bearclaw.

**Clan Flag:** White flag with an open bugbear claw.

**Mech Resources:** Ashigaru (5), barbagula (12), chi'i'rin (1), daughter (6), fangbiter (3), iron maiden (2), juggernaut (2), kabuto (1), kabutoshi (1), kusari (3), magwagon (1), mother (2), sensei (2), viper (1). Package value: 624,350 gp.

**Clan Size:** 300

**Composition:** 65% dwarf, 10% human, 10% gnome, 15% half-orc

**Alignment:** Chaotic neutral

**Religion:** Though the rowdiest Irontooth around, Clan Bugbear devotedly pays its respects to the Soul Father, whom they feel has not utterly abandoned them — for he's seen to it that Clan Bugbear has managed to survive the catastrophe, after all. Not everyone was so lucky.

### Rodorr Bearclaw, Clan Bugbear Mech Lord

**Rodorr Bearclaw, Irontooth Clan Bugbear, male dwarf Bbn13:** CR 13; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 13d12+65; hp 155; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 20 (+2 Dex, +8 armor), touch 12, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +13; Mech Atk +13 (certain mechs); Grp +16; Atk +22 melee (1d10+5/x3, +2 *dwarven waraxe*) or +15 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow) or +15 mech (on proficient mechs); Full Atk +22/+17/+12 melee (1d10+5/x3, +2 *dwarven waraxe*) or +15/+10/+5 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow) or +15/+10/+5 mech (on proficient mechs); SA Greater rage, rage 4/day; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., damage reduction 3/—, dwarf traits, fast movement, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +4, uncanny dodge; AL CN; SV Fort +13, Ref +8, Will +3; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 20, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 11.

**Skills and Feats:** Climb +7, Craft (blacksmith-



ing) +8, Handle Animal +8, Intimidate +8, Jump +7, Listen +3, Ride +6, Survival +7, Swim +7; Improved Critical (*dwarven waraxe*), Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Mech Hardened (*ashigaru*, *barbagula*, *iron maiden*, *raptor*), Weapon Focus (*dwarven waraxe*).

**Possessions:** +3 *chain mail*, +2 *dwarven waraxe*, *ring of freedom of movement*, light crossbow, club, dagger.

**Languages:** Common, Dwarven.

Rodorr Bearclaw is perhaps the rowdiest Bugbear clansman, and the others take their cue from him. Rodorr is a stout, bald dwarf with ferocious bear tattoos covering 70 percent of his body. He enjoys fighting, gambling, and drinking ... and fighting some more and drinking some more. His 16 children by various women are an indication of one of his other favorite pastimes.

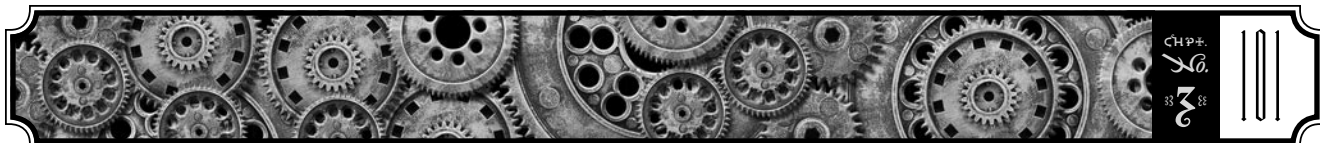
Rodorr seriously dislikes the Stenian Confederacy for its overt attempts to *control* everyone and everything. He enjoys tormenting their soldiers whenever he gets a chance, but he spends most of his time harassing (and often killing) the cult-like Legion members, whom he views as worthless garbage. He fears Shar Thizdic's armies could upset the balance of power on Highpoint, and though he doesn't approve of the Stenians, he prefers their dominance to Shar's.

Rodorr has successfully defended his right to rule the clan for over a decade now. He has no plans to release the reins anytime soon.

### Stodder Bearclaw, Clan Bugbear Warrior

**Stodder Bearclaw, Irontooth Clan Bugbear, male dwarf Mcj11:** CR 11; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 11d6+11; hp 52; Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16 (+2 Dex, +4 armor), touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +8; Mech Atk +11; Grp +9; Atk +10 melee (1d6+2/19-20/x2, +1 short sword) or +10 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow) or +13 mech (any mech weapon); Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d6+2/19-20/x2, +1 short sword) or +10/+5 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow) or +13/+8/+3 mech (any mech weapon); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., dwarf traits, extraordinary pilot, hand speed, mech fingers [skill transfer, warrior instinct], patchwork repairs, push the envelope 3/day, roll with the punches (-2 increments); AL CN; SV Fort +6, Ref +11, Will +4; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 9, Cha 9.

**Skills and Feats:** Balance +12, Climb +5, Craft (mechcraft) +15, Jump +5, Knowledge (mechs) +11, Knowledge (steam engines) +13, Listen +3, Mech Pilot +29, Spot +3; Dodge, Great



Fortitude, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Mech Dancer, Mech Fu, Mechidextrous, Mech-walker.

*Possessions:* +1 pilot armor, +1 short sword, dagger, light crossbow, steam gun.

*Languages:* Common, Dwarven, Gnome.

**S**todder Bearclaw bears a close resemblance to his bald father, minus the tattoos, and is one of Clan Bugbear's best and fastest mech jockeys. He also enjoys fighting just as much as his father. Few in the clan can best him in a mech joust, though better mech pilots have defeated him at the Great Joust. Still, the excitement of battling some of the greatest devil-mechs and holding his own is enough to buoy his spirits.

Stodder's father has allowed him to handle many of the clan's daily affairs, mostly because his father is usually off drinking and carousing, but he is not the best person for the task. He lacks the wisdom to handle things diplomatically — not that diplomacy holds very much with the Bugbear — and instead pushes others around. Although his fellow clansmen respect him as a mech pilot, they do not respect his attempts at ruling them. Were it not for his father's considerable physical prowess, many of them would choose to beat Stodder to a pulp. Because they don't want any problems with Rodorr, they either listen to or ignore him, depending on the importance of his request and their current mood.

### Olara Dorr, Clan Bugbear Shaman

**Olara Dorr, Irontooth Clan Bugbear, female dwarf Clr10:** CR 10; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 10d8+20; hp 68; Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18 (+2 Dex, +6 armor), touch 12, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +7; Mech Atk +7 (certain mechs); Grp +8; Atk +12 melee (1d10+4/x3, +3 dwarven waraxe) or +10 ranged (1d8/19-20/x2, +1 light crossbow) or +9 mech (on proficient

mechs); Full Atk +12/+7 melee (1d10+4/x3, +3 dwarven waraxe) or +10/+5 ranged (1d8/19-20/x2, +1 light crossbow) or +9/+4 mech (on proficient mechs); SA Spells; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., dwarf traits, spontaneous casting, turn undead; AL N; SV Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +11; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 16, Wis 20, Cha 15.

*Skills and Feats:* Concentration +7, Craft (blacksmithing) +15, Craft (mechcraft) +15, Diplomacy +7, Heal +10, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (history) +8, Knowledge (religion) +13, Knowledge (the planes) +8, Spellcraft +10; Brew Potions, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Mech Hardened (ashigaru, barbagula, iron maiden, raptor), Weapon Focus (dwarven waraxe).

*Possessions:* +1 chainmail, +3 dwarven waraxe, +1 light crossbow, dagger, club, holy symbol.

*Languages:* Common, Dwarven, Giant, Gnome, Orc.

*Prepared Spells* (6/6+1/5+1/4+1/4+1/3+1; Earth and Protection Domains; DC 15 + spell level): 0—create water, detect magic, detect poison, guidance, light, mending; 1st—bless (x2), command, divine favor, entropic shield, magic stone\*, magic weapon; 2nd—aid, bear's endurance, darkness, eagle's splendor, make whole, soften earth and stone\*; 3rd—blindness/deafness, create food and water, daylight, dispel magic, stone shape\*; 4th—air walk, dismissal, divination, greater magic weapon, spike stones\*; 5th—flame strike (x2), righteous might, wall of stones\*.

\*Indicates a domain spell.

**T**hough a priestess, Olara Dorr is just as rowdy as her fellow clansmen. She spends a great deal of her time gambling and drinking with the others ("Praise the Soul Father and pass the suds," she's fond of saying), and she keeps many of the younger priests as consorts. She's also not too keen on curing others for free ("What am I, your personal doctor?"), and often extorts coin or favors for her healing touch.

Olara is a dark-haired dwarf nearing middle age, but she is still beautiful enough to catch many a dwarf's fancy ... though her personality is not so charming.



### CLAN HAWK

**O**ne of the oldest and largest clans, Clan Hawk produces some of the greatest mech devils in Highpoint. The clan's leadership is very traditional, with an elder, Lugos Highhammer, ruling the clan. His eldest son, Madon Highhammer, serves as the clan's strong arm and assists his father with the clan's daily governmental needs.

Clan Hawk runs several protection rackets, and they support several exploration teams. As one of the largest clans, perhaps the largest, they have better access to mech materials and have some of the best mech builders in their midst. The tribe relies heavily on steam-powered and man-powered mechs, though it owns a few clockwork mechs, too. The clan's many raiders provide the clan with a lot of stolen mechs from the rust riders, Stenian Confederacy, and the Legion. They tend to avoid the elven magical mechs, as, having few wizards or sorcerers, they do not have the arcane firepower to deal with them, and they would rather remain on good terms. Of course, not all Irontooth Clans feel the elves are off limits, and at least one clan, the North Star Clan, is on very friendly with the elves and has a growing elven population.

Though Clan Hawk does not have many sorcerers, wizards, or constructors, it does contain numerous mech jockeys, mech devils, monks, anklebiters, and stalkers. These individuals help make the clan very formidable on the battlefield.

**Leader:** Elder Lugos Highhammer.

**Clan Flag:** Black flag with a red hawk in flight.

**Mech Resources:** Ashigaru (6), barbagula (17), ch'i'rin (1), daughter (7), fangbiter (4), incinerator (4), iron maiden (3), juggernaut (3), kabuto (3), kabutoshi (2), kappa (7), kusari (3), magwagon (3), mother (5), oni (2), raptor (4), sensei (2), viper (2), wakizashi (10). Package value: 2,027,608 gp.

**Clan Size:** 650

**Composition:** 70% dwarves, 10% human, 10% gnomes, 10% other



**Alignment:** Neutral

**Religion:** Clan Hawk is not particularly religious, but many priests of the Soul Father exist within the clan, and they have a decent following.

## Elder Lugos Highhammer, Clan Hawk Mech Lord

**Elder Lugos Highhammer, Irontooth Clan Hawk, male dwarf Mnk10:** CR 10; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 10d8+23; hp 71; Init +8; Spd 50 ft.; AC 21 (+4 Dex, +3 natural armor, +2 Wis, +2 bonus), touch 18, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +7; Mech Atk +7 (certain mechs); Grp +8; Atk +11 melee (1d6+3, +2 *quarterstaff*) or +8 (1d10+1, flurry of blows) or +12 ranged (1d6+2, +1 *javelin*) or +11 mech (on proficient mechs); Full Atk +11/+6 melee (1d6+3, +2 *quarterstaff*) or +8/+8/+3 (1d10+1, flurry of blows) or +12/+7 ranged (1d6+2, +1 *javelin*) or +11/+6 mech (on proficient mechs); SA Flurry of blows, *ki* strike (lawful, magic), unarmed strike; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., dwarf traits, evasion, fast movement +30 ft., improved evasion, purity of body, slow fall 50 ft., still mind, wholeness of body; AL LN; SV Fort +9, Ref +11, Will +11; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 15, Cha 12.

**Skills and Feats:** Balance +8, Climb +6, Concentration +4, Craft (mechcraft) +12, Diplomacy +3, Escape Artist +6, Hide +14, Jump +7, Knowledge (arcana) +4, Listen +3, Move Silently +7, Sense Motive +3, Spot +3, Tumble +9; Deflect Arrows, Improved Initiative, Improved Trip, Improved Unarmed Strike, Iron Will, Mech Hardened (barbagula, daughter, mother, raptor), Stunning Fist, Toughness.

**Possessions:** +2 *quarterstaff*, +1 *javelin* (x4), *amulet of natural armor* +3, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of invisibility*, *potion of bull's*

*strength*, *potion of cat's grace*.

**Languages:** Common, Dwarven.

Elder Lugos Highhammer wishes he could return his clan to a normal dwarven life deep below Highpoint, but he knows that the lunar rains have changed everything, tying his clan's future securely to this historical "Second Age of Walkers." Even though he has had to accept this, he continues to wax nostalgic. Lugos also takes his monastic studies very seriously, spending at least two hours a day performing the martial arts rituals that are a part of his monk background.

Lugos involves his son Madon in the leadership of the clan, as he hopes to one day leave the clan in his hands. Although his son has the heart and head of a warrior, Lugos thinks he will grow into a fine leader one day — he's shown some signs of it already.

The grandfatherly Lugos has a very calm personality, rarely raising his voice or becoming panicked. He is a very good listener, and he tries to spend time in conversation with his tribesmen to better understand their needs and desires. Lugos also has a soft spot in his heart for the tribe's children. He can sometimes be found playing games of hide and seek with them.

## Dorok Gales, Clan Hawk Mech Devil

**Dorok Gales, Irontooth Clan Hawk, male human Meji10/Mcd5:** CR 15; Medium humanoid (human); HD 10d6+5d6+15; hp 70; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 20 (+5 Dex, +5 armor), touch 15, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +10; Mech Atk +15; Grp +12; Atk +11 melee (1d6+4/19-20, +2 *short sword*) or +12 ranged (1d8, steam gun) or +20 mech (any mech weapon); Full Atk +11/+5 melee (1d6+4/19-20, +2 *short sword*) or +12/+7 ranged (1d8, steam gun) or +20/+15/+10 mech (any mech weapon); SA Stunning attack, unarmed damage (+3d6); SQ Agile mech +1, extraordinary pilot, fast movement (+10 ft. mech speed), hand speed, mech fingers [skill transfer, warrior instinct], patchwork repairs, push the envelope 3/day, roll with the punches (-1 increment), special skill uses; AL LN; SV Fort +5, Ref +18, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 20, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 6, Cha 13.

**Skills and Feats:** Balance +25, Bluff +9, Climb +15, Craft (mechcraft) +23, Escape Artist +11, Jump +17, Knowledge (mechs) +21, Knowledge (steam engines) +23, Listen +11, Mech Pilot +40, Sense Motive +6, Spot +11, Tumble +18; Dodge, Lightning Reflexes, Natural Pilot, Mech Dancer, Mech Fu, Mechidextrous, Mechwalker, Run, Speed Freak.

**Possessions:** +2 *pilot's armor*, +2 *short sword*, dagger, light crossbow, *potion of cure moderate wounds* (x2).

**Languages:** Common, Dwarven, Gnome, Orc.

Dorok grew up in Clan Hawk, and took quickly to mech training as a young lad. As soon as he was old enough, he started traveling with the Hawk raiders, and proved himself quite useful. It didn't take long for him to become one of the better mech pilots in Clan Hawk's ranks, and he was invited to learn the ways of the mech devils, becoming a master of mech fu.

Dorok takes his piloting very seriously, and he trains continuously, almost to the exclusion of everything else. He has won many jousts, especially at the Great Joust, and other Irontooth pilots vie to try their skills against him.

Dorok is a sandy-haired, clean-shaven man in his late thirties. He is strong-minded, humorless, and very intense about his passion for piloting.

## Madon Highhammer, Clan Hawk Warrior

**Madon Highhammer, Irontooth Clan Hawk, male dwarf Ftr10:** CR 10; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 10d10+30; hp 99; Init +7; Spd 20 ft.; AC 20 (+3 Dex, +7 armor), touch 13, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +10; Mech Atk +10 (certain mechs); Grp +12; Atk +18 melee (2d6+1d3+10/19-20/x3, +2 *chattersword*) or +15 ranged (1d8, +1 *steam gun*) or +13 mech (on proficient mechs); Full Atk +18/+13 melee (2d6+1d3+10/19-20/x3, +2 *chattersword*) or +15/+10 ranged (1d8/x2, +1 *steam gun*) or +13/+8 mech (on proficient mechs); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., dwarf traits; AL N; SV Fort +10, Ref +6,





Will +3; Str 18, Dex 17, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 18.

**Skills and Feats:** Climb +5, Craft (armor-smithing) +11, Craft (blacksmithing) +7, Craft (mechcraft) +11, Handle Animal +6, Intimidate +9, Jump +5, Mech Pilot +5, Ride +5, Swim +5; Exotic Weapon Proficiency (chattersword, steam gun), Improved Critical (chattersword), Improved Initiative, Greater Weapon Focus (chattersword), Leadership, Mech Hardened (barbagula, daughter, mother, raptor), Weapon Focus (chattersword, steam gun), Weapon Specialization (chattersword).

**Possessions:** +3 chain shirt, +2 chattersword, +1 steam gun, dagger (x4), *potion of cat's grace*, *potion of bull's strength*.

**Languages:** Common, Dwarf, Gnome.

**M**adon Highhammer is a warrior through and through. He enjoys taking battle to his enemies, and he's often victorious. Since he's not a very good mech pilot, he prefers to participate in the hand-to-hand fighting competitions that often spring up around Irontooth jousting contests. These are easier to find when Clan Battleaxe or Bugbear is around.

Madon is slowly learning about leadership from his father, who has done a very good job in expanding Clan Hawk and making them prosperous. While he is not as disciplined as his father, his charismatic personality has endeared the Hawk clansmen to him. They also like the fact that he is always out in the front of any battling, showing the enemy the extent of his strength and power.

Madon wears a dashing black cloak with a red hawk in flight upon it. He is four to five inches taller than most dwarves, and he has jet-black hair and a beard that reaches his mid-chest. His chain shirt and weapons are always gleaming, and he cuts a fine figure on the battlefield.

### Halsine Gutterduck, Clan Hawk Infiltrator

**Halsine Gutterduck, Irontooth Clan Hawk, female halfling Stk13:** CR 13; Small humanoid (halfling); HD 13d6+13; hp 61; Init +3; Spd 20 ft.; AC 21 (+3 Dex, +4 armor, +3 deflection, +1 size), touch 17, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +9; Mech Atk +4; Grp +5; Atk +14 melee (1d4+1/18-20, +1 *small rapier*) or +14 ranged (1d3/19-20, small dagger) or +3 mech; Full Atk +14/+9 melee (1d4+1/18-20, +1 *small rapier*) or +14/+9 ranged (1d3/19-20, small dagger) or +3 mech; SA Sneak attack +7d6; SQ Evasion, halfling traits, improved evasion, improved uncanny dodge, slippery mind, trap sense +4, uncanny dodge; AL N; SV Fort +8, Ref +14, Will +7; Str 10, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 13,

Wis 11, Cha 18.

**Skills and Feats:** Balance +15, Bluff +14, Climb +12, Diplomacy +16, Disable Device +13, Disguise +9, Gather Information +9, Hide +23, Jump +12, Listen +10, Move Silently +17, Open Lock +15, Search +11, Spot +12, Tumble +23, Use Magic Device +14; Acrobatic, Alertness, Gearstride, Nimble Fingers, Weapon Finesse.

**Possessions:** *Ring of protection* +3, +2 *leather armor*, *cloak of resistance* +2, +1 *rapier*, light crossbow, dagger (x4), *hat of disguise*, *ring of mind shielding*, *potion of cat's grace* (x2), *potion of invisibility* (x3).

**Languages:** Common, Dwarven, Halfling.

**T**he Gutterduck is infamous for her ability to sneak in and disable mechs. While the clan is very proud of its mech jockeys and mech devils, this particular stalker's reputation outshines them all. She has infiltrated and destroyed so many Legion mechs that she's currently on Shar Thizdic's hit list. Of course, the Stenians haven't been immune to her shenanigans either, and she's just below Jaguar of the Jaguar Clan on the Stenians' most-wanted list.

While most know about the Gutterduck, very few know what she truly looks like: She uses her *hat of disguise* to keep everyone guessing, and her *ring of mind shielding* keeps people out of her head. She likes being one step ahead of everyone, and she intends to keep it that way. She sometimes hooks up with scavengers and adventuring groups, pretending to be one of them to learn new bits of information just for the fun of it.



### CLAN OF THE MIDDLE PASS

“The middle pass” refers to the path between divine and arcane magic: psionics. This small clan's elders, in particular, are great practitioners of this mental magic. This group has strong monastic roots, as well, and most members walk their own middle pass by training both the body and the mind, meaning they alternate between levels in monk and psion. Just under one-third of the clan follows

this path, while the remaining clan members include a few mech jockeys, constructors, stalkers, and numerous coglayers.

In terms of religion, some members follow the traditional dwarven deities, but the Clan of the Middle Pass also counts a large number of Regenerators among its lot. Several fervent Regenerators happen to hold important posts in the clan, so their agenda to create a surface society has risen to the top of the clan's goals.

With the monetary aid of like-minded members of the Righteous Lancers Clan, the Clan of the Middle Pass has begun work, under the guidance of ex-Gearwright Stokata Loji, on what will one day become an Irontooth city-mech. Loji was formally disowned by the Gearwrights Guild when she left Nedderpik to join the Irontooth Clans. Many gearwrights grumble at this fact and point to political pressure from the Stenian Confederacy as the cause. Loji's goal of building a city-mech certainly finds no fault with most gearwrights. What gearwright *wouldn't* want that opportunity?

All the clan's coglayers and engineers are hard at work on this ongoing project to build a city-mech. Members of the Righteous Lancers Clan also lend a hand in building the city-mech and protecting the more stationary Middle Pass clansmen. Other clans who wish to see this project come to fruition also lend their help in terms of able-bodied engineers, money, equipment, materials, soldiers, and provisions.

Elder Coroshi Passos leads the clan. A five-member Council of Elders aids and advises him.

**Leader:** Elder Coroshi Passos.

**Clan Flag:** A white flag with a pass through the mountains.

**Mech Resources:** barbagula (20), chi'i'rin (1), iron maiden (1), kabutoshi (2), magwagon (3), oni (1), raptor (2). Package value: 170,0880.

**Clan Size:** 120, with 40-50 members of various other clans on hand.

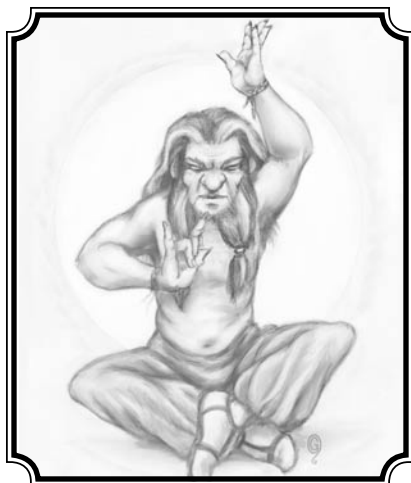
**Composition:** 70% dwarves, 15% gnomes, 10% human, 5% other

**Alignment:** Lawful neutral (clan leaders), neutral (other members)

**Religion:** The Soul Father and the Regenerator cult.

### Elder Coroshi Pasos, Clan of the Middle Pass Mech Lord

**Coroshi Passos, Irontooth Clan Middle Pass, male dwarf Mnk8/Psi(Seer)8:** CR 16; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 8d8+8d4+42; hp 91; Init +3; Spd 40 ft.; AC 19 (+3 Dex, +2 deflection, +3 Wis, +1 bonus), touch 19, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +10; Mech Atk +10 (cer-



tain mechs); Grp +10; Atk +10 melee (1d10, unarmed strike) or +15 ranged (1d8/19-20, +2 *light crossbow*) or +13 mech (on proficient mechs); Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d10, unarmed strike) or +5/+5/+0 (1d10, flurry of blows) or +15/+10 ranged (1d8/19-20, +2 *light crossbow*) or +13/+8 mech (on proficient mechs); SA Flurry of blows, *ki* strike (magic), psionic powers, slow fall 40 ft.; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., dwarf traits, evasion, purity of body, still mind, wholeness of body; AL LN; SV Fort +12, Ref +11, Will +15; Str 11, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 19, Wis 16, Cha 20.

**Skills and Feats:** Balance +14, Climb +11, Concentration +16, Craft (mechcraft) +17, Gather Information +11, Hide +14, Knowledge (history) +15, Knowledge (religion) +15, Listen +13, Move Silently +14, Perform (dance) +7, Psicraft +15, Sense Motive +12, Spot +13; Cloak Dance, Combat Reflexes, Greater Psionic Shot, Improved Psicrystal, Improved Trip, Improved Unarmed Strike, Mech Hardened (barbagula, daughter, mother, raptor), Metaphormic Transfer, Point Blank Shot, Psicrystal Affinity, Psionic Body, Psionic Shot, Stunning Fist.

**Possessions:** +2 *light crossbow*, cloak of charisma +4, ring of protection +2, psicrystal (single-minded, hero).

**Languages:** Common, Dwarven, Elven, Giant, Gnome, Terran.

**Power Points:** 74

**Psionic Powers:** 1st—crystal shard, destiny dissonance, energy ray, force screen, hammer; 2nd—biofeedback, clairvoyant sense, psionic levitate, swarm of crystals; 3rd—body adjustment, dispel psionics, energy bolt, fate link; 4th—empathic feedback, psionic dimension door, remote viewing, wall of ectoplasm.

Coroshi Passos, leader of the Clan of the Middle Pass, exemplifies the dual path

that tribesmen of this clan generally follow: He has perfected both mind and body by training both as a monk and a psion. A member of the Regenerators cult, he believes strongly in rebuilding a surface society for Highpoint, and he has made it his clan's goal to do so. In that regard, he sees to it that a large part of the clan's resources are spent on trying to create the Irontooth's first city-mech. This will be a long, arduous process, but Coroshi and his clansmen have put their hearts and souls into the project. They have graciously received help from such groups as the Righteous Lancers, and other clans have started to take notice of his plans and assist where possible.

Coroshi is a thin dwarf of many years. He is a bundle of constant-flowing energy, and he has the willpower to bring the Irontooth's first city-mech to fruition.

### Tenji Poru, Clansman of the Middle Pass

**Tenji Poru, Irontooth Clan Middle Pass, female dwarf Mnk5/Psychic Warrior 5:** CR 10; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 10d8+13; hp 61; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+1 Dex, +5 armor), touch 11, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +6; Mech Atk +3; Grp +8; Atk +9 melee (1d8+2, unarmed strike) or +8 ranged (1d8/19-20, *light crossbow*) or +5 mech (any mech weapon); Full Atk +9/+4 melee (1d8+2, unarmed strike) or +5/+5 (1d8+2, flurry of blows) or +8/+3 ranged (1d8/19-20, *light crossbow*) or +5 mech (any mech weapon); SA Flurry of blows, *ki* strike (magic), psionics; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., dwarf traits, evasion, purity of body, still mind, slow fall 20 ft.; AL LN; SV Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +8; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 17, Cha 15.

**Skills and Feats:** Autohypnosis +8, Balance +11, Climb +9, Craft (mechcraft) +17, Jump +11, Knowledge (psionics) +7, Move Silently +9, Search +7, Tumble +11; Cleave, Deflect Arrows, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Mental Leap, Power Attack, Power Penetration, Stunning Fist, Toughness, Weapon Focus (unarmed strike).

**Possessions:** +1 chain shirt, *light crossbow*, 10 bolts.

**Languages:** Common, Dwarven, Gnome, Terran.

**Power Points:** 14

**Psionic Powers:** 1st—biofeedback, claws of the beast, *elfsight*; 2nd—body adjustment, painful strike.

The middle-aged Tenji Poru serves as the assistant to Gearwright Stokata Loji, who is working on the city-mech project for the Lotus Clan. Tenji oversees materials acquisition and handles all financial matters. When special materials are needed that involve scavaging from dangerous sites, she hires the groups sent out to obtain them. To date, the Clan of the Middle Pass has hired a great many such groups, so Tenji is a good person for an enterprising group to know.

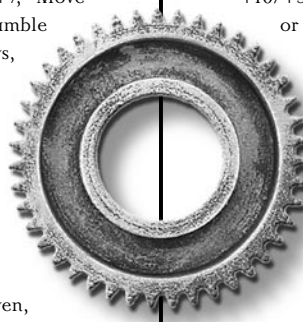
### Stokata Loji, Renegade Gearwright

**Stokata Loji, Irontooth Clan Middle Pass, female dwarf Cog7/Grt9:** CR 16; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 16d4; hp 41; Init +4; Spd 20 ft.; AC 21 (+4 Dex, +7 armor), touch 14, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +7; Mech Atk +3; Grp +8; Atk +10 melee (1d12+3/x3, +2

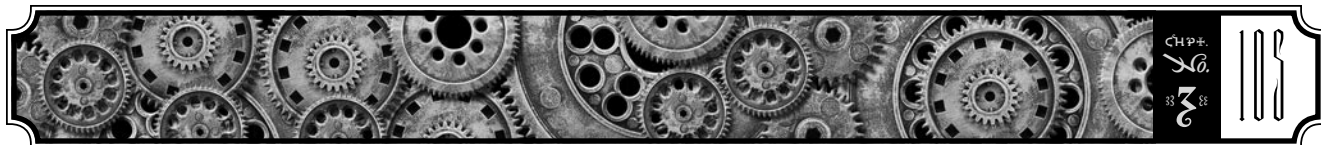


*buzzaxe*) or +12 ranged (1d8/19-20, *light crossbow*) or +7 mech (any mech weapon); Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d12+3/x3, +2 *buzzaxe*) or +12/+7 ranged (1d8/19-20/x2, *light crossbow*) or +7 mech (any mech weapon); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., dwarf traits, integrated parts (10), machine empathy, research, steam powers; AL NG; SV Fort +5, Ref +9, Will +16; Str 12, Dex 19, Con 11, Int 19, Wis 21, Cha 14.

**Skills and Feats:** Craft (blacksmithing) +25, Craft (mechcraft) +43, Disable Device +23, Knowledge (arcana) +29, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +29, Knowledge (geography) +12, Knowledge (history) +29, Knowledge (mechs) +44, Knowledge (steam engines) +42, Listen +24, Mech Pilot







+23, Spot +18, Use Magic Device +11; Craft Mech, Craft Steam Gear, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (buzzaxe, flame nozzle), Gearstride, Gearstride, Mech Dancer, Mech Weapon Proficiency (bore puncher, buzzsaw, changler, flame nozzle, lance), Mechdextrous, Mechwalker, Skill Focus [Craft (mechcraft)].

**Possessions:** +3 chain shirt, +2 buzzaxe, dagger, flame nozzle, light crossbow, 20 bolts, *potion of bull's strength* (x2), *potion of invisibility* (x2), *wand of magic missiles* (CL 5, 20 charges).

**Steam Powers:** Shoulder-mounted extra arms, used to assist in construction (x2) (Iron Arm + Voice Command + Animator); Tiny clockwork assistant (Clockwork Puppet + Drill + Voice Command + Pilot Light); perimeter defense system (Targeter + Discriminator + Voice Command + Animator + Automator, usually attached to a mech-mounted steam cannon near her building site); perimeter surveillance system (x2) (Optical Orb + Imagemaker); receiver for perimeter surveillance system (Imagemaker).

While among the Stenians, Stokata oftener encountered the proud, nomadic dwarves of the Irontooth Clans on her treks across Highpoint's flatlands and endless plains. She wondered how the Irontooth survived the unending lunar rain's downpour without their own city-mechs. It upset her deeply to see former dwarven brothers and sisters of Duerok left to fend for themselves against the harsh rains, when the Stenians had the technological know-how and resources to protect their dwarven kin from the elements.

Stokata, believing the Gearwrights Guild should offer their technological aid to all dwarves of Highpoint, approached the Guild's leaders with a request for a contingent of engineers and coglayers to build a city-mech for the non-Stenian dwarves of the plains. The Gearwrights Guild emphatically denied her request, fearing repercussions from the Stenians should they be involved in a scheme to empower the Stenians' enemy. Of

course, the Guild's leaders did not voice their concern to Gearwright Loji: The Gearwrights Guild claimed neutrality in all matters, and proclaiming such a fear would make it appear as though they answered to the Stenian Confederacy. Instead, the Guild claimed manpower and resource shortages as the reason for their refusal, and they followed their fabricated excuses with philosophic diatribes about how the barbarians could never be civilized; building the Irontooth Clans a city-mech would be a wasted, unappreciated effort, they concluded.

The wise Stokata, realizing the truth behind the Gearwrights Guild's refusal, reminded them of their oath to answer to no authority but their own. Then she berated them for refusing to share the knowledge that Master Gearwright Parilus had selflessly unearthed to all dwarves who once called Duerok home, and she denounced the Gearwrights Guild as puppets of the Confederacy.

Stokata left Nedderpik within days of her confrontation with the Guild. Hiring a mercenary group to guide and protect her, she made her way to the flatlands in search of the Irontooth. The mercenaries brought her to the most peaceful clan they knew, the Clan of the Middle Pass, and she offered her mech-build services to them. Now, with the aid of her adopted clan and sympathetic clans like the Righteous Lancers, Stokata is busily working toward her goal of building an Irontooth city-mech.

The Gearwrights Guild, of course, formally disowned Stokata. Official ostracism has not stopped Stokata from gaining use of the Master Repository, however. A growing faction within the Guild believes their leaders have indeed caved to the Stenian Confederacy's political might, making their oath to the Guild moot. Some of these individuals even empathize with Stokata's goal, and they secretly research information for her, provide her with copies of books and scrolls, and occasionally even send gifts of gold.

Stokata Loji is a brown-haired, 105-year-old dwarf. Because she has made it her goal to improve life for all dwarves and dwarf friends, Stokata has recently joined the Regnerators Cult. Though the Clan of the Middle Pass considers her an official member of their clan, Stokata claims only to be an Irontooth, a child of all the clans.



## IRON MAIDEN CLAN

The Iron Maiden Clan revels in the technology that mech engineering has brought to the world. They are more interested in how the knowledge can benefit them more directly, however. Over the past century, the clan has experimented more and more with limb transplantation, replacing their flesh with metal. Currently, almost a quarter of the Iron Maiden Clan's members are steamborgs, and nearly a dozen are assimilated into mechs. Some members are even Irontooth members who chose to live out life in a construct or awakened in one when their souls were brought back from death; in fact, most Irontooth soul constructs gravitate toward the Iron Maiden Clan, for being with like individuals makes it easier for them to adjust to their new body.

Elder Kilrodd Joy, a steamborg with a penchant for mech piloting, has ruled the clan for nearly forty years. His eight children (all steamborgs and accomplished mech builders) assist him in the day-to-day running of the clan, and his wife, Loka Joy, is one of the best coglayers around.

Although the Iron Maiden Clan produces its share of good mech jockeys, they concentrate their energies on building mechs for other Irontooth Clans, and expanding steam and mech technology. They have converted a kabuto into a traveling laboratory. In fact, they have come the closest to mass producing mechs in an assembly-line fashion. Because of their streamlined methods, they can produce most mechs 20% cheaper than the listed base cost. They are especially effective at producing iron maidens — thus the clan's name.

The clan also promotes exploration of High-



point, as the falling lunar rocks often contain some interesting finds. The Iron Maidens, a group of four female adventurers, have been exploring the flatlands for some time for their clan. They are also very experienced in "acquiring" items found by others who beat them to lucrative meteor sites. The Iron Maidens no longer use their given names; instead, they refer to themselves as Mother Mace, Sister Spellslinger, Sister Sword, and Sister Stalker.

**Leader:** Elder Kilrodd Joy.

**Clan Flag:** A black flag with a silver metal fist.

**Mech Resources:** Ashigaru (5), barbagula (11), daughter (4), fangbiter (2), iron maiden (12), kabuto (1), kabutoshi (1), kusari (1), mother (2), oni (1), viper (1). Package value: 574,973 gp.

**Clan Size:** 250

**Composition:** 65% dwarf, 15% gnome, 15% human, 5% other

**Alignment:** Neutral

**Religion:** The Soul Father and some worshippers of Dotrak.

## Killrod Joy, Iron Maiden Clan Mech Lord

**Killrod Joy, Iron Maiden Clan, male dwarf Smb13:** CR 13; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 13d8+26; hp 88; Init +5; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18 (+1 Dex, +4 natural armor, +3 deflection), touch 14, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +9; Mech Atk +12 (certain mechs); Grp +13; Atk +16 melee (2d8+1d6+10/x3, +2 *large buzzaxe of shock*) or +11 ranged (1d10, +1 *steam gun*) or +10 mech (on proficient mechs); Full Atk +16/+11 melee (2d8+1d6+10/x3, +2 *large buzzaxe of*

*shock*) or +11/+6 ranged (1d10, +1 *steam gun*) or +10/+5 mech (on proficient mechs); SQ Artificial parts +6, darkvision 60 ft., dwarf traits, lose self, metal skin, steam engine, steel skeleton; AL CN; SV Fort +12, Ref +5, Will +10; Str 19, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 11.

**Skills:** Balance +6, Climb +17, Craft (mechcraft) +18, Disable Device +11, Knowledge (steam engines) +14, Mech Pilot +9; Cleave, Improved Initiative, Mech Hardened (barbagula, daughter, mother, raptor), Power Attack, Weapon Focus (buzzaxe).

**Possessions:** +2 *large buzzaxe of shock*, chatter-sword, +1 *steam gun* amplified, dagger, *ring of protection* +3.

**Languages:** Common, Dwarven, Gnome.

**Steam Powers:** Amplifier, darkness generator, nozzle, pump.

**Artificial Parts:** Steam arms (+2 Str, +2 damage), metal torso (+2 natural armor).

Killrod Joy is a burly old dwarf with a metal torso and steam-powered arms. His hair is stark white and stands up on end as if he'd been electrocuted. He wears a black leather cloak and protective goggles cover his eyes. Killrod is a hyper fellow, and he's always seen walking about the Iron Maiden camp muttering to himself and occasionally cutting things up with his buzzaxe.

Holding a conversation with him is often difficult. His sentences are disjointed, as if his mind is already racing off to something else. Because of this, his tribesmen think him a bit off, but his fierceness in battle has gained him all the respect from them that he needs. Luckily, his wife, Loka Joy (Mcj6/Cog4), helps him deal with the finer points of clan leadership.

## Mother Mace, Iron Maiden Leader

**Mother Mace, Iron Maiden Clan, female dwarf Mnk3/Smb9/Ank2:** CR 14; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 12d8+2d10+70; hp 138; Init +9; Spd 30 ft.; AC 20 (+5 Dex, +3 armor, +2 natural armor), touch 15, flat-footed 20 (uncanny dodge); Base Atk +10; Mech Atk +5; Grp +13; Atk +14 melee (1d8+4, unarmed damage) or +15 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow) or +6 mech; Full Atk +14/+9 melee (1d8+4, unarmed damage) or +12/+12 (1d8+4, flurry of blows) or +15/+5 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow) or +6 mech; SA Artificial parts +5, flurry of blows, unarmed strike; SQ Connections I, darkvision 60 ft., dwarf traits, evasion, lose self, metal skin (+2 natural armor), rapid boarder +1, steel skeleton, steam engine, steam powers, still mind, tools; AL LN; SV Fort +17, Ref +17, Will +11; Str

16, Dex 20, Con 21, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 9.

**Skills and Feats:** Balance +18, Climb +15, Concentration +6, Craft (mechcraft) +6, Hide +16, Jump +14, Knowledge (mechs) +3, Knowledge (steam engines) +2, Listen +2, Move Silently +9, Spot +7, Tumble +13; Alertness, Deflect Arrows, Gearstride, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Mech Rider, Strong Self.

**Possessions:** *Bracers of armor* +3, light crossbow, quarterstaff, *potion of cure light wounds* (x3).

**Artificial Parts:** Two steam arms (+1 attack, unarmed damage 1d8, +1 damage), steam legs (+1 Dex).



**Steam Powers:** Cauterizer, fog generator.

Mother Mace is the leader of the Iron Maidens, an adventuring group so-called because all its members are female steamborgs. The Iron Maidens do a great deal of exploration for the Iron Maiden Clan, seeking out fallen meteorites, though they also participate in overtaking strong mechs with the other members of the clan. Mother Maiden's team specializes in boring through their portholes and bringing them down one crewmember at a time.

A dwarven steamborg, she has replaced her arms and legs with steam gear, and a metal skull cap has been permanently attached to her head. Her steam legs are long, making her height just over 6 feet, and her steam arms have been proportioned to match.

Mother Mace's monk abilities coupled with her steamborg abilities make her a dangerous opponent. Like a lot of steamborgs, she sometimes loses herself to her machine side, but she is learning to control that. She is a strong, organized leader, and her Maidens will follow





her anywhere — no questions asked.

## Sister Sword, Iron Maiden Warrior

**Sister Sword, Iron Maiden Clan Mech, female human Crg6/Smb5:** CR 11; Medium humanoid (human); HD 6d8+5d10+33; hp 91; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (+1 Dex, +6 armor, +2 natural armor), touch 11, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +9; Mech Atk +9 (certain mechs); Grp +12; Atk +13 melee (1d8+6+1d6 electricity/19-20, +2 *longsword of shock*) or +13 (1d6+6/19-20, +2 *short sword*) or +10 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow) or +10 mech (on proficient mechs); Full Atk +13/+8 melee (1d8+6+1d6 electricity/19-20, +2 *longsword of shock*) and +13/+8 (1d6+6/19-20, +2 *short sword*) or +10/+5 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow) or +10/+5 mech (on proficient mechs); SA Combat style (two-weapon combat), favored enemy (dragon), improved combat style, wild empathy; SQ animal companion, artificial part +2 (atk +1, dmg +1), lose self, metal skin (+2 natural AC bonus), steam engine; AL N; SV Fort +14, Ref +9, Will +8; Str 17, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 11.

**Skills and Feats:** Balance +8, Climb +9, Concentration +7, Craft (mechcraft) +10, Disable Device +5, Heal +10, Hide +9, Jump +7, Knowledge (steam engines) +13, Listen +9, Move Silently +4, Spot +5; Endurance, Gearstride, Improved Initiative, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Mech Rider, Mech Hardened (barbagula, daughter, mother, raptor), Strong Self, Track, Two-Weapon Fighting.

**Possessions:** +2 chain shirt, +2 long sword of shock, +2 short sword, dagger, light crossbow, ring of resistance +2.

**Languages:** Common, Dwarven.

**Artificial Parts:** Mechanical arms (+1 attack, +1 damage).

Sister Sword long ago replaced her arms with mechanical ones, making her stronger and more deadly with her favored magical swords. Sister Sword is very effective at making her way through a mech's gear forest, and she's very effective at taking out a mech's crew.

Sister Sword is a dark-haired human woman of average height and build. A large scar cuts across the right side of her head, starting at the temple and ending just under her chin.

Sister Sword enjoys attacking mechs more than performing the exploration jobs the Iron Maidens are sometimes assigned. She's most at home in a mech's inner workings, and she finds bringing down a mech an exhilarating challenge. Still, she is very loyal to Mother

Mace and the other Iron Maidens, and will do whatever is needed. She spends a great deal of



time training with her swords, though she can occasionally be swayed into a game of cards.

## Sister Stalker, Iron Maiden Stalker

**Sister Stalker, Irontooth Iron Maiden Clan, female halfling Stk6/Smb4:** CR 10; Medium humanoid (halfling); HD 6d6+4d10+30; hp 75; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (+4 Dex, +3 armor, +1 size), touch 15, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +7; Mech Atk +7 (certain mechs); Grp +3; Atk +9 melee (1d4/19-20, small masterwork shortsword) or +13 ranged (1d3+1/19-20, small +1 dagger) or +11 mech (on proficient mechs); Full Atk +9/+4 melee (1d4/19-20, small masterwork shortsword) or +13/+8 ranged (1d3+1/19-20, small +1 dagger) or +11/+6 mech (on proficient mechs); SA Sneak attack +3d6; SQ Artificial parts +2, evasion, halfling traits, lose self, steam engine, trapfinding, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge; AL N; SV Fort +10, Ref +11, Will +9; Str 11, Dex 18, Con 17, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 10.

**Skills and Feats:** Balance +19, Climb +14, Craft (mechcraft) +13, Disable Device +11, Escape Artist +9, Gather Information +5, Hide +8, Knowledge (mechs) +9, Knowledge (steam engines) +11, Jump +2, Listen +4, Mech Pilot +9, Move Silently +15, Open Lock +13, Search +7, Tumble +13, Use Magic Device +8; Gear-

stride, Mech Hardened (barbagula, daughter, mother, raptor) Mech Rider, Run.

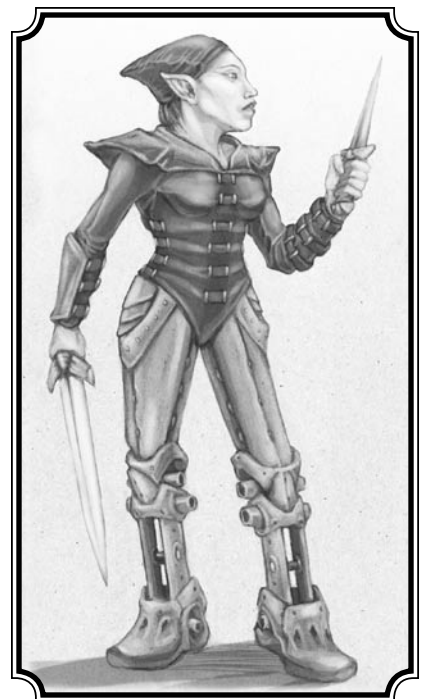
**Possessions:** Bracers of armor +3, small masterwork short sword, small +1 dagger (x4), wand of magic missile (CL 5, 20 charges), masterwork thieves' tools.

**Languages:** Common, Dwarven, Halfling.

**Artificial Parts:** Steam legs (+10 ft. movement).

Sister Stalker joined the Iron Maidens just six years ago. She was formerly freelancing her stalker talents to whomever paid the highest, but she joined up with the Iron Maidens when the Iron Maidens happened to attack a mech she was in the process of infiltrating — and they weren't being quite as stealthy as she. They initially intimidated her into helping them, though they paid her for her assistance. Impressed by her skills, they offered her the chance to earn more money as a member of their group. Since they had recently lost a sister, Sister Axe, to a surprise attack by the Legion, they had an opening for another steam-borg within their ranks. Unfortunately, Sister Stalker was no steam-borg at the time.

She agreed to accompany them for a time to see if their stories of gold were true. When the stories panned out, and after she realized how beneficial the steam-borg additions had been for the others, she decided to go under the knife herself. Sister Stalker then had her legs replaced with steam legs, making her



much faster for her race. After the operation, she officially became one of the Iron Maidens and a member of the Iron Maiden Clan. Though money remains her primary interest, she has a growing bond to the others, as they have protected her life on many occasions and have brought her more wealth than she could have acquired on her own. She also enjoys the fame that being a member of the Iron Maidens has brought her. It seems that bards are very attracted to the strange group, and the Iron Maiden clansmen are always willing to buy them some good brew and a meal just to hear their tales.

## Sister Spellslinger, Iron Maiden Sorcerer

**Sister Spellslinger, Irontooth Iron Maiden Clan, female gnome Sor6/Smb5:** CR 11; Small humanoid (gnome); HD 6d4+5d8+36; hp 73; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17 (+4 natural armor, +2 deflection, +1 size), touch 13, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +6; Mech Atk +3; Grp +2; Atk +10 melee (1d6+2/x3, small +2 *hooked hammer*) or +10 ranged (1d3+3/19-20, +3 *small dagger*) or +2 mech (any mech weapon); Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d6+2/x3, small +2 *hooked hammer*) or +10/+5 ranged (1d3+3/19-20, +3 *small dagger*) or +2 mech (any mech weapon); SA Spells; SQ Artificial parts +2, familiar benefits, gnome traits, lose self, low-light vision, metal skin, steam engine, summon familiar; AL N; SV Fort +9, Ref +3, Will +10; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 17.

**Skills and Feats:** Balance +5, Bluff +9, Con-

centration +12, Craft (alchemy) +10, Craft (mechcraft) +13, Disable Device +9, Heal +6, Hide +4, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (steam engines) +7, Listen +5 (+7 within 30 ft. of familiar), Spot +1 (+3 within 30 ft. of familiar); Alertness (with familiar), Craft Magic Wand, Scribe Scroll, Strong Self, Toughness, Weapon Focus (hooked hammer).

**Possessions:** Ring of protection +2, +2 *hooked hammer*, +3 *small dagger*, wand of magic missiles (5th, 36 charges), light crossbow, 20 bolts.

**Languages:** Common, Dwarven, Gnome, Goblin.

**Spells Known** (6/7/6/4; DC 13 + spell level; DC 14 + spell level illusion spells): 0—*detect magic*, *flare*, *light*, *message*, *open/close*, *ray of frost*, *read magic*; 1st—*burning hands*, *magic missile*, *obscuring fog*, *shocking grasp*; 2nd—*bear's endurance*, *cat's grace*; 3rd—*lightning bolt*.

**Spell-Like Abilities** (DC 13 + spell level): 1/day—*dancing lights*, *ghost sound*, *prestidigitation*, *speak with animals*.

**Artificial Parts:** Armor plating (natural armor +2).

**Steam Powers:** Drill, fog generator.

**Zavvy, lizard familiar:** Tiny magical beast; CR —; HD 1/2d8 (effective 11d8); hp 42; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 20 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 16 (+2 Dex, +2 size, +2 natural armor), touch 14, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +6; Grp —6; Atk/Full Atk +8 melee (1d4-4, bite); SA Deliver touch spells; SQ Improved evasion, low-light vision, speak with master; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +10; Str 3, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 2.

**Skills and Feats:** Balance +10, Bluff +2, Climb +12, Concentration +9, Hide +10, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (steam engines) +4, Listen +3, Spot +3; Weapon Finesse.

One of the Iron Maidens, Sister Spellslinger uses her magic to bolster their abilities for up-close fighting and to protect the group from distant enemies. Sister Spellslinger enjoys a good fight, too, and has no qualms about jumping into combat with her hooked hammer. In fact, she often becomes a bit battle crazed, and it's sometimes difficult to drag her away when a retreat is needed. For this reason, Sister Sword often keeps close to her to keep her away from trouble.

When not fighting, Sister Spellslinger is a more fun-loving individual, enjoying practical jokes, drinking, and gambling. She likes hearing good music and good songs, and often takes particular interest in local bards. When times are good financially, she becomes a patron of their arts, sharing large amounts of her wealth with those she finds most entertaining.



## JAGUAR CLAN

A fierce mech devil named Jaguar leads the Jaguar Clan. A tall human woman with flaming red hair, Jaguar is one of the few non-dwarves to lead a clan of her own, and she is the only female currently holding power as a Mech Lord. She cultivates other women pilots, however, so she hopes she will not to be the last. In fact, her own daughter, the 13-year-old Red Lioness, is already showing signs of greatness in the jousts.

Jaguar was once a member of a small mech tribe, but a Confederacy patrol killed her entire tribe when they failed to offer the lead Stenian officer a satisfactory tribute. The tribe was quite poor; they had offered him everything of value that they owned. Still, the rogue Stenian was not impressed, and he ordered his mechs to kill them all — which they did. Only Jaguar survived the massacre, by taking flight into the flatlands on her father's order. She ran like the wind, escaping the chaos. Luckily, her flight took her directly into the path of an Irontooth Clan (Clan Hawk) en route to attack the Stenian patrol for the booty it would provide them. The scavengers became her saviors, as they destroyed the Stenian patrol and took her in as one of their own.

To this day, Jaguar hates everything the Stenian Confederacy represents. She and her clan make a great deal of their living by attacking small Stenian patrols and caravans. Her clan favors the faster-moving smaller mechs, and they attack in packs, with her larger mechs providing artillery coverage in their battles. The Jaguar Clan has three special units called Harriers whose composition features harrier steamjocks who have the Speed Freak feat and pilot jaguar harrier mechs (see pages 117 and 126). Mech jockeys and anklebiters also form part of the units.

The Jaguar Clan has only been in existence for ten years. In that time, however, they have become quite a devastating force. The Stenian Confederacy has publicly offered to award a





mech to any group able to annihilate Jaguar and her clan. To date, no one has been stupid enough to try to take out one of the Irontooth's greatest mech devils.

The Jaguar Clan is one of the few divinely devoted clans. They faithfully follow the teachings of Dotrak, as delivered by one of his vessels, Gavinrul. The very presence of Gavinrul has helped persuade other clansmen to change their thinking on Dotrak. Thanks to its human leader and non-traditional religious inclinations, the Jaguar Clan contains a larger percentage of humans and half-orcs than most Irontooth clans.

**Leader:** Mech Lord Jaguar.

**Clan Flag:** White flag with a pouncing jaguar.

**Mech Resources:** Ashigaru (2), barbagula (8), daughter (2), fangbiter (2), incinerator (2), iron maiden (3), jaguar harrier mech (12), kabutoshi (1), magwagon (1), raptor (2). Package value: 281,595 gp

**Clan Size:** 130

**Composition:** 30% dwarves, 30% human, 10% gnomes, 25% half-orc, 5% other

**Alignment:** Neutral

**Religion:** Dotrak, the Great Engine.

### Jaguar, Jaguar Clan Mech Lord

**Jaguar, Irontooth Jaguar Clan Mech Lord, female human Mcj11/Mcd9:** CR 20; Medium humanoid (human); HD 20d6+40; hp 112; Init +9; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (+5 Dex, +3 armor), touch 15, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +14; Mech Atk +20; Grp +15; Atk +23 melee (1d6+5/19-20, +4 *short sword*) or +19 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow) or +25 mech (any mech weapon); Full Atk +23/+18/+13 melee (1d6+5/19-20, +4 *short sword*) or +19/+14/+9



ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow) or +25/+20/+15/+10 mech (any mech weapon); SA Agile mech +3, deflect projectiles, extraordinary pilot, fast movement, hand speed, masterful dodge, mech fingers (skill transfer, warrior instinct), patchwork repairs, push the envelope 3/day, roll with the punches (2 increments), special skill uses, stunning attack, unarmed damage; AL N; SV Fort +8, Ref +18, Will +7; Str 12, Dex 21, Con 14, Int 17, Wis 13, Cha 15.

**Skills and Feats:** Balance +15 (+18 to resist trip attacks), Bluff +14, Climb +8 (+10 climbing in mech), Craft (mechcraft) +25, Diplomacy +6, Escape Artist +14, Hide +10, Jump +10, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (mechs) +28, Knowledge (steam engines) +26, Listen +15, Mech Pilot +50, Move Silently +10, Sense Motive +13, Spot +13, Tumble +19; Dodge, Greater Weapon Focus (sword blade), Improved Critical (sword blade), Improved Initiative, Improved Trip, Mech Dancer, Mech Fu, Mechdextrous, Mechrobatics, Mechwalker, Natural Pilot, Quick Draw, Spring Attack, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (sword blade).

**Possessions:** Masterwork pilot's armor, +4 *short sword*, light crossbow, light mace, dagger.

**Languages:** Common, Dwarven, Gnome, Orc.

Jaguar is in her late thirties and stands just over six feet tall. She has flaming red hair that she keeps in braids and a jaguar tattoo on her left cheek. At the young age of 13, Jaguar proved herself so capable in the youth mech jousts that Clan Hawk clans put her up against adult opponents in real mechs. When she beat several young clansmen in the jousts, they made her a mech jockey and started using her on the raids. She learned fast and rose quickly through the ranks. In the clan-meet jousts, she beat more and more opponents, and her reputation expanded. Ten years ago, she decided to challenge three Irontooth Mech Lords to a Mech Lord Joust with their best pilots. Over the three-day period, which provoked a great Clan turnout, she not only proved capable of beating each opponent in turn — a feat that has rarely been done — but she attracted so many followers that she was able to form her own clan. After the joust, the defeated Mech Lords from Clan Bugbear, Clan Battleaxe, and the Righteous Lancers gifted her three old mechs with which to start her clan.

Jaguar is strong-willed and intent on becoming a thorn in the Stenian Confederacy's side.

She especially hates rogue officers who take advantage of their power to terrorize others. When she hears rumors of such officers, she and her clansmen hunt them down and kill them, taking their valuables for the clan.

Jaguar has little use for the Legion. Though they may have similar goals in terms of the Stenian Confederacy, she fears Shar Thizdic's hatred toward non-humans will cause genocidal wars, and she has strong familial ties to the dwarves who took her in. To her, Shar is just another tin-plated dictator. If he happens to get in her way or cause problems for the Irontooth Clans, then she'll make it a priority to rid Highpoint of him. Until that day, he's welcome to form his Legion and preach his ideals.

Jaguar's piloting skill is so great that she can not only make her mech dance, but she can tumble in it, as well. She has termed this ability mechrobatics (see page 125), and other mech devils have flocked to her to learn this skill.

### Drader Gotov, Jaguar Clan Tinkerer

**Drader Gotov, Irontooth Jaguar Clan, male dwarf Cog3/Mcj4:** CR 7; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 3d4+3d6; hp 19; Init +6; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15 (+2 Dex, +3 armor), touch 12, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +3; Mech Atk +3; Grp +3; Atk/Full Atk +5 melee (1d6/18-20, rapier) or +5 ranged or +3 mech (any mech weapon); SA Extraordinary pilot, hand speed, integrated parts, machine empathy, mech fingers (warrior instinct), patchwork repairs, push the envelope 1/day, steam powers; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., dwarf traits; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +4; Str 11, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 11, Cha 9.

**Skills and Feats:** Balance +4, Climb +2, Craft (blacksmithing) +12, Craft (mechcraft) +20, Disable Device +9, Hide +4, Jump +2, Knowl-





edge (geography) +9, Knowledge (local) +9, Knowledge (mechs) +18, Knowledge (steam engine) +16, Listen +5, Mech Pilot +15, Move Silently +4; Craft Steam Gear, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (steamgun), Gearhead, Gearstride, Improved Initiative, Mech Weapon Proficiency (flame nozzle), Mechwalker, Quick Draw, Weapon Finesse.

**Possessions:** Pilot's armor, rapier, club, dagger, steam gun.

**Languages:** Common, Dwarven.

**Steam Powers:** Target-acquiring self-firing steam gun (Animator + Automator + Discriminator + Ranger + Scanner (set to dwarves)); Small clockwork puppet repair assistant (Clockwork Puppet + Clockwork Puppet + Animator).

Drader Gotov left Clan Hawk ten years ago to join Jaguar when she earned her own clan. He has spent his time with the Jaguar Clan learning more about mech technology and how to pilot them proficiently. Jaguar counts Drader among her closest friends, and she has personally seen to his mech pilot training over the years.

Drader is very loyal to Jaguar, and he thinks of himself as Jaguar's personal confidante and bodyguard, though she doesn't much need the latter. He also helps to train her daughter, Red Lioness; as much a mech pilot prodigy like her mother, the young girl will soon join Drader as a mech jockey.

Drader is a quick but wiry dwarf. He is small and has a large nose, so others often mistake him for a gnome from a distance. His hair is unnaturally gray for his young 70 years of age, and sparse, scraggly hairs dot his face — his failed attempt to grow a beard.

### Gavinrul, Touched by Dotrak

**Gavinrul, Irontooth Jaguar Clan, male dwarf Cog7/VoD7:** CR 14; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD7d4+7d6+14; hp 58; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 14 (+4 armor, +2 natural armor), touch 10, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +8; Mech Atk +4; Grp +7; Atk +7 melee (1d6-1, quarterstaff) or +8 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow) or +4 mech; Full Atk +7/+2 melee (1d6-1, quarterstaff) or +8/+3 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow) or +4 mech; SA Integrated parts (x2), machine empathy, steam powers, spells, turn/rebuke constructs; SQ Clockwork heart, darkvision 60 ft., dwarf traits, metal skin I, steel skeleton (nails, skeleton, teeth); AL N; SV Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +13; Str 9, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 19, Cha 14.

**Skills and Feats:** Concentration +6, Craft (blacksmithing) +15, Craft (mechcraft) +26,

Disable Device +13, Heal +9, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +13, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +13, Knowledge (geography) +13, Knowledge (history) +13, Knowledge (mechs) +26, Knowledge (steam engines) +24, Listen +14, Mech Pilot +10, Profession (engineer) +9, Spellcraft +13, Spot +9; Craft Powered Mech, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (buzzsaw, flame nozzle), Gearhead, Lightning Reflexes, Mech Weapon Proficiency (bomb launcher, steam cannon), Siege Weapon Proficiency (ballistae).

**Possessions:** Gearmail, flame nozzle, buzzsaw, steam gun, light crossbow, quarterstaff.

**Languages:** Common, Dwarven, Gnome, Terran, Undercommon.

**Steam Powers:** Tiny "clockwork prophets" (3) (Clockwork Puppet + Animator + Discriminator + Voice Command); Gavinrul hasn't used one steam power slot yet, as he's saving it toward another clockwork prophet.

**Divine Spells Prepared** (6/5+1/4+1/3+1/2+1; DC 14 + spell level): 0—create water, detect magic, detect poison, guidance, light, mending; 1st—bless, cause fear, command, construct friendship\*, doom, entropic shield; 2nd—aid, bear's endurance, bull's strength, darkness, hold construct\*, 3rd—blindness/deafness, prayer, searing light, tick tock knock\*; 4th—neutralize poison, rusting grasp\*, tongues.

\*Indicates a domain spell.

Gavinrul is a middle-aged dwarf of average height and build. His skin is a silvery metal, as are his teeth and nails. His hair is blond, long, and wild. A blond beard stretches beyond his stomach.

Since his birth, Gavinrul has been a dedicated tinkerer. He could always be found toying with a mechanical contraption of some kind. He became a coglayer and advanced his skills through methodical study and great natural

aptitude. Other coglayers noted the diligence and intensity with which he studied his craft; it seemed as if he was interested in nothing else in life. Gavinrul disdained earthly pursuits, and even seemed to doubt the importance of the Soul Father.

In short, Gavinrul didn't fit in, especially among the rowdy Clan Battleaxe where he made his home. His talents were valuable enough for the rest of the clan to keep him on, but he had few friends. On the day Jaguar formed her own clan, he abandoned his clan ties because the young human woman had impressed him. But it wasn't just her great mech fu fighting abilities that had caught his eye. Instead, as she stood before the Mech Lords she had defeated in combat and accepted her own Mech Lord title, she openly and proudly displayed a certain holy symbol: the symbol of Dotrak. Most worshippers feared ridicule or exile and so did not admit to believing Dotrak to be a deity. Yet here was a woman proud of her faith — and woe to the clansmen who would deride Dotrak in her presence.

At this time, Gavinrul had already been chosen as a vessel by Dotrak. But his transformation was not yet obvious, except to those who stood very close at quiet moments. Nonetheless, he increasingly felt out of place in his clan. So on the day of creation of the Jaguar Clan, he renounced his ties to Clan Battleaxe and joined Jaguar and her clan.

Since then, Gavinrul has been continually chosen by Dotrak to carry his power, a sign that Dotrak is pleased with Gavinrul's chosen clan. He uses his steam powers to create a small army of tiny clockwork assistants, who help him repair and build mechs but also are programmed to recite the virtues of Dotrak on command. Mech Lord Jaguar, happy to have a vessel of Dotrak in her clan, asked Gavinrul to spread the word of the Great Engine. Because of this, most members of the Jaguar Clan are followers of Dotrak, and those mech pilots who have totally given themselves over to Gavinrul's words have felt the stirring of greater knowledge over steam — and clockwork-powered mechs. Under Gavinrul's continued guidance, and with Jaguar's blessing, these unusual pilots have formed an elite group known as the Harriers (see page 126).

Gavinrul is a hardy, happy dwarf. He talks of Dotrak to anyone who will listen. He hopes one day Highpoint will abound with temples and clergy to the Great Engine, but until that day, he plans to do his part to get the word out.







## Kovar, Jaguar Clan Mech Raider

**Kovar, Irontooth Jaguar Clan, male human Bbn7/Ank2:** CR 9; Medium humanoid (human); HD7d12+2d10+18; hp 80; Init +6; Spd 40 ft.; AC 16 (+2 Dex, +4 armor), touch 12, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +9; Mech Atk +4; Grp +13; Atk+13 melee (2d6+1d3+4/x3, chattersword) or +11 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow) or +2 mech (any mech weapon); Full Atk +13/+8 melee (2d6+1d3+4/x3, chattersword) or +11/+6 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow) or +2 mech (any mech weapon); SA Rage 2/day; SQ Connections I, damage reduction 1/–, fast movement, improved uncanny dodge, rapid boarder +1, tools, uncanny dodge, trap sense +2; AL N; SV Fort +8, Ref +10, Will +2; Str 19, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 12.

**Skills and Feats:** Balance +5, Climb +12, Intimidate +6, Handle Animal +7, Jump +12, Knowledge (mechs) +5, Listen +5, Ride +7, Spot +2; Exotic Weapon Proficiency (chattersword, steam gun), Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Mech Rider.

**Possessions:** Chain shirt, chattersword, dagger, light crossbow, steam gun, club.

**Languages:** Common.

Kovar grew up among the rust riders, eking out a living by capturing the mechs of others or thieving from the other races when they came into contact. His rust rider companions talked about their dreams of pulling off great mech thefts. During such campfire chats, the rust riders' mech pilots admiringly spoke of various mech jockeys who, if defeated, would earn great respect for those pilots. Increasingly, the pilots talked of a human woman pilot in the Irontooth Clan Hawk. Her name was Jaguar, he learned, and the fiery-haired woman could make a mech dance like few others. Jaguar's fame continued to grow, and Kovar even heard word that she'd proven worthy enough to form

her own clan. Meanwhile, his companions began to earnestly plan her demise; for with her death, they would earn a name for themselves.

They finally encountered Jaguar and a few members of the new, but small, Jaguar Clan outside of Edge. Drunk with bravado, the rust riders attacked. With their mech riders and anklebiters hanging off their iron maidens, they swarmed the clan.

The rust riders, who outnumbered the Jaguar Clan two to one, soon learned the error of their ways. Jaguar and her barbagula moved fast and fluidly, and her companions were skilled in mech combat, as well. Soon it became obvious that the Jaguar Clan didn't believe the rust riders to be a great threat, as they began toying with them, like a cat playing with a mouse. Shamefaced and frustrated, the rust riders raised their white flags and prepared to give over their mechs to the greater warriors — hoping that death wouldn't soon follow the transference of property.

Oddly enough, Jaguar merely saluted the rust rider leader and thanked him for the joust. It was then that Kovar decided he wanted to join the Jaguar Clan. Bloodied and tired, he walked forward, bowed, and placed his chattersword at the feet of Jaguar's mech. "Pick up your sword, Jaguar clansman. We must be on our way," was all she said.

Kovar has been with the Jaguar Clan ever since. Over the last few years, he has become Jaguar's consort. While not a harrier, he often rides with them, boarding and securing the mechs that they take down.

Kovar is a tall, broad man in his late twenties. He has a mane of blond hair and a jaguar tattoo on his right cheek.



## LOTUS CLAN

The Lotus Clan sticks closely to its monastic beginnings. Like other Irontooth Clans, members of this clan often offer themselves as protectors to other communities for money to build more mechs and buy provisions. Unlike many of the Clans, though, their word is law.

Their clan flag has become known to Highpoint's residents as an honorable clan, so they do not fear dealing with them, even though the reputation of other, less trustworthy Irontooth Clans precedes them. When the Lotus Clan makes an oath, its members follow through with it — and they are far above bribery. Occasionally, this steadfastness has brought them into conflict with other Irontooth Clans. To date, however, these conflicts have not escalated beyond words. Certainly, the Lotus Clan doesn't start fights. They *do* finish them, though.

Elder Brother Lotus XII leads the Lotus Clan. Although an elder monk always leads the clan, a council of eight clansmen from various backgrounds, called the Council of Enlightened Initiates, guides him. Currently, the Council consists of a steam mage, a constructor, a stalker, two monks, a cleric of the Soul Father, a coglayer, and a steamborg.

**Leader:** Mech Lord Brother Lotus XII

**Clan Flag:** Yellow flag with an open lotus flower.

**Mech Resources:** Ashigaru (4), barbagula (11), daughter (3), fangbiter (2), iron maiden (2), kabuto (1), kabutoshi (1), kusari (1), mother (1), sensei (1), viper (1). Package value: 307,106 gp

**Clan Size:** 200

**Composition:** 60% dwarf, 20% human, 20% gnome

**Alignment:** Lawful neutral

**Religion:** Spirituality plays a large role in the monastic life of the Lotus Clan. Some members worship privately, but many still worship the Soul Father.

## Brother Lotus XII, Lotus Clan Mech Lord

**Brother Lotus XII, Irontooth Lotus Clan, male dwarf Mnk14:** CR 14; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 14d8+42; hp 108; Init +7; Spd 60 ft.; AC 22 (+3 Dex, +3 deflection, +2 Wis, +4 bonus), touch 22, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +10; Mech Atk +10 (certain mechs); Grp +10; Atk +11 melee (2d6, unarmed strike) or +13 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow) or +13 mech (on proficient mechs); Full Atk +11/+6 melee (2d6, unarmed strike) or +11/+11/+6 melee (2d6, flurry of blows) or +13/+8 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow) or +13/+8 mech (on proficient mechs); SA Flurry of blows, greater flurry, ki strike (lawful, magic), unarmed strike; SQ Abundant step, darkvision 60 ft., diamond body, diamond soul (spell resistance 24), dwarf traits, evasion, fast movement +40 ft., improved evasion, purity of body, slow fall 70 ft., still mind, wholeness of body; AL LN;



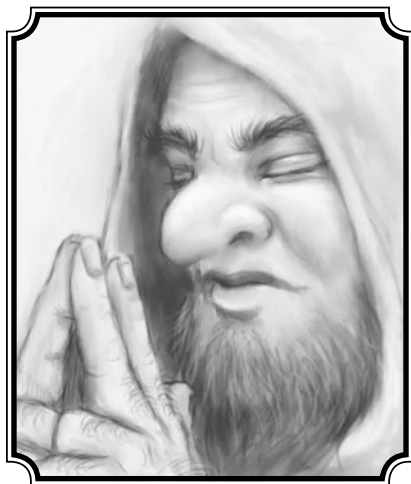


SV Fort +12, Ref +12, Will +11; Str 11, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 12.

**Skills and Feats:** Balance +15, Jump +12, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (religion) +6, Listen +7, Mech Pilot +5, Move Silently +13, Perform (oratory) +11, Spot +8, Tumble +15; Combat Reflexes, Deflect Arrows, Dodge, Improved Disarm, Improved Grapple, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Mech Hardened (barbagula, daughter, mother, raptor), Weapon Focus (unarmed strike).

**Possessions:** Ring of protection +3, light crossbow, +2 quarterstaff, potion of cure moderate wounds (x3).

**Languages:** Common, Dwarven, Gnome.



The monastic Lotus tradition traces back a millennium before the cataclysms that ravaged Highpoint. When the dwarves followed Bader Irontooth to the surface, they brought their traditions with them. In time, a splinter clan of monks broke off from Bader's main group, forming the Lotus. The clan's monastic tradition continues to this day, and the Lotus Clan's leader, Brother Lotus XII, is a formidable monk.

Brother Lotus wears traditional monk robes and shaves his head, though he keeps a small beard. Brother Lotus is a man of his word, and he expects all members of the clan to follow his example. He has built a strong reputation of reliability for his clan, and he intends to keep it that way.

### Tanno Mudgoshi, High Priest of the Soul Father

**Tanno Mudgoshi, Irontooth Lotus Clan, male dwarf Clr12:** CR 12; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 12d8+24; hp 81; Init -1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18, touch 9, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +9; Mech Atk +9 (certain mechs); Grp +9; Atk +11

melee (1d6+1/x2, +1 light mace) or +8 ranged (1d8/19-20/x2, light crossbow) or +8 mech (on proficient mechs); Atk/Full Atk +11/+6 melee (1d6+1/x2, +1 light mace) or +8/+3 ranged (1d8/19-20/x2, light crossbow) or +8/+3 mech (on proficient mechs); SA Spells; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., dwarf traits, spontaneous casting, spell resistance 21 (*mantle of spell resistance*), turn undead; AL N; SV Fort +12, Ref +5, Will +13; Str 11, Dex 9, Con 9, Int 13, Wis 17, Cha 11.

**Skills and Feats:** Concentration +7, Craft (blacksmithing) +8, Craft (mechcraft) +8, Heal +8, Knowledge (history) +6, Knowledge (religion) +11, Knowledge (the planes) +6, Spellcraft +6; Brew Potion, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Forge Ring, Mech Hardened (barbagula, daughter, mother, raptor), Weapon Focus (light mace).

**Possessions:** +2 breastplate, +1 light mace, +1 buckler, ring of resistance +2, mantle of spell resistance, potion of bull's strength (x2), potion of cure serious wounds (x4), dagger, light crossbow.

**Languages:** Common, Dwarven, Terran.

**Prepared Spells** (6/6+1/5+1/5+1/3+1/3+1/2+1; Domains: Earth and Protection; DC 13 + spell level): 0—create water, detect magic, detect poison, guidance, light, read magic; 1st—bless, command, divine favor, doom, magic stone\*, magic weapon, sanctuary; 2nd—aid, augury, bear's endurance, bull's strength, darkness, shield other\*; 3rd—daylight, dispel magic, magic vestment, prayer, protection from energy, stone shape\*; 4th—dismissal, divination, greater magic weapon, spell immunity\*; 5th—flame strike (x2), righteous might, spell resistance\*; 6th—antimagic shield\*, mass bear's endurance, mass bull's strength.

\*Indicates a domain spell.

As a high priest of Korduk, the Soul Father, Tanno Mudgoshi is the religious pulse of the Lotus Clan. He also serves as a member of the Council of Enlightened Initiates that assists and guides Elder Brother Lotus XII in dealing with the clan's day-to-day problems.

Tanno is a round, friendly, fatherly dwarf. He is quick to give a sermon on the Soul Father's vision for the Lotus Clan, and he is also quick to lend a hand when needed.



### NORTH STAR CLAN

This small clan believes in a higher calling; they have made it their duty to find out what is responsible for the catastrophes that have occurred on Highpoint and why the gods are so quiet. They spend much of their time exploring the continent, searching for meteorites that may hold valuable information as to the nature of the lunar creatures and their masters. They have uncovered a number of strange moon shards from such sites (see **The Shardsfall Quest**), and they are always interested in finding more. The clan possesses a traveling library, a kabutoshi they converted for such purposes, which is said to have in it a map of the moon before its surface was shattered.

The North Star Clan is one of the few clans that actively practices wizardry. The clan also has a number of sorcerers. Because this clan is more magic-attuned than most Irontooth clans, they own a few elven animated mechs, and they are on very friendly terms with the L'arile Nation. In fact, a few elves and half-elves have joined the clan.

Their leadership structure is very unusual. An elected Council of Three rules the clan. Adults select the councilmen by popular vote, and the council members serve a ten-year term. The current Council of Three, consisting of two dwarven wizards and an elven wizard, has been in power for four decades.

The North Star Clan often works closely with the Righteous Lancers Clan and the Clan of the Middle Pass. They are also reputed to have regular ties to the mysterious Moonwatchers Clan, known as the Lost Clan, but no one has ever witnessed such interaction.

**Leader:** Council of Three: Paidol Marr, Algor Marr, and Hadole Del'l'arile.

**Clan Flag:** Dark blue flag with a glowing star in its center.

**Mech Resources:** Ashigaru (1), dignitary (1), kabutoshi (3; 1 is a library), incinerator (1), lancer (elven) (5). Package value: 270,970 gp

**Clan Size:** 150

**Composition:** 60% dwarves, 15% human, 10% elves, 5% half-elves, 5% gnomes, 5% other



**Alignment:** Neutral good

**Religion:** Many are members of the Regenerator cult.

### Paidol Marr, North Star Clan Councilmember

**Paidol Marr, Irontooth North Star Clan, male dwarf Wiz12:** CR 12; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 12d4+36; hp 67; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 14 (+1 Dex, +3 armor), touch 14, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +6; Mech Atk +6 (certain mechs); Grp +6; Atk +8 melee (1d6+2, +2 quarterstaff) or +8 ranged (1d4+1/19-20, +1 dagger) or +7 mech (on proficient mechs); Full Atk +8/+3 melee (1d6+2, +2 quarterstaff) or +8/+3 ranged (1d4+1/19-20, +1 dagger) or +7/+2 mech (on proficient mechs); SA Spells; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., dwarf traits, familiar benefits, summon familiar; AL NG; SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +10; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 18, Wis 15, Cha 10.

**Skills and Feats:** Appraise +7, Concentration +12, Craft (alchemy) +13, Craft (weaponsmithing) +15, Craft (mechcraft) +14, Decipher Script +9, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (mechs) +9, Knowledge (religion) +9, Knowledge (steam engines) +9, Listen +4, Mech Pilot +4, Spellcraft +16, Spot +4; Alertness (with familiar), Brew Potion, Craft Magic Arms & Armor, Craft Magic Wand, Craft Magic Mech, Craft Rod, Forge Ring, Mech Hardened (barbagula, daughter, mother, raptor), Scribe Scroll.

**Possessions:** Bracers of armor +3, +2 quarterstaff, +1 dagger (x2).

**Languages:** Common, Dwarven, Elven, Giant, Gnome, Terran.

**Spells Prepared** (4/5/5/5/4/3/2; DC 14 + spell level): 0—acid splash, detect magic, light, read magic; 1st—color spray, cause fear, comprehend languages, magic missile, shield; 2nd—blur, detect thoughts, locate object, protection from arrows, web; 3rd—dispel magic, fireball, hold person, sleet storm, tongues; 4th—lesser globe of invulnerability,



minor creation, wall of fire, wall of ice; 5th—baleful polymorph, cloudkill, major creation; 6th—greater dispel magic, passwall.

**Spellbook:** 0—acid splash, daze, detect magic, detect poison, flare, ghost sound, light, mending, ray of frost, read magic; 1st—alarm, color spray, cause fear, comprehend languages, endure elements, grease, mage armor, magic missile, shield, summon monster I; 2nd—blur, detect thoughts, fog cloud, hypnotic pattern, locate object, protection from arrows, resist energy, see invisibility, summon monster II, web; 3rd—dispel magic, explosive runes, fireball, hold person, lightning bolt, sleet storm, tongues, wind wall, vampiric touch; 4th—fire shield, lesser globe of invulnerability, minor creation, shadow conjuration, stoneskin, wall of fire, wall of ice; 5th—baleful polymorph, cloudkill, major creation, summon monster V, teleport; 6th—acid fog, greater dispel magic, passwall, true seeing.

**Blackjack, raven familiar:** Tiny magical beast; CR —; HD 1/4 d8 (effective 12d8); hp 33; Init +2; Spd 10 ft., fly 40 ft. (average); AC 20 (+2 Dex, +2 size, +6 natural armor), touch 14, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +6; Grp —7; Atk/Full Atk +8 melee (1d2-5, claws); SA Deliver touch spells; SQ Empathic link, improved evasion, low-light vision, share spells, speak with master, speak with ravens, spell resistance +17; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +9; Str 1, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 14, Cha 6.

**Skills and Feats:** Concentration +9, Decipher Script +5, Knowledge (mechs) +5, Knowledge (religion) +5, Knowledge (steam engines) +5, Listen +3, Spot +5, Spellcraft +9; Weapon Finesse.

**Languages:** Dwarven.

The middle-aged Paidol Marr—and his identical twin brother, Algor Marr—are both wizards and members of the North Star Clan's ruling Council of Three. Paidol is the more brash and outspoken of the brothers. Once he takes a side in an argument, he is hard to sway. Still, he cares very much for the clan and is a benevolent leader.

Paidol has always admired the elven magical mechs, and it was he who struck up a dialogue with members of the L'arile Nation. This eventually developed into a strong trade in magical knowledge, including the creation of magical mechs. As even the elves had abandoned wizardry to a large extent, the elves who still practiced the arcane arts were happy to make such an alliance. It has proven beneficial to both sides, and a few elves have even joined the Irontooth North Star Clan as a result of this contact and its resulting friendships.

Paidol is a very studious dwarf, and usually has his head in a book or is deep in thought. He

wears blue robes and his long beard is braided in gold ribbons.

### Algor Marr, North Star Clan Councilmember

**Algor Marr, Irontooth North Star Clan, male dwarf Wiz12:** CR 12; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 12d4; hp 31; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 13 (+3 armor), touch 10, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +6; Mech Atk +6 (certain mechs); Grp +6; Atk +9 melee (1d6+3, +3 quarterstaff) or +7 ranged (1d4+1/19-20, +1 dagger) or +6 mech (on proficient mechs); Atk/Full Atk +9/+4 melee (1d6+3, +3 quarterstaff) or +7/+2 ranged (1d4+1/19-20, +1 dagger) or +6/+1 mech (on proficient mechs); SA Spells; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., dwarf traits, familiar benefits, summon familiar; AL NG; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +12; Str 11, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 19, Wis 18, Cha 12.

**Skills and Feats:** Appraise +7, Concentration +6, Craft (alchemy) +8, Craft (armorsmithing) +10, Craft (mechcraft) +16, Decipher Script +10, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (history) +10, Knowledge (mechs) +10, Knowledge (steam engines) +10, Listen +6, Mech Pilot +3, Spellcraft +12, Spot +6; Alertness (with familiar), Craft Magic Staff, Craft Magic Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Craft Magical Mech, Craft Powered Mech, Mech Hardened (barbagula, daughter, mother, raptor), Moonwatcher, Scribe Scroll.

**Possessions:** Bracers of armor +3, +3 quarterstaff, +1 dagger (x3).

**Languages:** Common, Dwarven, Elven, Giant, Gnome, Terran.

**Spells Prepared** (4/5/5/5/4/3/2; DC 14 + spell level): 0—daze, detect magic, light, read magic; 1st—cause fear, chill touch, grease, magic missile, shield; 2nd—blur, detect thoughts, hypnotic pattern, protection from arrows, summon monster II; 3rd—deep slumber, fireball, hold person, sleet storm,



tongues; 4th-lesser globe of invulnerability, shadow conjuration, wall of fire, wall of ice; 5th-baleful polymorph, cloudkill, teleport; 6th-greater dispel magic, true seeing.

**Spellbook:** 0-acid splash, daze, detect magic, detect poison, flare, ghost sound, light, mending, ray of frost, read magic; 1st-alarm, chill touch, cause fear, comprehend languages, endure elements, grease, mage armor, magic missile, shield, summon monster I; 2nd-blur, detect thoughts, fog cloud, hypnotic pattern, locate object, protection from arrows, resist energy, see invisibility, summon monster II, web; 3rd-deep slumber, explosive runes, fireball, hold person, lightning bolt, sleet storm, tongues, wind wall, vampiric touch; 4th-fire shield, lesser globe of invulnerability, minor creation, shadow conjuration, stonkskin, wall of fire, wall of ice; 5th-baleful polymorph, cloudkill, major creation, summon monster V, teleport; 6th-acid fog, greater dispel magic, passwall, true seeing.

**Raptor, raven familiar;** Tiny magical beast; CR -; HD 1/4d8 (effective 12d8); hp 15; Init +2; Spd 10 ft., fly 40 ft. (average); AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +6; Grp -7; Atk/Full Atk +8 melee (1d2-5, claws); SA Deliver touch spells; SQ Empathic link, improved evasion, low-light vision, share spells, speak with master, speak with ravens, spell resistance +17; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +9; Str 1, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 14, Cha 6.

**Skills and Feats:** Concentration +6, Decipher Script +6, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (history) +6, Knowledge (mechs) +6, Knowledge (steam engines) +6, Listen +3, Spot +5, Spellcraft +8; Weapon Finesse.

**Languages:** Dwarven.

Unlike his brother, Algor Marr tends not to talk unless he has something important to say. He prefers to hear out all arguments before voicing his thoughts on a subject. In this manner, he is perhaps somewhat wiser than his twin, who often commits to an idea or plan of attack rather quickly.

When not studying magic or history, Algor spends a great deal of his time building and repairing mechs. He, too, has learned to craft magical ones, a skill he learned from the elven member of the Council of Three, Hadole Del'larile, and he enjoys building magical mechs most of all.

Algor is fond of long strolls, and has the unusual habit of taking nighttime walks. Some members of the clan consider such behavior foolish, given the risks of the lunar rain, but somehow, Algor always picks the safe nights to go out. Fellow clansmen on watch duty say they sometimes hear him in the distance having long conversations with strangers on these walks.

Algor wears brown robes and keeps his long beard in braids like Paidol.

## Hadole Del'larile, North Star Clan Councilmember

**Hadole Del'larile, Irontooth North Star Clan, female elf Wiz13:** CR 13; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 13d4; hp 34; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+2 Dex, +2 armor), touch 12, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +6; Mech Atk +3; Grp +6; Atk +9 melee (1d4+3, +3 dagger) or +9 ranged (1d4+3/19-20, +3 dagger) or mech +4 (any mech weapon); Full Atk +9/+4 melee (1d4+3/x2, +3 dagger) or +9/+4 ranged (1d4+3/19-20/x2, +3 dagger) or mech +4 (any mech weapon); SA Spells; SQ Elf traits, familiar benefits, low-light vision, sry on familiar, summon familiar; AL NG; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +11; Str 10, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 20, Wis 13, Cha 17.

**Skills and Feats:** Concentration +9, Craft (alchemy) +11, Craft (mechcraft) +14, Craft (painting) +11, Decipher Script +15, Hide +7, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (history) +15, Knowledge (local) +11, Knowledge (mechs) +11, Listen +7, Mech Pilot +6, Move Silently +7, Search +7, Spellcraft +17, Spot +7 (+10 in shadows); Alertness (with familiar), Brew Potion, Craft Magic Arms & Armor, Craft Magic Staff, Craft Magic Wand, Craft Magical Mech, Craft Wondrous Item, Iron Will, Scribe Scroll.

**Possessions:** Bracers of armor +2, +3 dagger, +1 dagger (x3), boots of elvenkind, cloak of elvenkind, wand of lightning bolt (10th; 40 charges).

**Languages:** Common, Dwarven, Draconic, Elven, Gnome, Halfling.

**Spells Prepared** (4/6/5/5/4/2/1; DC 14 + spell level): 0-daze, detect magic, light, read magic; 1st-identify, mage armor, magic missile, obscuring mist, shield, true strike; 2nd-blur, darkness, flaming sphere, resist energy, summon monster II; 3rd-dispel magic, fireball, heroism, hold person, wind wall; 4th-ice storm, lesser globe of invulnerability, phantasmal killer, rainbow pattern, stonkskin; 5th-cone of cold, dominate person, nightmare, symbol of pain; 6th-guards and wards, summon monster VI; 7th-summon monster VII.

**Spellbooks:** 0-daze, detect magic, disrupt undead, light, mending, read magic, ray of frost, resistance, touch of fatigue; 1st-burning hands, color spray, hold portal, hypnotism, identify, mage armor, magic missile, obscuring mist, ray of enfeeblement, shield, shocking grasp, true strike; 2nd-blur, darkness, bull's strength, daze monster, flaming sphere, fog cloud, resist energy, shatter, summon monster II; 3rd-dispel magic, fireball, heroism, hold person, minor image, rage, sepia snake sigil, suggestion, wind wall; 4th-confusion, ice storm, lesser globe of

invulnerability, locate creature, phantasmal killer, rainbow pattern, remove curse, shout, stonkskin; 5th-cone of cold, dismissal, dominate person, mind fog, nightmare, prying eyes, symbol of pain, teleport; 6th-antimagic field, greater dispel magic, guards and wards, mislead, summon monster VI; 7th-banishment, forcecage, plane shift, summon monster VII.

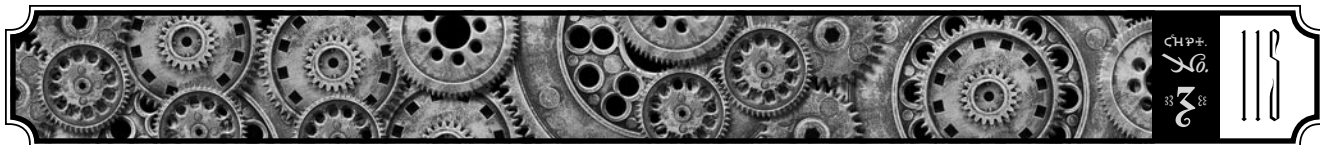
**Sadora, owl familiar;** Tiny magical beast; CR -; HD 1d8 (effective 13d8); hp 17; Init +3 (+3 Dex); Spd 10 ft., fly 40 ft. (average); AC 24 (+3 Dex, +2 size, +9 natural armor), touch 15, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +6; Grp -5; Atk/Full Atk +9 melee (1d4-3, talons); SA Deliver touch spells; SQ Empathic link, improved evasion, low-light vision, speak with master, speak with owls; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +7, Will +10; Str 4, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 4.

**Skills and Feats:** Concentration +9, Decipher Script +11, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge (history) +11, Knowledge (local) +7, Knowledge (mechs) +7, Listen +14, Move Silently +17, Spot +6\*, Spellcraft +13; Weapon Finesse.

\*Owls have a +8 racial bonus to Spot checks in areas of shadowy illumination.

One of the North Star Clan's Council of Three, Hadole Del'larile pledged her knowledge and magic to the North Star Clan just twenty years ago. Since then, she has spent a great deal of time studying the problem of the lunar rains and the unusual starshards the clan has uncovered. Hadole truly believes a means to stop the rains exists, and she believes the magical starshards somehow hold the answer. Seeking answers to the crystals' purpose, she has consumed tomes on history and arcana, but her search has so far been futile. Still, she has not lost her resolve to uncover their mystery, and she seeks to collect as many of them as possible; to this end, Hadole will pay handsomely for any recovered starshards.

The 125-year-old Hadole is still a young elf by elven standards. Her boundless energy, superior intellect, and insatiable curiosity have allowed her to absorb the study of wizardry quickly, a field of study that is quickly dying on Highpoint. The reed-thin Hadole has silver hair and large, lavender eyes.



## THE RIGHTEOUS LANCERS CLAN

Though considered a clan, the Righteous Lancers are really nothing more than a large mercenary group and their civilian henchmen and supporters. The Lancers specialize in fighting demons, dragons, and other annoying monsters that threaten life on Highpoint, and they hire themselves out wherever their services are needed. Occasionally, they offer their services for free, doing a good deed for those on Highpoint who cannot protect themselves or afford to hire protection.

The paladin Zyon Orion started the clan 60 years ago. He claimed to have experienced a dream sent by a divinity he merely called the Righteous. The Righteous told him to form a group to tackle the problems caused by the lunar invaders. Though the group now contains individuals with various abilities, many of the clansmen are paladins like their leader.

Zyon has shared his visions and experiences of the Righteous, and a growing religion has sprung up within the clan. Zyon claims the Righteous is an old deity who has slumbered for millennia, waiting to awaken in a time when his ideals, strength, and courage would be needed to maintain hope in the world. He awakened during the early days of the catastrophe, and he has been sending visions to those worthy of carrying his word to the masses. A few dwarves have felt his call and answered by becoming priests. Like the vessels of Dotrak, there are a mere two dozen or so of them at this time.

A large number of humans have joined the clan. To a one, the humans have all embraced the word of the Righteous, and they gladly work hand-in-hand with the other races to bring an end to the horrors that plague Highpoint. In fact, most of the Righteous' priests are humans.

Some members of the clan are members of the Regenerator cult, seeking to rebuild surface society.

**Leader:** Mech Lord Zyon Orion

**Clan Flag:** A white flag with crossed silver lances.

**Mech Resources:** Ashigaru (4), barbagula (16), chi'i'rin (1), daughter (1), iron maiden (1), juggernaut (1), magwagon (3), mother (1), viper (1). Package value: 218,742 gp

**Clan Size:** 85

**Composition:** 45% dwarves, 35% human, 10% gnomes, 5% half-elves, 5% others

**Alignment:** Lawful neutral (good tendencies)

**Religion:** The Righteous and the Regenerator cult.

### Zyon Orion, Leader of the Righteous Lancers

**Zyon Orion, Irontooth Righteous Lancers Clan, male dwarf Pal15:** CR 15; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 15d10+45; hp 132; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 21 (+1 Dex, +10 armor), touch 11, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +15; Mech Atk +15 (certain mechs); Grp +21; Atk +24 melee (1d8+11/x3, +2 lance) or +16 ranged (1d8/19-20/x3, light crossbow) or +16 mech (on proficient mechs); Atk/Full Atk +24/+19/+14 melee (1d8+11/x3, +2 lance) or +16/+11/+6 ranged (1d8/19-20/x3, light crossbow) or +16/+11/+6 mech (on proficient mechs); SA Smite evil 4/day; SQ Aura of courage, aura of good, darkvision 60 ft., *detect evil*, divine grace, dwarf traits, lay on hands, *remove disease* 4/week, special mount, turn undead; AL LG; SV Fort +12, Ref +6, Will +7; Str 22, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 11, Wis 14, Cha 12.

**Skills and Feats:** Diplomacy +6, Handle Animal +3, Heal +7, Mech Pilot +8, Ride +6, Sense Motive +7; Gearstride, Speed Freak, Mech Hardened (barbagula, daughter, mother, raptor), Mechwalker, Natural Pilot, Weapon Focus (lance).

**Possessions:** +2 full plate armor, +3 lance, +1



longsword, light crossbow, dagger, gauntlets of ogre power, *potion of cure serious wounds* (x3).

**Languages:** Common, Dwarven.

**Prepared Spells** (3/2/1/1; DC 12 + spell level): 1st—*bless*, *bless weapon*, *divine favor*, *lesser restoration*; 2nd—*bull's strength*, *shield other*; 3rd—*greater magic weapon*; 4th—*dispel evil*.

A vision inspired the paladin Zyon Orion to form a group dedicated to fighting the monstrous entities threatening their world. Zyon believes the vision came from a deity he calls the Righteous, a god who has been in a deep slumber for many millennia. In the name of the Righteous, Zyon has managed to build a small following of like-minded individuals and their families. Together, they scour the continent, ridding the world of evil and protecting the weak.

Zyon is a thick, mountain of a dwarf, and his arms ripple with muscles. He has dark hair, a long beard, and crystal-blue eyes. He is usually of good humor and is always willing to lend those in need a helping hand.

### Evesha Xoshar, Righteous Lancer Mech Jockey

**Evesha Xoshar, Irontooth Righteous Lancers Clan, female human Mcj5/Pal5:** CR 10; Medium humanoid (human); HD 5d6+5d10; hp; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 20 (+3 Dex, +5 armor, +2 shield), touch 13, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +8; Mech Atk +7; Grp +8; Atk +13 melee (1d6+2, +2 *short sword*) or +11 ranged (1d8/x2, steam gun) or +10 mech (any mech weapon); Full Atk +13/+8 melee (1d6+2, +2 *short sword*) or +11/+6 ranged (1d8/x2, steam gun) or +10/+5 mech (any mech weapon); SA Push the envelope 1/day, smite evil 2/day; SQ Aura of courage, aura of good, *detect evil*, divine grace, extraordinary pilot, hand speed, lay on hands, mech fingers (warrior instinct), patchwork repairs, *remove disease* 1/week, roll with punches (-1 increment), special mount, turn undead; AL LG; SV Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +4; Str 11, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 18.

**Skills and Feats:** Balance +9, Climb +6, Diplomacy +9, Handle Animal +9, Heal +7, Jump +5, Knowledge (mechs) +9, Knowledge (religion) +4, Knowledge (steam engines) +6, Listen +6, Mech Pilot +16, Ride +5; Gearstride, Improved Initiative, Mechidextrous, Mechwalker, Natural Pilot, Quick Draw, Speed Freak, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (lance).

**Possessions:** +1 chain shirt, +1 light steel shield, +2 *short sword*, *potion of cure serious wounds* (x2).

**Languages:** Common, Dwarven.

**Prepared Spells** (1; DC 12 + spell level): 1st—*magic weapon*.

Like her leader Zyon, Evesha is a strong follower of the Righteous. She firmly believes her clan has been given a higher calling, and she will do everything in her power to bring Zyon's received vision to fruition.

Evesha has been with the Righteous Lancers for 20 years, and in that time, she has become Zyon's confidante and second in command. She takes her duty seriously, and when not fighting to save the world, she trains others in the clan to become paladins and mech jockeys.

Evesha is a 60-year-old, blonde-haired dwarf. She is very devout and kindhearted, and she does her best to protect the weak from those who would prey on them.



## THE SHINTAJI (SPIRIT SEALERS) CLAN

The small Shintaji Clan holds closely to the old ways, continuing the monastic lifestyle of their predecessors. The Shintaji hold the secret of spirit sealing, the art of combining mech and spirits of departed clansmen, thus they are revered by all the Irontooth. The Shintaji have used this ability to seal the spirits of great clan elders into the twelve known sensei mechs (see page 35 of the **Mech Manual**). They have also created the fierce samurai mechs (see page 119) by capturing the spirits of the clans' greatest mech jockeys.

The Shintaji Clan gains its name from the shintaji spirit shamans (see page 127) within the clan. The spirit shamans only teach those who denounce their ties to the individual Irontooth Clans, and those they train as shintaji may never return to their old clans or join any new clan except the Shintaji.

Because their skills are so valued throughout the Irontooth Clans, each clan vies to host the Shintaji, agreeing to feed and protect these valuable guests for a year. After that year, a new clan becomes host to the entire Shintaji tribe (they never separate) at the annual Great Joust. Though the other clans try their best to woo the Shintaji into traveling with them, leader Petojin Duraji chooses his new host by counsel of the

Irontooth Clan spirits that guide him. So far, the spirits have chosen to spread the Shintaji's skills to several of the larger tribes.

The Shintaji travel in a kabutoshi—a very small kabuto—that serves as a monastery, training facility, workshop, and home. The kabutoshi is made entirely of wood, and it is rumored to be piloted by a very old spirit. The Shintaji have never confirmed or denied this rumor, nor do they allow others to enter their kabutoshi.

Every member of the Shintaji Clan must take a level as a monk. Those born into the clan do so early on. Those who join the clan later in life take a level as soon as they perform the Rite of Loss, the severing of the ties that bind them to clan and family. Upon doing so, they give away all their worldly possessions and don the orange robes that signify their status as Shintaji.

The Shintaji practice a spirit-worshipping religion that has no name; outsiders refer to the clansmen, the spirit sealers, and the religion all as shintaji. To date, all members of the Shintaji are dwarfs, although the clan will in theory accept other races into their fold. The tribe contains mostly monks, clerics, riftwalkers, and shintaji shamans. Many of the clan's members have other abilities, however, as they joined the clan after living a life among one of the other tribes.

The Shintaji maintain 10 ashigaru and 10 samurai as clan property. They keep these onboard the kabutoshi in case an enemy should prevail over their protectors. In such instances, ten among them suit up to attack the enemy, giving the clan and its kabutoshi the chance to escape.

**Leader:** Elder Petojin Duraji

**Clan Flag:** A solid orange flag.

**Mech Resources:** Ashigaru (10), kabutoshi (1), samurai (10). Package value: 60,236 gp

**Clan Size:** 65

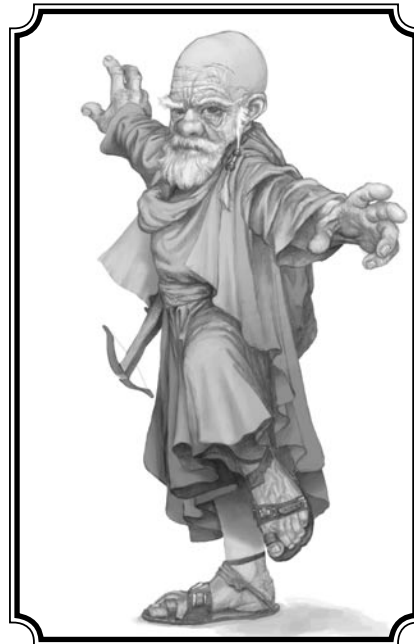
**Composition:** 100% dwarf

**Alignment:** Lawful neutral

**Religion:** The Shintaji worship spirits. This religion is called shintaji, as well.

### Petojin Duraji, Leader of the Shintaji Clan

**Petojin Duraji, Irontooth Shintaji Clan, male dwarf Mnk13:** CR 13; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 13d8+13; hp 75; Init +5; Spd 60 ft.; AC 17 (+1 Dex, +4 Wis, +2 bonus), touch 17, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +9; Mech Atk +4; Grp +9; Atk +9 melee (2d6, unarmed strike) or +10 ranged (1d8/19-20/x2, light crossbow) or +5 mech; Atk/Full Atk +9/+4 melee (2d6, unarmed strike) or +9/+9/+9/+4 (2d6, flurry of blows) or +10/+5 ranged (1d8/19-20/x2,



light crossbow) or +5 mech; SA Flurry of blows, greater flurry, *ki* strike (lawful, magic), unarmed strike; SQ Abundant step, darkvision 60 ft., diamond body, diamond soul (spell resistance 24), dwarf traits, evasion, fast movement +40 ft., improved evasion, purity of body, slow fall 60 ft., still mind, wholeness of body; AL LN; SV Fort +9, Ref +11, Will +12; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 19, Wis 18, Cha 14.

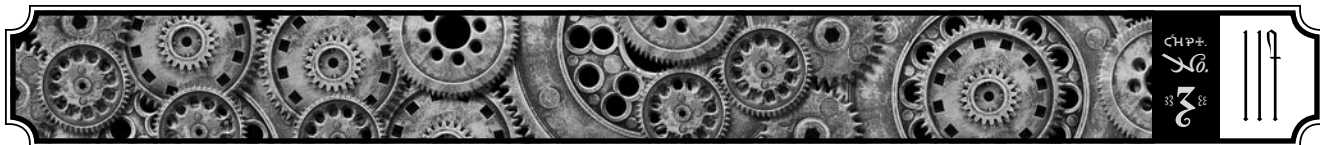
**Skills and Feats:** Balance +18, Climb +10, Concentration +14, Craft (mechcraft) +16, Diplomacy +10, Escape Artist +13, Hide +14, Jump +17, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Knowledge (religion) +9, Listen +6, Move Silently +14, Spot +11, Tumble +15; Acrobatic, Agile, Alertness, Deflect Arrows, Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Lightning Reflexes, Stunning Fist.

**Possessions:** Light crossbow.

**Languages:** Common, Dwarven, Giant, Gnome, Terran, Undercommon.

Petojin Duraji leads the unusual spirit-worshipping Shintaji Clan. The clan's shintaji spirit shamans speak to elders in the Spirit World and pass that information on to their leader, allowing him to make appropriate decisions for his clan and for the entire Irontooth Clans.

Petojin wants to make the Irontooth Clans a strong force to be reckoned with, especially in terms of the other factions on Highpoint and



the lunar creatures that harass them. In this regard, his clan seeks out clan spirits willing to be harnessed into spirit mechs for the good of the current clans. Most of these spirits are placed inside samurai mechs, but the clan has created sensei mechs, as well.

As Petojin foresees greater problems for the residents of Highpoint, he longs for a more strongly allied and organized clan structure. Yet he doubts that will ever come to pass. As it is, he sees it as his duty to strengthen each individual clan as the spirits guide him. Some clans, no doubt, will play a greater role in dealing with the turmoil to come, and he will make sure they have the resources necessary to survive.

### Qori Lamuto, Shintaji Shaman

**Qori Lamuto, Irontooth Shintaji Clan, female dwarf Mnk2/Shn15:** CR 17; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 17d8+34; hp 114; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 20 (+1 Dex, +3 armor, +6 Wis), touch 20, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +12; Mech Atk +12 (certain mechs); Grp +12; Atk +14 melee (1d6+2, +2 *quarterstaff*) or +13 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow) or +13 mech (on proficient mechs); Atk/Full Atk +14/+9/+4 melee (1d6+2, +2 *quarterstaff*) or +13/+8/+5 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow) or +13/+8/+5 mech (on proficient mechs); SA Flurry of blows; SQ *Capture spirit*, darkvision 60 ft., dwarf traits, rebuke spirits, spirit empathy, trancing; AL N; SV Fort +14, Ref +9, Will +19; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 17, Wis 21, Cha 15.

**Skills and Feats:** Balance +6, Climb +5, Concentration +12, Craft (mechcraft) +25, Diplo-

macy +7, Heal +15, Hide +6, Jump +5, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (religion) +18, Knowledge (the planes) +18, Move Silently +6; Combat Reflexes, Craft Spirit Mech, Improved Unarmed Strike, Iron Will, Mech Hardened (barbagula, daughter, mother, raptor), Sense Spirits, Smite Spirit, Spirit Strike, Spirit Ward, Stunning Fist.

**Possessions:** +2 *quarterstaff*, +3 *bracers of armor*, +1 *dagger*, light crossbow.

**Languages:** Common, Dwarf, Giant, Gnome, Terran.

Early on in life, Qori had planned to follow the path of the monk, but her dead father contacted her from the Spirit World in a vivid dream, whereupon he asked her to take up the role of shintaji to help guide her clan. After the dream, Qori presented herself to her clan's shintaji spirit sealers, and she performed the Rite of Loss, thereby gaining access to their secrets.

Since that time, Qori has grown in power. She is one of the few shintaji that can pull live spirits, willing or not, from their corporeal forms without the aid of a spell. For this reason, she is highly respected among her clan. She has aided the Shintaji and other clans in recalling ancestral heroes from the Spirit World to serve their descendants as samurai or sensei mechs.

The middle-aged Qori wears the orange robes of the Shintaji Clan. She has brown hair and brown eyes that exhibit a very faraway look, as if she sees both in this world and the one beyond.

## MECHS OF THE IRONTOOTH CLANS

The Irontooth Clans use a wide variety of mechs, which are rapidly diverging from the designs of other mechs and within the clans themselves. The Clans' monastic heritage is evident in many of their mechs (particularly those described in the **Mech Manual**), but as the clans increasingly splinter into distinct cultures, so too are new designs developed.

Similarly, certain clans' growing ability to manufacture their own mechs — as opposed to simply stealing them — means that new designs are coming from nontraditional sources. The jaguar harrier is one such mech.

Unlike other mechs, the Irontooth Clans do not value consistency whatsoever. A clan that possessed three juggernaut mechs has most likely painted each one a different color, and adorned them with completely different patterns of spikes and barbs. Aside from the common flag they all fly, there's often no commonality whatsoever in the appearance of mechs from a single clan. In fact, many Irontooth decorate their mechs in fantastic ways, whether through totems and banners or more artistic methods like paintings. The famous Irontooth artist Zack Rodebaugh commands fantastic sums for painting the mechs of powerful mech jockeys, who gladly pay him a huge portion of their winnings to have him render their mechs' appearance all the more incredible.

### JAGUAR HARRIER

**Size:** Gargantuan

**Power Source:** Steam

**Payload Units:** 13 (extra weapon mounts)

**Height:** 25 ft.

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

**Crew:** 1 (weapons: 2)

**Firing Ports:** 13

**Hit Dice:** 24

**Hit Points:** 132

**Critical Thresholds:** Green, Yellow 66,

Orange 33, Red 713

**Base Initiative:** -1

**Speed:** 50 ft. (fast legs)

**Maneuverability:** Good

**AC:** 8

**Hardness:** 10 (iron)

**Base melee attack:** +4

**Base range attack:** -1

**Unarmed damage:** 1d10+1d6+8

**Trample:** largest Medium; safe Small; damage 3d6

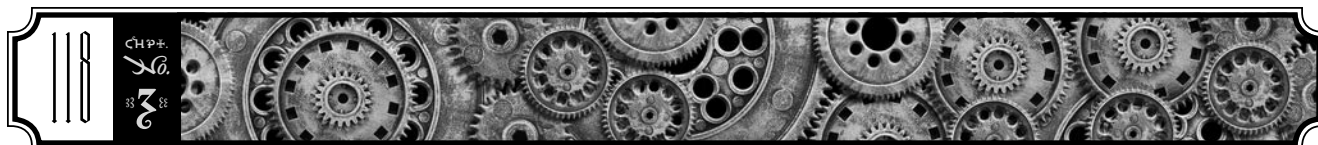
**Saves:** Fort +2, Ref -2, Will -

**Abilities:** Str 26, Dex 8, Con -, Int -, Wis -, Cha -

TABLE 3-1: MECHS OF THE IRONTOOTH CLANS

Mech Name	Faction	Size	Power	Price (GP)
Jaguar Harrier	Irontooth Clans	Gargantuan	Steam	5,951
Kabutoshi	Irontooth Clans	Colossal III	Manpower	16,266
Samurai (base)	Irontooth Clans	Huge	Manpower	3,223





**Mechcraft:** DC 36  
**Base Planning Time:** 72 days  
**Base Cost:** 1,391 gp  
**Total Cost:** 5,951 gp (plus 2,210 gp for steam powers)  
**Labor Requirements:** 1,920 man-hours  
**Construction Time:** 24 days (10 avg. laborers plus 1 overseer)  
**Special:** Combat spikes, steady feet, extra weapon mounts (2), fast legs, steam powers (Chain Tentacle: Animator + Automator + Discriminator; Mech: Iimagemaker + Optical Orbs (x2) + Scanner (metal) (x7; 6,400 ft. range))

#### PAYLOAD USAGE

PU	Use
1	Crew
12	Onboard weaponry
<b>13</b>	<b>Total</b>

The Jaguar Clan specifically designed these fast mechs for their harrier steamjock pilots (see page 126), who work in elite mech-acquisition units. The workhorse of these units, the jaguar harrier becomes even faster and deadlier in the steamjocks' capable hands.

This mech looks similar to a barbagula — and indeed that was the prototype — with a jaguar head, a chandler on one arm, and a harpoon in the other. The mechs specialize in tripping mechs with their chandler or pulling them down with an embedded harpoon. A standard Irontooth harrier unit includes four jaguar harrier mechs and one or two barbagulas.

The jaguar harriers are equipped with metal scanners for finding large deposits of metal. Generally the largest concentration of metal in any given area is a mech, and that's the target of these harriers. The stacked scanners have a range of over a mile. Harriers also have two-way video links for passing on visual information about an enemy, and their harpoon weapon is controlled by an animator and discriminator device, for shooting and pulling down enemy mechs.

### Special Rules

**Chain Tentacle:** The chain tentacle is constructed with an animator, automator, and discriminator to reduce crew requirements. Once the pilot fires the chain tentacle, the animator and automator proceed to automatically wind in the chain and reset it for subsequent attacks, and the discriminator ensures that a

successful tentacle strike pulls in targets intelligently.

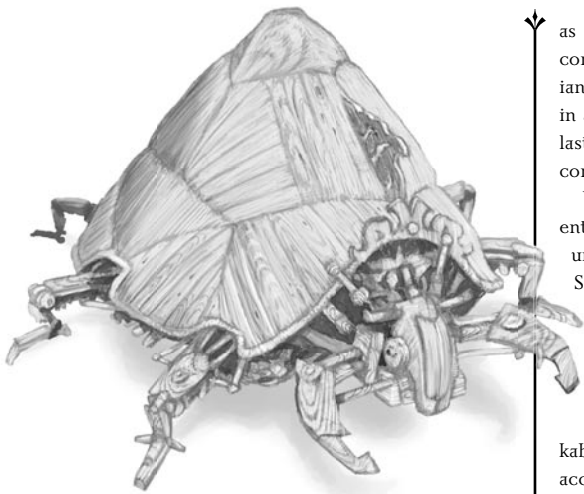
**Harrier Pilots:** Harrier steamjocks are known for their speed and tripping precision. In the hands of such pilots, the jaguar harrier's maneuverability becomes perfect (due to their Natural Pilot feat), its speed increases by an additional +10 ft. (due to their Speed Freak feat) and possibly more (since a 2nd-level harrier steamjock gains an additional +10 ft., and this ability increases with level), and the mech gains an additional +4 bonus to trip checks (due to their Improved Trip feat). Those harrier steamjocks with the Improved Initiative feat increase the mech's initiative by +4 and add their Dexterity modifier, as well.

### KABUTOSHI

**Size:** Colossal III  
**Power Source:** Manpower  
**Payload Units:** 128 (heavy payload; 64 reserved for cargo)  
**Height:** 75 ft.  
**Space/Reach:** 50 ft. x 50 ft./50 ft.  
**Crew:** 32 (weapons: 3)  
**Firing Ports:** 70  
**Hit Dice:** 120  
**Hit Points:** 660  
**Critical Thresholds:** Green, Yellow 396, Orange 231, Red 132  
**Base Initiative:** -2  
**Speed:** 50 ft.  
**Maneuverability:** Clumsy  
**AC:** 2  
**Hardness:** 16 (steel, Colossal III)  
**Base melee attack:** +2 (+10 Str, -8 size)  
**Base ranged attack:** -2  
**Unarmed damage:** 2d12+1d6+10  
**Trample:** largest Gargantuan; safe Large; dam-

TABLE 3-2: ONBOARD WEAPONRY – IRONTOOTH CLANS

LOCATION	ARC OF FIRE	WEAPON (DAMAGE, RANGE IN FT., OTHER)	PU	CREW
Jaguar Harrier Onboard Weaponry				
Left arm	Melee	Huge chandler (1d10+8, +4 to trip checks)	4	1
Right arm	180° forward	Gargantuan chain tentacle (2d8, 100)	8	1*
<b>Total</b>			<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>
*STEAM POWERS MOUNTED TO THE CHAIN TENTACLE REDUCE ITS CREW REQUIREMENT.				
Kabutoshi Onboard Weaponry				
Front (high)	180° forward	Gargantuan ballista (5d6/x3, 180)	8	2
Front (low)	Melee	Gargantuan buzzsaw (2d12/19-20/x3) ignores hardness	8	1
<b>Total</b>			<b>16</b>	<b>3</b>
Samurai Onboard Weaponry				
Left arm	Melee	Large lance (2d6+2/x3)	2	1
Right arm	Melee	Huge sword blade (2d8+2/19-20)	4	1
<b>Total</b>			<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>



age 6d6  
**Saves:** Fort -2, Ref -4, Will -  
**Abilities:** Str 30, Dex 6, Con -, Int -, Wis -,  
 Cha -  
**Mechcraft DC:** 46  
**Base Planning Time:** 92 days  
**Base Cost:** 6,525 gp  
**Total Cost:** 16,266 gp  
**Labor Requirements:** 7,680 man-hours  
**Construction Time:** 96 days (10 avg. laborers  
 plus 1 overseer)  
**Special:** Combat spikes, hangars, heavy payload

PAYLOAD USAGE	
PU	Use
32	Crew
16	Onboard Weaponry
80	Passengers and cargo (shantytown)
128	Total

The kabutoshi is a smaller version of the kabuto (described on page 30 of the **Mech Manual**). Like the kabuto, these roaming thorps look like massive horned beetles, slowly scuttling over the land on a multitude of insectoid legs. No two kabutoshi are constructed exactly alike, though most have a domed, pyramidal, or helmet-like shape to them, each being uniquely recognizable by a great, ornately flared ridge halfway up the face of the mech's front.

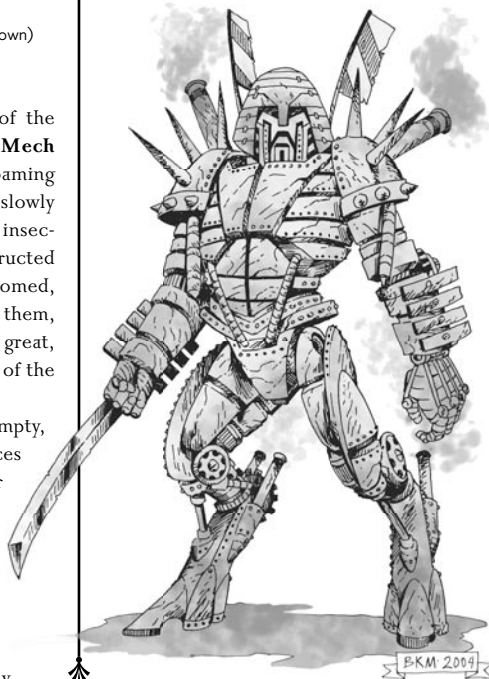
The interior of a kabutoshi is mostly empty, its main levels being large open spaces for mechs and passengers. Except for revered elders and clerics, no personal quarters exist. Rather, the entire community creates a kind of shantytown inside the mech, using tents and simple structures just as though they were in the wilderness. Those onboard a kabutoshi do not think of themselves merely

as passengers, but members of a tightly knit community within the larger clan. Many civilians spend their whole lives living and working in and around the mech and take a middle or last name that designates which kabutoshi they come from.

Whereas a kabuto is intended to house an entire clan, a kabutoshi houses smaller family units or provides space for special purposes. Some are used as mobile forges or construction areas, where other mechs can be constructed in the safety of a large, mobile enclosed area even when the clan is on the move. Others are used for housing special sections of the clan (such as the kabutoshi used by the Shintaji Clan, which accompanies whatever larger clan they're dwelling with), while still others have unique purposes. The North Star Clan utilizes a kabutoshi packed full of old books, scrolls, tablets, and tomes as a veritable mobile library, one of the last great concentrations of knowledge on the endless plains aside from the memory mechs of the elves.

## SAMURAI (BASE DESIGN)

**Size:** Huge  
**Power Source:** Steam  
**Payload Units:** 7 (extra weapon mounts)  
**Height:** 15 ft.  
**Space/Reach:** 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.



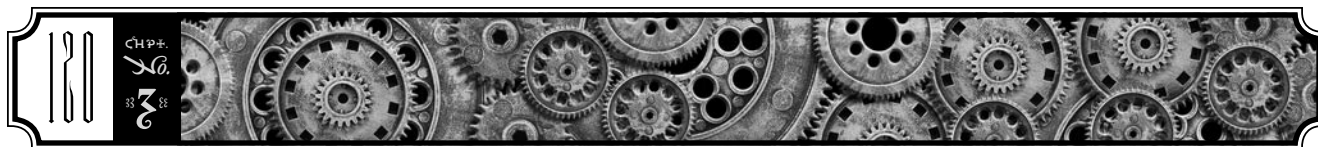
**Crew:** 1 (weapons: 2)  
**Firing Ports:** 7  
**Hit Dice:** 12  
**Hit Points:** 66  
**Critical Thresholds:** Green, Yellow 33,  
 Orange 17, Red 7  
**Base Initiative:** +0  
**Speed:** 40 ft. (fast legs)  
**Maneuverability:** Good  
**AC:** 8  
**Hardness:** 12 (steel)  
**Base Melee Attack:** +0  
**Base Ranged Attack:** +0  
**Unarmed Damage:** 1d8+1d6+2  
**Trample:** largest Medium; safe Medium; damage 2d6  
**Saves:** Fort +0, Ref -2, Will -  
**Abilities:** Str 14, Dex 10, Con -, Int -, Wis -,  
 Cha -  
**Mechcraft:** DC 33  
**Base Planning Time:** 66 days  
**Base Cost:** 716 gp  
**Total Cost:** 3,223 gp  
**Labor Time:** 960 man-hours  
**Construction Time:** 12 days (10 avg. laborers  
 plus 1 overseer)  
**Options:** Combat spikes, extra weapon  
 mounts (2), fast legs, steady feet

PAYLOAD USAGE	
PU	Use
1	Crew
6	Onboard weaponry
7	Total

The Samurai mech appears as a tall, armored human. This mech is specifically designed to house the spirit of an Irontooth ancestor, usually a warrior of some reknown. A shintaji cleric calls the spirit and binds it to the mech, at which point the mech becomes self-powered.

While the base model presented here is a steam-powered mech, samurai mechs can be made in other starting power types. Most are built using steam power so they have some power source until they are imbued with a spirit, but some are constructed with man-powered engines simply so they can be constructed cheaply, knowing that once animated the animating spirit will provide the mech's power. The crew listed for the mech's weapons are optional, as the samurai spirit mech can power them itself once animated.

As a samurai mech houses an ancestral spirit, each is essentially an intelligent construct, and its stats must be modified according to its occupant. Such a construct has feats and skill knowledge, as well as Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores. An example samurai using the base mech follows.



## MANXIA GUORISHI (SAMURAI SPIRIT MECH)

**Size:** Huge  
**Power Source:** Steam  
**Payload Units:** 7 (extra weapon mounts)  
**Height:** 15 ft.  
**Space/Reach:** 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.  
**Crew:** 1 (weapons: 1)  
**Firing Ports:** 7  
**Hit Dice:** 23 (12 for mech, 11 for monk levels)  
**Hit Points:** 126  
**Critical Thresholds:** Not subject to critical hits  
**Base Initiative:** +0  
**Speed:** 40 ft. (fast legs)  
**Maneuverability:** Good  
**AC:** 8  
**Hardness:** 12 (steel)  
**Base Melee Attack:** +10/+5 (+0 for mech, +8/+3 for monk's base attack bonus, +2 for mech jockey's mech attack bonus)  
**Base Ranged Attack:** +10/+5 (+0 for mech, +8/+3 for monk's base attack bonus, +2 for mech jockey's mech attack bonus)  
**Unarmed Damage:** 1d8+1d6+2  
**Trample:** largest Medium; safe Medium; damage 2d6  
**Saves:** Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +5 (base of Fort +0 and Ref +2 for mech, modified by monk and mech jockey levels)  
**Abilities:** Str 14, Dex 10, Con –, Int 14, Wis 20, Cha 13



**Mechcraft:** DC 33

**Base Planning Time:** 66 days

**Base Cost:** 716 gp

**Total Cost:** 3,223 gp (basic shell)

**Labor Time:** 960 man-hours

**Construction Time:** 12 days (10 avg. laborers plus 1 overseer) plus ritual to bind spirit

**Options:** Combat spikes, extra weapon mounts (2), fast legs, steady feet

### PAYLOAD USAGE

PU	USE
1	Crew
6	Onboard weaponry
7	<b>Total</b>

Manxia Guorishi was a monk of great renown some twelve centuries ago. He was famous for his “Iron Monkey” technique, a style of martial arts that focused on strengthening the body through extreme conditioning and intense focus. Each day, he would have the younger monks in his temple batter him for four hours with heavy wooden logs. At the end of the session, he would stand strong amidst an immense pile of splinters. Many decades of this training, combined with an unusually strong ki, produced his “Iron Monkey Strike,” where he would literally punch straight through blocks of the strongest metal.

When the shintaji needed a warrior-mech of great strength, they immediately thought of the legends of Manxia Guorishi, which are still told to this day. A shintaji spirit sealer (described on page 127) went to the Spirit World every day for two years until he found Manxia's spirit. Then he bound it to the mech. Now Manxia fights again.

Manxia Guorishi prefers not to use the weapons his mech was built with. He long ago dropped them by the wayside. Instead, he strikes with unarmed attacks. He still assumes his Iron Monkey pose as best he can — the mech's clumsy metal joints prevent him from getting it perfectly correct, something he has complained about to his shintaji summoner — and he has already begun teaching the clan's younger practitioners some aspects of his ancient technique. Since he has been in his new mech body for a little more than a year now, he has acquired some degree of prowess with it, and has begun advancing in levels as a mech jockey.

When using this spirit mech, treat it as if it were piloted by Manxia Guorishi himself. Manxia is an 11th-level monk. The stats above already incorporate most of his abilities. His remaining abilities, including special attacks, are summarized below.

Manxia can use his flurry of blows abil-

ity with the mech's unarmed attack. All of his monk abilities apply to the mech body except wholeness of body, which cannot be used with inorganic bodies.

**Manxia Guorishi, spirit mech Mnk11/Mcj2:** CR 13; Huge mech; SA diamond body, evasion, extraordinary pilot, flurry of blows, greater flurry, improved evasion, *ki* strike (lawful, magic), patchwork repairs (can't be used as mech), purity of body, slow fall 50 ft., still mind, unarmed strike, wholeness of body (can't be used as mech); AL LN.

**Skills and Feats:** Balance +3, Climb +20, Craft (mechcraft) +16, Diplomacy +11, Jump +12, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (steam engines) +6, Knowledge (religion) +6, Listen +12, Mech Pilot +16, Spot +15; Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Greater Mech Fu, Improved Mech Fu, Improved Trip, Mech Dancer, Mech Fu, Mechidextrous, Mechwalker, Quick Draw, Stunning Fist, Weapon Finesse.

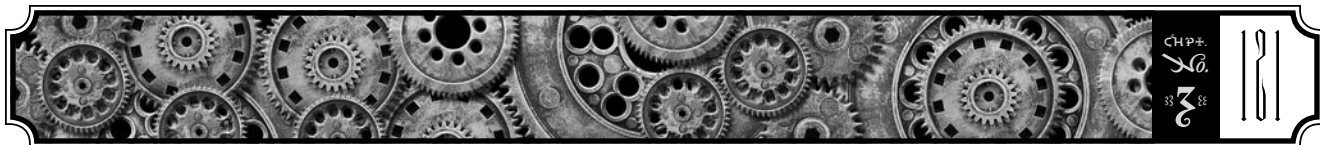
## SPIRIT-POWERED MECHS

Spirit mechs are powered by a spirit summoned and bound to the mech. In this sense, they are a cross between animated and undead mechs. The difference is that the spirit still lives, and it has sentience. Unlike the magical or necromantic energy that empowers animated and undead mechs, a spirit mech is powered by a life force which pervades the entire mech.

Spirit mechs cannot be built. A spirit mech always starts out as a mech of some other type, usually man-powered or steam-powered. A summoning and binding ritual by a shintaji spirit sealer brings back a spirit from the Spirit World to power the mech. As any existing mech can be imbued with a spirit, a spirit mech's appearance varies as to its base mech. A spirit-powered mech does not require a fuel source, and it takes on many of the construct traits.

If the spirit within the mech allows, it may have a pilot and be used as a normal mech of its type, requiring its standard fuel source for operation. It is rare that a spirit mech would allow itself to be maneuvered in such a way, however.

Usually, a spirit mech is powered by the life force that controls it. This life force has completely sovereignty over the mech. It can operate all weapons each round, it is completely aware of all aspects of the mech's conditions, and it can perceive the world around it as if the mech could see and hear as a human. In a sense, the mech truly becomes the body of the spirit.



To create a spirit mech, its creator must have the Craft Spirit Mech feat, which is a special ability of the shintaji spirit sealers. No other class has ever been able to succeed at creating such mechs.

**Power Source:** Animating spirit.

**Physical Appearance:** A spirit mech appears as the base mech its spirit was placed in.

Spirit mechs, like undead mechs, are utterly silent.

**Critical Thresholds:** Not subject to critical hits. Even if a spirit inhabits a steam-powered mech, the steam engine is no longer used to power the mech, so critical hits against it no longer matter. Note, however, that the steam engine (or other power source as applicable) may still be necessary to power certain weapons (e.g., if a steam cannon is mounted on the spirit mech), in which case certain critical hit effects might still be applicable.

**Crew:** A spirit-powered mech requires no crew, but may have them (if desired). Crew members are subject to the base mech's PU.

For purposes of spells and other special effects, the spirit-powered mech is considered a construct. In game terms, it is treated as if the spirit had been pulled into the mech via the *rebuild soul* spell (see page 51 of **DragonMech**), with the following additional effects:

- A spirit mech is subject to turning by creatures capable of turning or rebuking spirits or undead, though it receives a +4 turn resistance.
- The spirit mech's metal body does not heal naturally. It must be repaired per the usual method for its base type. Generally, this requires the Craft (mechcraft) skill. If the spirit mech has the knowledge, the tools, the physical mobility, and hands (instead of arms ending in weapons), it may repair itself. Additionally, due to its construct nature, certain spells also provide healing, per the *rebuild soul* spell entry.
- When the mech body hits 0 hp, the spirit within is not immediately released. To release the spirit, its vessel must be found. Its shintaji creators often hide the spirit vessel in a secret compartment, requiring a DC 25 Search check to locate. When the vessel is destroyed, the spirit is released, leaving a normal ruined mech behind. The spirit can once again be captured if the shintaji spirit sealer desires to recapture it.
- The spirit mech receives the base HD of its mech type. It receives additional d10 hit dice equal to the hit dice from class levels from when it was alive. It also retains all other class abilities, though they may be

limited by its new body.

- A spirit that could once cast spells can still do so only if it is still capable of using the same components. Verbal and somatic components will both be severely limited. A mech built with a voicemaker can achieve verbal components but with a 25% spell failure rate. A mech built to resemble a humanoid shape could, in theory, still cast spells if the bound spirit can cast spells, but it suffers an arcane spell failure chance of at least 40% (the same as half-plate armor) and potentially much higher depending on how well it can mimic normal human poses.
- A spirit-powered mech receives a mech attack bonus equal to its base attack bonus. After a one-month period of adjusting to its new body, the spirit is automatically considered proficient with all weapons mounted on the mech. If the spirit advances in level, its mech attack bonus continues to equal its base attack bonus. This is an exception to the usual rule of mech attack bonus being half of base attack bonus. If the spirit advances in level in a class that grants a mech attack bonus, its mech attack bonus from any previous class levels' BAB increases by the amount of the new class-granted mech attack bonus.
- The spirit mech retains all feat slots, skill ranks, base attack bonuses, saving throws, class abilities, and racial abilities, except where the metal body may change them. It retains the spirit's alignment.
- A spirit mech automatically gains the Mechi-dextrous feat as a free feat that does not count towards its total feat slots. This represents its utter control over its new body.
- A spirit mech automatically meets all Dexterity prerequisites for mech-related feats, regardless of its actual score. The precision with which it manipulates its controls is on par with the most skilled mortal mech pilot, even though its Dex score is expressed by the clumsy movement of its metal limbs rather than the fine motor skills of a human pilot.
- All spirit mechs treat Craft (mechcraft) and Mech Pilot as class skills, regardless of original class.
- All spirit mechs treat mech jockey as their favored class, instead of whatever favored class corresponded to their original body.
- The spirit mech may continue to advance in new class levels. Most spirit mechs take levels as mech jockeys, and eventually turn to the mech devil prestige class.
- A spirit recently returned to a mech body may find itself unable to utilize its new body effectively because it lacks ranks in the

Mech Pilot skill. The shintaji use the spells *imbue with skill knowledge* and *implant skill knowledge* to teach such skills to the spirit. Additionally, until it gains a new class level, the spirit may choose to exchange existing skill ranks and feat slots with new ones. Each rank or slot may be exchanged only once. Once a level in a new class is gained, all skill ranks and feat slots from preceding levels become fixed.

## LIFE AMONG THE IRONTOOTH CLANS

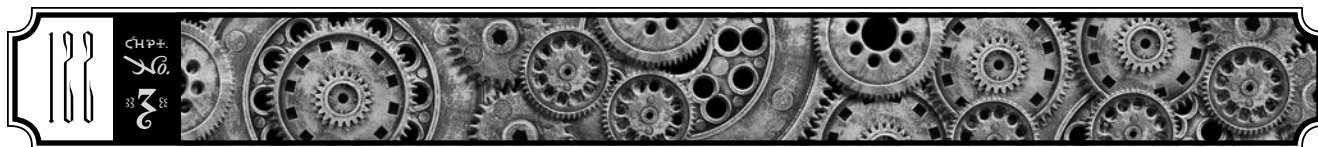
The Irontooth Clans are wandering nomads, never sure where the next day will take them. A life among them is a whirlwind of different experiences, new people, faraway places, and strange events. Each clan has its own practices which shape everyday life, whether it's constant brawling or rarified introspection, but they share a certain commonality: There's no such thing as a dull day among the Irontooth Clans.

### LANGUAGES

The two most dominant languages among the Irontooth Clans are Dwarven and Common. Elven and Gnomish are also encountered occasionally among the few clans to have such members. Most other languages aren't commonly used. However, because the clans wander so much, they pick up the languages of those who live within their domains. It's usually the case that at least one member of every clan speaks Orc, Goblin, or whatever other language is common to the creatures they frequently encounter.

### CALENDAR

The Irontooth generally follow the calendar of the Stenian Confederacy. They are too busy stealing or building mechs to increase their own power to care about arguing over a measurement of days.



## RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

Religion plays a large role in the daily life of some clans, and is completely irrelevant in the lives of others. It really depends on the nature of a given clan. Given the chaotic nature of life among the Irontooth, the tastes of the individual play a large role as well. The clan descriptions above indicate which religions are followed by each clan. The two religions most commonly associated with the Irontooth are the Righteous and the Regenerators cult.

### The Regenerators Cult

The Regenerators cult is an idealistic cult dedicated to making the surface world safe again. It began among the worm farmers, where the world's races had already begun to work cooperatively toward a common goal. Among them, a young human woman named Jolian Nodwi began preaching that if the peoples of Highpoint united, they could rebuild the surface society destroyed during the lunar rains. Banded together, she said, they could conquer any problem, including the lunar dragons.

The worm farmers didn't believe common people could rebuild Highpoint's surface, let alone fight the lunar dragons. They balked at Jolian's ideas, and chided her for thinking she'd ever be more than a worm farmer. Then Jolian began manifesting magical abilities, much like the few priests who lived among the worm farmers. She took these growing abilities as a divine sign that she had a special destiny to fulfill that would indeed take her away from worm farming. Buoyed by this secret knowledge, she continued her preaching.

Eventually her charm and promise of a better life swayed some of the younger, more idealistic worm farmers. Jolian began meeting secretly with these loyal followers in the early morning hours to discuss how they could make this dream a reality. They decided the dirt-dwelling worm farmers lacked the courage to bring their dream to fruition. So they abandoned their families and lives, leaving with the next passing mech tribe to seek out others who could help them succeed.

Once on the road, Jolian didn't hide her divine powers. She used them to heal the sick and help the tribes she and her followers met along the way. Her abilities often gained food and sanctuary for her small group, most of whom had not seen a priest in their midst for some time. With each new tribe she encountered, the ranks of the Regenerators,

as Jolian called her group, grew by one or two new members.

An encounter with the Irontooth Clans' peaceful Clan of the Middle Pass finally gave Jolian a home. Deciding the Irontooth had the power to bring her dream to reality, she and her followers stayed with the hospitable clan for many years.

A most fortuitous thing happened while Jolian and her followers resided among the Middle Pass Irontooth. The denounced gearwright Stokata Loji came to live with the clan, and she promised to help the Irontooth build a city-mech of their own. Jolian, of course, saw this as another sign that she was on the right path toward fulfilling her dream for Highpoint. She has since vowed to do what she can to get the needed materials and money for the project. Because of this promise, she and several of her followers have returned to the road, where they hope to gain both new followers and financial support for the cause.

It's unclear how Jolian's divine powers have come about. She worships no particular god, and the Regenerators are not based around formal worship. Some say the raw purity of her deep-seated idealism manifested into pure divine power.

*Symbol:* A flourishing tree.

*Domains:* Earth, Life, and Protection.

*Alignment:* Any good.

### The Righteous

The Righteous is an old deity who has lain dormant for many millennia. More than 40,000 years ago, the Righteous led Athuraz to the moon, where Athuraz first encountered the strange lunar creatures that — as the Righteous revealed to him — would one day become alien divinities intent on attacking the terrestrials (see **The Shardsfall Quest**, pages 56-57). Then, after allowing Athuraz to walk the earth for 3,000 years, the Righteous raised him to godhood. He knew even then that Athuraz would play an integral part in protecting the terrestrial future by infusing his essence into the starshards. When Athuraz created the starshards, the Righteous went dormant to save his strength for the time when the starshards would once more be needed. He knew much blood would be shed before the terrestrials could obtain peace through Athuraz's essence. To protect the innocent, heroes would have to rise up from the ashes of destruction, and the Righteous would provide them with the strength to do so.

The Righteous represents strength and protection. As a being who existed long before

the gods chose sides on the law-chaos axis, the Righteous is merely a being of goodness. Thus, neutral good most closely defines its alignment.

Through dreams, the Righteous speaks to those with the desire to fight the lunar creatures and save Highpoint. The Righteous chose his first hero 60 years ago, the paladin Zyon Orion, current leader of the Irontooth Righteous Lancers Clan. Since then, many among Zyon's clan have come to worship him, and the religion is spreading.

*Symbol:* A silver cross.

*Domains:* Good, Protection, and Strength.

*Alignment:* Neutral good.

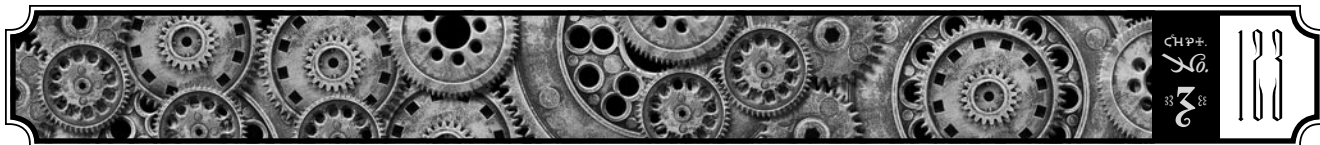
## COMMERCE

Economic relationships among the Irontooth clans often depend on the nature of the clan involved. Clans Battleaxe, Bugbear, and Hawk earn their keep primarily as predators. They prey on the weak, whether it's through protection rackets or outright raids. The proceeds of protection rackets tend to be either agricultural products, which are usually eaten at the next meal, or trade goods, which are traded with other clans to acquire metal, fuel, and mech parts. Raids generally produce more hard coinage, plus the occasional "borrowed" mech that can be rebuilt with a louder engine and more guns.

The Iron Maiden Clan is heavily invested in raids and combat. When it comes to commerce, they give very little to the local economy; mostly, they just take. They focus largely on the mechs of the Stenian Confederacy and the Legion. Some Iron Maiden clan members like to say this is an act of altruism, for they avoid bullying those weaker than they, but outsiders point to the fact that Stenian and Legion mechs tend to be a lot better equipped (and thus worth much more gold) than independent mechs.

Jaguar Clan takes the Iron Maiden raiding-lifestyle one step further. They have almost no commercial or trade relationships; everything they own comes from open combat with the Stenian Confederacy. Jaguar herself has a "Robin Hood" style habit whereby she shares the proceeds of her raids against rogue Stenian officers with the victims of their crimes, but aside from that, the clan has virtually no economic transactions except to trade with other clans.

The Lotus Clan and Clan of the Middle Pass live impoverished existences steeped in



the austerity of their monastic heritage. Their members generally have very little hard coinage at hand. For the Middle Pass clan in particular, everything the clan produces goes into its city-mech project. Toward this end, the clan is supported to a large degree by other clans, particularly the Righteous Lancers. When the Middle Pass clan runs low on supplies, its members are generally able to trade their engineering expertise for food. As long as they have enough parts and raw materials to continue their city-mech project, the Middle Pass clan members ask for little else.

The Righteous Lancers are arguably on the fringes of Irontooth life, qualifying as much as an adventuring group as a clan. Were they founded a few decades later, or in another part of the continent, they probably would have no Irontooth ties at all. As it stands now, they have close ties to the Clan of the Middle Pass, and wholeheartedly support its city-mech project. Most of the treasure collected by the Righteous Lancers in their adventuring escapades goes toward the Clan of the Middle Pass.

## SOCIAL STRUCTURE

The social structure of a given clan can vary widely. Some follow the traditional dwarven model of elder rule, while others have councils or rule by brute force. But the most important element of Irontooth society is the mech, and it's the social structure that has built up around the mech that deserves special attention.

Clan youths learn early on that the might of their mechs is directly related to their clan's continued survival. As soon as a child can walk, the clan begins their mech training, and by age fourteen, these children are better mech pilots than many adult pilots, the Stenian Confederacy or the Legion. The mech is a pivotal element of every clansman's life from his earliest days.

The importance of the mech, and skill in piloting it, supercedes other considerations. Among the Irontooth, racial or cultural background is far less important than mechanical aptitude. While most of the Irontooth's members are dwarves, they respect those members of other races who can prove themselves useful in a fight or in fixing mechs, and they gladly welcome them among their number. As members of the clan, they are treated no differently than their dwarven members, though they are often overlooked when the clans choose their leaders.



## VALUES

The Irontooth Clans value many things: power, skill, and combat. Most of all, they value mechs, and this is reflected in their jousts.

### The Jousts

Raiding is integral to the survival of the Irontooth clans, and their traditional jousts reinforce this. The jousts give young pilots a chance to test their skills outside of real danger, and give experienced pilots an outlet for challenges. They prevent open conflict among the clans via honor duels, provide a constant training ground for mech jockeys, and, of course, make for great entertainment. More recently among some of the more battle-thirsty clans, they have also become a way to determine clan leadership via Mech Lord jousts. Nearby clans joust regularly, honing their skills against the best mech jockeys among them.

When jousting, the mechs use only close-combat weapons, which they dull down with thick layers of clay or hide. They then coat them with a thin layer of dye for marking hits. Each

competing mech powers down to half-power to weaken the strength of the blows dealt, and this powering down gives smaller mechs a fighting chance against larger ones; the battle becomes a true competition between pilots, not mechs. The blows are marked by the dye and dents they leave, and the crowds rule when a mech is beaten into inoperability. Of course, disagreements among the observers on the winner often leads to "joust riots," another form of Irontooth entertainment.

Because members of the Irontooth grow up participating in these jousts, gaining valuable training and experience early on, they become some of the best mech jockeys on Highpoint. Many go on to specialize their training, becoming masters of mech fu as the famed mech devils.

### Mech Lord Jousts

The "Mech Lord" has become the common title for a leader of an Irontooth Clan, at least among the rowdier clans. In clans with Mech Lord leaders, clansmen can vie for leadership in Mech Lord jousts that take place annually, usually on the outskirts of the





Irontooth Clans' annual weeklong Great Joust. Since most Mech Lord-ruled tribes admire strength above all else, most of these battles come down to hand-to-hand combat between the current Mech Lord and his challenger. The usual winners tend to be powerful barbarians. Occasionally, when requested, a Mech Lord joust takes place in mechs, only the mech pilots do not power them down for safety. Although the Mech-Lord jousts are more dangerous and have higher stakes, they resemble the Irontooth Clans' regular jousts in every other respect.

In more recent times, individuals seeking to form their own tribes have fought in another type of Mech-Lord joust. To gain the Irontooth Clans' blessings, the individual must compete against three current Mech Lords, if fighting in hand-to-hand combat, or their best mech pilots, if mech jousting. The challenger does not necessarily have to beat each Mech Lord or his best pilot, but he must impress at least two out of the three. A Mech Lord gives his approval with a thumbs-up after the battle. If the challenger happens to beat all three Mech Lords or their proxies, then he gains the automatic right to create his own clan.

Assuming the challenger gains his own clan, the approving Mech Lords often gift the newcomer with several clansmen, sometimes warrior family members, who can aid the upstart clan. The gifted clansmen see this as an honor, for no Mech Lord would gift a useless clansmen; the gifting is indeed a sign of respect both to the new Mech Lord and to those given over as gifts. Each Mech Lord "donates" five people with mid-level class skills. Members of other clans not involved in the Mech-Lord joust often gift the new Mech Lord with members, as well, and Irontooth clansmen who have been won over by the challenger's showing in the joust may decide to join the new clan, too.

### Honor Duel Jousts

Honor duels are used to settle disputes and personal conflicts among individual clan members. The two combatants armor up in ashigaru mechs — small, blocky mechs of wooden armor fitted with blunted lances (as described on page 37 of the **Mech Manual**). The ashigarus enhance their pilots' physical skills, making them stronger and faster, but they do not limit the pilots' other natural skills. Surviving a stronger, quicker opponent in such a mech requires guile and sheer skill.

The arguing clansmen cannot just don ashigarus and beat each other into submission to resolve the issue on their own. Instead, they must petition their dispute before a clan elder

or the Mech Lord, who will decide if the conflict warrants such a duel. Assuming it does, the chosen mediator arranges the duel. If, however, the belligerents bring a frivolous claim before the mediator, they are punished with severe physical labor and ostracism. In extreme instances of lies or dishonorable behavior, they are exiled from the clan for a month or more, forced to endure Highpoint's hardships on their own, thereby relearning the value of their clan and their clansmen. If they don't relearn it, they are welcome to join the rust riders or mech tribes. In any case, such punishments generally ensure that only serious claims are brought before a mediator.

As honor duels are serious matters, the mediator gives the scheduled combatants a week to withdraw their complaint. Withdrawing is actually considered more honorable than fighting and losing. If the combatants still wish to settle the issue in the arena, the fight takes place on an assigned battleground, usually an empty mech hanger or spacious dojo. The clan's elders, including the original mediator and/or the Mech Lord, stand in judgment of the battle, while all married members of the clan are invited to witness the duel. As the duel constitutes what amounts to a trial in other cultures, these duels are somber occasions and bring no joy to their observers.

The duelist enter their ashigaru mechs at their homes or at opposite ends of the community. The combatants, led by a "caller" who shouts out the details of conflict, then progress through the community in a small parade, giving their clansmen the opportunity to see the duelists before they enter their battleground.

At the battleground, the reason for the duel is reiterated before all. The combatants are given the sign to begin. The fight continues until one mech is disabled or until a combatant submits. While some duels have exceeded five hours, most end within 30 minutes. Though accidents happen, the fights rarely result in death. Those who do die in such a duel are treated with honor.

When the duel ends, the winner receives vindication of his side of the original complaint. The dishonored loser must then either compensate the winner or the clan for their time in the matter. Depending on the original complaint, the loser's punishment might be as little as being forced to be the "caller" in another honor duel, a lowly position in the eyes of the Irontooth Clans, or being forced into the winner's service for a period of several years.

## RULES INFORMATION

Characters from the Irontooth Clans span the gamut of race, class, alignment, and attitude. The ten clans presented in this volume provide a wide range of inspiration for potential PCs. And there are more than 40 other Irontooth Clans not described herein, opening the door even further.

Because of the wide variety of potential Irontooth backgrounds, it's futile to attempt to describe a "typical" Irontooth clansmen. When creating an Irontooth character, it's far more important to focus on the themes that tie all Irontooth together. Regardless of race, class, or other background elements, an Irontooth PC should value certain things: family or clan loyalty; personal power, whether through discipline, strength, or mechs; the importance of jousting and dueling, both to settle disputes and as a pastime; and a nonconformist and rebellious outlook on life, with lawful tendencies expressed primarily through discipline or loyalty, not obedience to authority.

Irontooth characters can be of any background. Those who are recently from the human nomads of the flatland, or the old dwarven clans of Duerok, may retain the special abilities of such origins (as described in the sections on the Stenian Confederacy and Legion).

### FEATS OF THE IRONTOOTH CLANS

The Irontooth Clans are well known for their mech fu, traditional jousts, and chaotic culture, as well as the strange spirit magic that is found among their members. This lifestyle has given rise to a number of abilities that are now commonly found in the form of special feats.

#### Greater Mech Fu (Mech: Irontooth)

True masters of mech fu gain the ability to stop their opponents' strikes before the opponent realizes he has decided to attack.

**Prerequisite:** Improved Mech Fu, Mech Pilot 16 ranks

**Benefit:** You can make more than one mech fu counterattack per round, up to the num-



ber of attacks of opportunity you have. Your counterattacks count toward your attacks of opportunity for the round. The counterattacks are made as free actions, per the Improved Mech Fu feat.

### Improved Mech Fu (Mech: Irontooth)

Skilled mech fu pilots can react to enemy attacks almost instantly.

**Prerequisite:** Mech Fu, Mech Pilot 13 ranks

**Benefit:** When piloting a mech, you may use an unarmed attack to counter melee attacks against your mech as a free action rather than as a readied action. In all other respects, this feat is like Mech Fu. You may only make one such unarmed counterattack per round, and it counts against your attacks of opportunity for the round. Feats such as Combat Reflexes do not let you counter more than one attack per round, although Greater Mech Fu does.

### Joust Lord (Mech: Irontooth)

You are talented in the mech jousts, able to inflict great damage with an unarmed blow.

**Prerequisite:** Mech Pilot 5 ranks

**Benefit:** When making an unarmed attack in a mech, you add +1d6 to the damage you cause.

### Mech Hardened (Mech: Irontooth)

The Irontooth Clans are practically born to mech fighting, and they hone their talents in the clan jousts. An Irontooth clansman with this feat can transfer his natural combat ability to the mech, much like Mechanized Combat Practice.

**Prerequisite:** Irontooth clansman, extensive time in various mechs.

**Benefit:** During your training with the Irontooth, you learn to effectively fight with four mechs of your choosing. Your mech attack bonus with those mechs equals your base attack bonus. This includes multiple attacks if you have them.

**Normal:** Only the classes of mech jockey, assimilated, and mech devil normally have a mech attack bonus.

**Special:** Must be taken at 1st level and may not be retaken. To acquire more mech knowledge, a character must take Mechanized Combat Practice.

### Mechrobatics (Mech: Irontooth)

You are so skilled at piloting your mech that you make climbing and jumping in a mech look easy. You can even make a mech tumble.

**Prerequisites:** Dex 18+, Mech Dancer, Tumble 10 ranks, trained by Irontooth clansmen.

**Benefits:** You are so finely attuned to your mech's positioning that you can maneuver it as if it were an extension of your body. When climbing or jumping in a mech with perfect or good maneuverability, you add your Climb and Jump skill modifiers to the roll. Synergy bonuses from the mech devil's special skill uses ability still apply. You may also make a mech tumble, transferring your Tumble skill modifiers to the mech. This only works with mechs with perfect or good maneuverability. Mechs make Tumble checks at the normal DC +4.

### Mech Scholar (General)

You are naturally knowledgeable about mechs.

**Benefit:** You get a +2 bonus on all Knowledge (mechs) and Knowledge (steam engines) checks.

### Powerful Rebuke (Spirit)

You are more effective in rebuking or commanding.

**Prerequisite:** The ability to rebuke spirits or undead as a 5th-level character

**Benefit:** You receive a +4 bonus on turning checks to turn or rebuke undead, spirits, or any other creatures you are able to turn or rebuke. This feat can only be taken once.

### Sense Spirits (General)

You can sense the presence of spirits.

**Prerequisite:** Ability to rebuke or turn spirits.

**Benefit:** By concentrating and using one of your rebuke/turn attempts for the day, you can sense the presence of spirit creatures as if you were using a *detect spirits* spell at your character level, but you cannot gain more than the first two rounds of effect. On the first round of concentration, you sense the presence or absence of spirits within range. On the second and later rounds of concentration, you sense the number of spirits present and the strength of the strongest spirit present.

### Smite Spirit (Spirit)

You can strike a spirit with a powerful blow.

**Prerequisites:** Ability to rebuke spirits, Cha 13+

**Benefit:** By using one of your turning attempts for the day, you can strike a spirit with a powerful blow. Add your Charisma bonus to your attack roll and your rebuke level to your damage for one melee attack against the spirit. For example, an 8th-level shintaji with Charisma 15 would have +2 to attack and do +8 damage. This feat does not give you the ability to strike incorporeal spirits without a magical weapon, nor does it overcome any weapon

TABLE 3-3: IRONTOOTH CLAN FEATS

FEATS	PREREQUISITE	BENEFIT
Greater Mech Fu <sup>1</sup>	Improved Mech Fu, Mech Pilot 16 ranks	Counter multiple mech melee attacks per round
Improved Mech Fu <sup>1</sup>	Mech Fu, Mech Pilot 13 ranks	Counter mech melee attacks as free action
Joust Lord <sup>1</sup>	Mech Pilot 5 ranks	+1d6 unarmed damage in mechs
Mech Hardened	Irontooth, practice in mech	Gain Mech Attack Bonus in four mechs
Mechrobatics <sup>1</sup>	Dex 18+, Mech Dancer, Tumble 10 ranks, Irontooth	Transfer ranks in Climb and Jump to mech; can tumble in mech
Mech Scholar	—	+2 to Knowledge (mechs) and Knowledge (steam engines) checks
Powerful Rebuke	Rebuke spirits or undead	+4 to turning checks
Sense Spirits	Rebuke or turn spirits	Can detect presence of spirits
Smite Spirit	Rebuke spirits, Cha 13+	Bonus to attack, damage spirit
Spirit Strike	Rebuke spirits, Cha 13+	Attack spirits as if ghost touch weapon
Spirit Ward	Rebuke spirits, Cha 13+, Spirit Strike	+2 bonus to saves against spirits for all within 60-foot radius
Strong Self	Steamborg level 1+	+4 to steamborg's daily Charisma checks
Stunning Precision	Mech devil, stunning attack	Can make stunning attacks with weapon
Swift Turn	Rebuke spirits, Cha 13+, Powerful Rebuke or Extra Turning	Rebuke spirits as free action

<sup>1</sup> THESE FEATS MAY BE SELECTED BY AN IRONTOOTH MECH JOCKEY AS BONUS FEATS, PROVIDED ALL PREREQUISITES ARE MET.



immunities the spirit may have.

### Spirit Strike (Spirit)

You can channel energy to strike incorporeal beings normally.

**Prerequisites:** Ability to rebuke spirits, Cha 13+

**Benefit:** By using one of your turning attempts for the day, you can make melee attacks against incorporeal beings as if you were wielding a ghost touch weapon for a number of rounds equal to your Charisma bonus. Add your Charisma modifier to the attack roll rather than your normal Strength modifier. The incorporeal target still gains its deflection bonus (from its Charisma) but is otherwise affected by the attack as if it were solid.

### Spirit Ward (Spirit)

You can protect yourself and others from the powers of spirits.

**Prerequisites:** Ability to rebuke spirits, Spirit Strike, Cha 13+

**Benefit:** By using one of his turning attempts for the day, the character can give himself and any allies within a 60-foot radius of him a +2 sacred bonus on all saving throws against the attacks and powers of spirits for a number of rounds equal to his Charisma bonus.

### Stunning Precision (Mech: Irontooth)

Some mech devils learn to make stunning blows with their weapon.

**Prerequisite:** Mech devil with stunning attack ability

**Benefit:** You can make a stunning attack with a melee or ranged weapon. The weapon must be physical in nature and cause slashing, bludgeoning, or piercing damage. You must be within 150 feet of your target to make the stunning attack. Your stunning attacks are still limited to one per day per level in the mech devil class. In all other regards, this ability is like the

mech devil's stunning attack ability.

### Strong Self (Steamborg)

Your sense of self is very strong.

**Prerequisite:** Steamborg level 1+

**Benefit:** You gain a +4 bonus to your daily Charisma checks to maintain your sense of identity in your increasingly metallic body.

### Swift Turn (Spirit)

You can rebuke spirits with little more than a thought.

**Prerequisites:** Ability to rebuke spirits, Cha 13+, Powerful Rebuke or Extra Turning

**Benefit:** The character can turn or rebuke spirits as a free action, but with a –4 penalty to both the turning roll and the damage roll. He can still only make one turning attempt per round and this feat only applies to actually turning spirits, not using another spirit's feat.

## HARRIER STEAMJOCK (NEW PRESTIGE CLASS)

The harriers are a specialized takedown and salvage group within the Irontooth's Jaguar Clan. They are also devout followers of Dotrak, the Great Engine, whose growing divinity flows through them in a manner similar to the vessels of Dotrak. The harriers do not become living machines like the vessels of Dotrak, however; instead, a mechanical affinity courses through their veins that allows them to push the limits of their steam machines.

The harriers hunt in packs and are known as some of the quickest pilots around. Not only are they fast and difficult to hit in combat, but they can take down a mech with their changlers in a matter of seconds. Once the mech is down, it takes little time for the harriers to secure it for the Jaguar Clan. They can even "heal" the injured metal mechs of injuries sustained

during their takedown, making all recovered mechs immediately valuable additions to the clan.

Becoming a harrier steamjock requires devotion to Dotrak and membership in the Irontooth Jaguar Clan. The harriers learn their talents by training with mech jockeys, and a vessel of Dotrak guides them on learning how to "hear" and "feel" the power of their steam mechs.

**Hit Die:** d8

### REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a harrier steamjock, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

**Skills:** Mech Pilot 5 ranks

**Feats:** Mechwalker, Natural Pilot, Speed Freak

**Mech Attack Bonus:** +3

**Special:** Harrier steamjocks must be adherents of Dotrak, and must receive training with the Jaguar Clan.

### CLASS SKILLS

The harrier steamjock's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Craft (mechcraft) (Int), Jump (Str), Knowledge (mechs) (Int), Knowledge (steam engines) (Int), Listen (Wis), and Spot (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

### CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the harrier steamjock prestige class.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** A harrier steamjock spontaneously acquires the ability to use all mech weapons and armor derived from steam engine or clockwork technology. These include the buzzaxe, buzzsaw, chattersword, flame nozzle, lobster claw, steambreather, and steam gun, plus gearmail and hydraulic armor, as well as similar weapons and armor.

**Improved Trip:** At 1st level, the harrier steamjock gains the benefit of the Improved

TABLE 3-4: THE HARRIER STEAMJOCK

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	MECH ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+1	+1	+3	+0	Improved trip, steam savvy, tools
2	+2	+2	+1	+4	+0	Fast movement +10 ft., unnatural pilot +4
3	+3	+3	+2	+4	+1	Mending touch 1/day
4	+4	+4	+2	+5	+1	Hasten actions 1/day
5	+5	+5	+3	+5	+1	Trample evasion, mending touch 2/day
6	+6	+6	+3	+6	+2	Fast movement +15 ft., unnatural pilot +5
7	+7	+7	+4	+7	+2	Steam focused, mending touch 3/day
8	+8	+8	+4	+7	+2	Hasten actions 2/day
9	+9	+9	+5	+8	+3	Greater steam savvy
10	+10	+10	+5	+8	+3	Fast movement +20 ft., unnatural pilot +6



Trip feat when making trip attacks with his mech. He does not have to meet the feat's prerequisites.

**Steam Savvy:** While fighting in a steam-powered mech, you gain a +1 bonus to all attack rolls. Additionally, in your hands, steam-powered weapons deal an additional +1 point of damage per die.

**Tools:** Like anklebiters, the harrier steamjocks carry special tools designed to open mech portholes. Consisting of an assortment of crowbars, levers, and bolt cutters, these tools are constructed of the strongest steel and crafted by the best blacksmiths. These masterwork tools grant the same benefit as the anklebiter class ability of the same name.

**Fast Movement (Su):** At 2nd level, the harrier steamjock has an uncanny ability to always step on solid ground, plant the mech's feet at just the right lengths, and avoid obstacles. Any steam-powered mech he pilots has its speed improved by 10 feet. This is a supernatural ability given to the steamjocks by Dotrak. The steamjock learns to move the mech faster as he gains levels, gaining an additional 5 feet at 6th and 10th level. This ability stacks with the Speed Freak feat, a mech jockey's ability to push the envelope, and the fast movement trait of certain mechs.

**Unnatural Pilot (Ex):** At 2nd level, the harrier steamjock gains the benefit of the Unnatural Pilot feat while piloting a steam-powered mech. He does not have to meet any prerequisites. The bonus on this feat begins at +4 and rises as the harrier steamjock gains experience, becoming +5 at 6th level and +6 at 10th level.

**Mending Touch (Su):** At 3rd level, the harrier steamjock can repair steam-powered metal mechs with his touch. Once per day, he can repair 2d8+5 points of damage +1 point per harrier level. He may use this ability twice per day at 5th level and three times per day at 7th.

**Hasten Actions (Su):** At 4th level, once per day, the harrier steamjock gains the supernatural ability to hasten his actions as if under the effects of a *haste* spell. This ability last for 1d4 rounds +1 round per harrier level. At 8th level, he may hasten his actions twice per day.

**Trample Evasion (Ex):** A harrier of 5th level or higher takes only half damage if he fails his Reflex save against a mech trample.

**Steam Focus (Ex):** At 7th level, the harrier steamjock receives a +1 attack bonus with any steam-powered weapon. This ability applies whether the attack is made from a mech or while on foot, and stacks with Weapon Focus and Greater Weapon Focus.

**Greater Steam Savvy (Ex):** At 9th level,

the harrier steamjock's attack bonus with steam-powered weapons increases to +2. This ability stacks with Weapon Focus and Greater Weapon Focus.

## SHINTAJI (VARIANT CLERIC)

A shintaji is a shamanic cleric who specializes in tapping into the Spirit World (see below). The shintaji are always members of the Irontooth Shintaji Clan and worship extraplanar spirits in a religion that is also called shintaji. Shintaji clerics are often called spirit sealers, as they hold the secret to imbuing permanent spirits into mechs. The Shintaji Clan has a few standard clerics, and those clerics have access to the Healing and Spirit (see page 130) domains.

The shintaji are especially powerful in modern Highpoint because they are able to contact spirits that are otherwise inaccessible. The divine wars between the lunar and terrestrial gods have made it increasingly difficult to use *raise dead* and similar spells. In many cases, departed souls simply do not return (see page 64 of **DragonMech**). But the shintaji have an especially close tie to the other planes, and their ability to contact the spirits of departed souls makes it easier for them to revive dead creatures.

Characters become shintaji because they have an obsessive interest in the Spirit World and want to serve as intermediaries between that world and the Material Plane. Some characters are driven by purely academic interest; others make contact with spirits (or have contact made with them) and are drawn to the class for its ability to decipher what they have seen.

The shintaji have embraced steam engine technology, seeing it as a means to extend the spirit beyond the mortal body. For this reason, they study it as intently as coglayers, though they craft their mechs not for the living but for the dead who wish to aid the living.

## THE SPIRIT WORLD

The misty Spirit World into which the shintaji can see lies all around the Middle World. (Wizards and scholars refer to the Spirit World as the Ethereal Plane and the Middle World as the Material Plane.) The ghostly entities of the Spirit World can see into the Middle World as if looking through a veil. To most denizens of the Middle World, however, creatures from the Spirit World are invisible.

Spirits are incorporeal in the Middle World, able to pass through solid materials and unable to physically harm the material beings they encounter, although they may attack them with magic.

## SPIRIT CREATURES

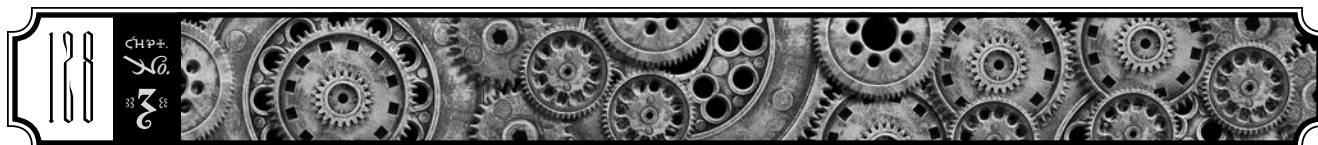
Spirits are creatures that occupy the outer planes. This includes both the departed souls of mortals, and creatures native to those planes. The shintaji's abilities are geared primarily toward communing with departed souls, but they may also communicate with extraplanar creatures from time to time.

Spirit creatures wander the world constantly. They are usually invisible and incorporeal. Mortal creatures never see them, and even those who can see them rarely interact with them. Usually only the most disturbed spirit creatures, such as malevolent ghosts, ever come into contact with normal people, and it is these evil spirits that shape common perception.

In reality, however, most spirits are harmless. A noble hare may leave behind a spirit that guides other hares, or a powerful bison may forever lead the thundering migration of its spirit herd. These spirits coexist side by side with the Middle World, peacefully going about their business.

The fact that these spirits can be nearly ageless is the source of shintaji soul sealer's power, for he gains the ability to communicate with them and, ultimately, to bind them.

In game terms, the departed souls of normal creatures are treated as ghosts, though they are often benevolent in nature (or at least innocuous) and lacking any sort of attacks. Beyond simple ghosts and creature spirits, many creatures from the MM (and other sources of creatures) are also considered spirits, for the purposes of the shintaji's abilities. Any creature of the elemental or outsider types, or of the incorporeal subtype, is considered a spirit. For ease of reference, the following creatures from the MM are considered spirits: aasimar, achiarai, air elemental, allip, angels, archons, arrowhawk, azer, barghest, belker, bralani, celestial, chaos beast, couatl, demon, devil, djinni, dread wraith, earth elemental, efreeti, fiend, fire elemental, genie, ghaele, ghost, hell hound, howler, invisible stalker, janni, lillend, magmin, mephit, night hag, nightmare, rakshasa, rast, ravid, salamander, shadow, shadow mastiff, spectre, tiefling, thoquua, titan, tojanidas, triton, vargouille, water elemental, wraith, xill, xorn, and yeth hound.



## Game Rule Information

A shintaji is identical to a normal cleric with the following modifications.

### CLASS SKILLS

The shintaji's class skills (and the key abilities for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (history) (Int), Knowledge (mechs) (Int), Knowledge (the planes) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Knowledge (steam engines) (Int), and Spellcraft (Int).

**Skill Points at 1st level:** (2 + Int modifier) × 4.

**Skill Points at Each Additional Level:** 2 + Int modifier.

### CLASS FEATURES

**Spells:** Shintaji spells are treated as normal cleric spells, except the shintaji class has its own list of spells. This list includes all cleric spells, a few arcane spells, and several new spirit-based spells.

Shintaji spells are granted not by the gods but by a wide variety of assorted spirits with which the shintaji communes. As a result, shintaji are not affected by the war between lunar and terrestrial gods in their ability to gain their spells each day. At the same time, they cannot spontaneously channel spells against lunar creatures, or detect the presence of lunar creatures.

Shintaji soul sealers may select any spell that clerics normally select, as well as any of the following spells:

0—*dancing lights*, *ghost sound*

1st—*animate rope*, *detect spirits*, *invisibility to spirits*, *lay to rest*, *protection from spirits*, *see spirits*, *spirit dart*

2nd—*augury* (T), *ghost touch*, *identify spirit*, *speak with animals*, *spirit claws*, *spirit spear*, *whispering wind*

3rd—*magic circle against spirits*, *materialize*, *speak with spirits* (T)

4th—*ethereal projection* (T), *imbue with skill knowledge*, *journey of soul retrieval* (T), *rebuild soul*, *reincarnate*, *spirit wall*

5th—*awaken*, *awaken construct*, *commune with spirits* (T), *contact other plane*, *divination* (T), *dream*, *ethereal jaunt* (T), *greater ethereal projection* (T), *ferrous soul*, *journey of soul retrieval* (T), *lesser astral projection* (T), *magic jar*, *nightmare*, *phantasmal killer*

6th—*animate objects*, *etherealness* (T), *forbiddance*, *ethereal banishment*, *legend lore*, *mass ethereal projection* (T), *slay spirit*

7th—*shadow walk*, *transpose spirit*, *vanquish*

TABLE 3-5: TRANCE TABLE

CONCENTRATION DC	TASK
5	Sleep normally despite distractions
10	Sleep normally despite difficult distractions
10	Slow breathing down to half normal rate
10 + damage dealt	Ignore pain or injury
10 + spell level	Cast a spell with Trance as a component
15	Body awareness
15	Heal at twice the normal rate; meditate
15	Slow breathing down to one-quarter normal rate
20	Feign death and delay poison

*spirit, vision*

8th—*impart skill knowledge*, *soul box*, *trap the soul*

9th—*astral projection* (T), *foresight*, *shadow projection* (T), *weird*

**Note:** (T) indicates spells that requires a trance component type. If a spell includes a trance component, the shintaji must enter a trance by making a Concentration check (DC 10 + the spell's level) the round before casting it (see Shintaji trancing special ability below).

**Domains:** The shintaji receive only the Spirit domain (see page 130). Also, they do not gain bonus domain spells. Instead, they gain special abilities and bonus feats at various levels.

**Raise Dead and Similar Spells (Su):** Shintaji are particularly adept at tapping into the spirit world. They are able to communicate with departed souls much more easily than traditional clerics. If a shintaji casts *raise dead*, *journey of soul retrieval*, or a similar spell to bring a creature back from the dead, it receives a +4 competence bonus to its Will save (per the rules on page 64 of *DragonMech*).

**Trancing (Ex):** At 1st level, a shintaji can use the Concentration skill to enter an altered state of consciousness, or trance state, to cast certain spells (spells marked with T as a component). To make a Concentration check for trancing, the shintaji must be relaxed and motionless, as if sleeping. Full elves (but not half-elves) receive a +2 racial bonus to Concentration checks for trancing.

**Sleeping:** A successful Concentration check allows the shintaji to sleep and rest in distracting conditions, ranging from minor (the din of daily life, non-severe weather, the motion of a bouncy wagon ride or a ship in rough seas) to difficult (bad weather, the sounds of combat or loud singing, the motion of a small boat in a storm).

**Slow breathing:** The shintaji can deliberately slow his rate of breathing so that he consumes less air — vital in situations where there is only a limited amount of breathable air available.

**Ignore pain:** The shintaji can ignore the

effects of pain or injury. If he chooses, nothing can wake him so long as he makes a successful Concentration check.

**Cast spells:** The shintaji can enter a trance and cast spells with a Trance component, as described below

**Body awareness:** The shintaji can become very aware of his physical self while in a trance. This allows him to sense if his body is touched or moved in any way while he's outside of it (when using *ethereal projection*, for example). If his physical body is damaged, subtract the amount of damage dealt from the DC.

**Heal:** While in a trance, the shintaji can speed his natural recovery, regaining hit points at twice the normal rate.

**Meditate:** The shintaji can meditate for four hours and receive the benefits of 8 hours of sleep.

**Feign death:** By exerting supreme control over his body, a shintaji can enter a deep trance almost indistinguishable from death. A Spot check with a DC equal to his Concentration check is required to determine that he is still alive. Spells that detect life still work normally on him. While in this state, he also benefits from the effects of a *delay poison* spell.

**Rebuke Spirits (Ex):** At 1st level, shintaji have the authority and power to rebuke spirits, much like a neutral or evil cleric's ability to rebuke undead. All shintaji, regardless of alignment, rebuke (awe) or control (command) spirits.

Rebuking spirits works exactly like turning undead: the shintaji makes a check of 1d20 + Charisma modifier to determine the most powerful spirit he can rebuke that action. He then rolls 2d6 + class level + Charisma modifier to see how many total Hit Dice of spirits are affected that turn. In all other respects, rebuking spirits works like turning undead (see **Chapter 8: Combat, Turn or Rebuke Undead**, PHB). As with clerics, shintaji can rebuke a number of times per day equal to 3 + their Charisma modifier.

Shintaji cause the following effects when



rebuking spirits:

**Rebuke:** A rebuked spirit cowers in awe of the shintaji for 10 rounds. Attack rolls against the spirit during this time gain a +2 bonus.

**Command:** If the shintaji has twice as many levels as the spirit has Hit Dice, the spirit may be commanded instead of rebuked, placing the spirit under the shintaji's control. The shintaji must take a standard action to issue orders to the spirit. A shintaji may command a number of spirits whose total Hit Dice do not exceed his level. He may relinquish command of a spirit to command a new one.

A shintaji may also control a single spirit with more Hit Dice than he has levels, but he must concentrate continuously to maintain control (as in concentrating to maintain a spell), and he can command no other spirits while doing so.

**Bolster:** A shintaji can strengthen a spirit's ability to resist the rebuke of another shintaji or cleric. He makes a rebuke check as if attempting to rebuke the spirit, but the Hit Dice result of the check becomes the spirit's effective Hit Dice as far as rebuking is concerned, provided it is higher than the spirit's actual Hit Dice. The bolstering effect last 10 rounds.

**Dispel Rebuke or Control:** A shintaji can attempt to overcome the effects of another shintaji's rebuke. The shintaji makes a rebuke check. If it is equal to or greater than the first shintaji's rebuke check, then the effects of the rebuke are canceled.

**Dispel Shintaji Magic:** Since a shintaji's magic draws upon the power of the Spirit World, a shintaji's rebuke can dispel it. A shintaji can make a rebuke attempt against another shintaji's magic like a targeted use of the *dispel magic* spell. He rolls 1d20 + character level against a DC of 11 + the spell's caster level for each spell on the subject. If the check succeeds, the spell is dispelled. If it fails, it remains in effect. The check automatically succeeds against any spell the shintaji casts himself.

This ability also affects the spell-like powers of spirits in the same way. It is completely ineffective against any other spells or spell-like powers.

**Rebuking Undead:** Shintaji can rebuke incorporeal undead just as evil clerics do. In cases where a shintaji's and a cleric's rebuke interact, they can affect each other normally, so a shintaji can overcome a good cleric's attempt to turn incorporeal undead or dispel the effects of an evil cleric's rebuke or command.

**Spirit Empathy (Su):** A shintaji can make a Diplomacy check to improve the attitude of a spirit, even if that creature does not understand the shintaji's language or has an Intelligence

score of 1 or 2. The spirit must be able to see and hear the shintaji. Influencing a spirit in this way usually takes about a minute, depending on the spirit and the conditions. The typical spirit has a starting attitude of indifferent, while evil spirits approached by good shintaji (and vice versa) are usually unfriendly. In addition, because shintaji are so in tune with the Spirit World, they receive a +1 competence bonus to the DC for all saving throws against spells with a Spirit designator. This bonus increases to +2 when dealing with Shintaji Clan ancestral spirits, such as when using *speak with ancestor*.

**Bonus Feats:** At 4th, 8th, 12th, 16th, and 20th level, a shintaji gains a bonus feat. At each such opportunity, he must choose a spirit feat (see New Feats, page 124). The shintaji must still meet all prerequisites for a bonus feat. These bonus feats are in addition to the feat that a character of any class gets every three levels.

**Capture Spirit (Sp):** At 9th level, once per day, a shintaji can travel to the Spirit World to capture a departed spirit. (Any *living* creature that is classified as a "spirit" can only be captured this way through the *capture living spirit* ability at 15th level.) The shintaji can capture any spirit it seeks, no matter how long the creature has resided in the Spirit World (time of death is no limitation). If the spirit is willing, then the spirit must make a DC 6 Will save to give itself over to the shintaji. If the spirit was formerly a cleric or paladin, capturing its spirit is more difficult. In such cases, the spirit adds its cleric

and/or paladin class levels to the save's DC. If the Will save succeeds, the shintaji successfully captures its spirit.

If the spirit is unwilling to return to the Material World, the shintaji may attempt to capture it anyway. The unwilling spirit must make a Will save (DC 15 + the shintaji's Wis modifier) or be captured. The save DC increases by 2 if the unwilling creature is an ancestor of the Irontooth Clans. It further increases if the spirit was a cleric and/or paladin, as above.

The shintaji needs a vessel to hold the captured spirit. This vessel may be a gem or crystal of at least 100 gp value, or a masterwork steam engine. To find a spirit, the shintaji must have its body, a personal item of the former creature (perhaps even parts of a mech it piloted), or a bone fragment. For this reason, those who are more recently deceased are easier to capture, though capturing older spirits is not unheard of. In fact, because time is not a factor, the shintaji's spirit-sealing power is more useful than the *rebuild soul* spell.

Capturing a soul requires at least 10 minutes of time. This amount of time allows the shintaji to encounter a few random spirits, any of which is eligible to be captured. Capturing a specific spirit may take much, much longer. The amount of time depends on how long ago the spirit departed from the mortal realm. The longer ago the spirit left, the further in the outer planes it dwells, and the fewer other spirits will remember it or how to locate it. A spirit departed for up to one year can be found in an hour;

TABLE 3-6: THE SHINTAJI

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+0	+2	+0	+2	Spells, rebuke spirits, spirit empathy, trancing
2	+1	+3	+0	+3	
3	+2	+3	+1	+3	
4	+3	+4	+1	+4	Bonus feat
5	+3	+4	+1	+4	
6	+4	+5	+2	+5	
7	+5	+5	+2	+5	
8	+6/+1	+6	+2	+6	Bonus feat
9	+6/+1	+6	+3	+6	Capture spirit
10	+7/+2	+7	+3	+7	Craft Spirit Mech
11	+8/+3	+7	+3	+7	
12	+9/+4	+8	+4	+8	Bonus feat
13	+9/+4	+8	+4	+8	
14	+10/+5	+9	+4	+9	
15	+11/+6/+1	+9	+5	+9	Capture living spirit
16	+12/+7/+2	+10	+5	+10	Bonus feat
17	+12/+7/+2	+10	+5	+10	
18	+13/+8/+3	+11	+6	+11	
19	+14/+9/+4	+11	+6	+11	
20	+15/+10/+5	+12	+6	+12	Bonus feat





up to one decade, in a day; up to a century, in a month. Beyond that, the times grow both quickly and exponentially. Wading through the millions of old spirits occupying the outer planes to locate a particular departed soul (say, of a great warrior such as Manxia Guorishi) could take years. The journey through the Spirit World to find a departed spirit can make for many adventures in and of itself.

The shintaji must enter a trance to perform this ability. The captured spirit remains permanently in its vessel until the vessel is destroyed. Upon the vessel's destruction, the soul is released, and it returns to its afterlife.

**Craft Spirit Mech:** At 10th level, a shintaji can imbue any mech (animated, clockwork, powered, undead, or magic) with a spirit. The shintaji need not specifically design the mech, as he only implants a spirit within it. However, the shintaji do craft their own mechs. The samurai mech is their favored spirit vessel.

Once a mech receives a spirit, its power source changes to spirit (see page 120) and it no longer requires any fuel, as the spirit can freely animate its body. The mech retains the physical ability scores, the speed, and maneuverability of its original mech type, but otherwise is considered a living construct in the spirit mech description.

**Capture Living Spirit (Sp):** At 15th level, once per day, a shintaji can capture a willing or unwilling living spirit as per the *trap the soul* spell. If a living spirit is unwilling, it can make a Will save against DC 18 + the shintaji's Wisdom modifier to resist. If he is willing to give himself over to the shintaji, he must make a DC 10 Will save. Any cleric or paladin levels modify the DC as per the *capture spirit* ability.

The shintaji requires a vessel (gem) of at least 5,000 gp value to hold the captured living spirit.

Capturing a living spirit requires a standard action. The shintaji must enter a trance to travel to the Spirit World. The physical body of the desired spirit must be within close range (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels).

The captured spirit remains permanently in its vessel until the vessel is destroyed. Upon the vessel's destruction, the spirit rejoins its material body (if the body is still alive). If the body is deceased, the spirit travels to the afterlife.

## NEW CLERIC DOMAIN: SPIRIT

This domain is only found among those who have established a bridge between the

Middle World and the Spirit World. They are able to commune with spirit creatures to gain unusual abilities.

**Granted Power:** You cast spirit spells at +1 character level.

Spirit Domain Spells

- 1 *Invisibility to spirits*
- 2 *Identify spirit*
- 3 *Magic circle against spirits*
- 4 *Spirit wall*
- 5 *Lesser astral projection* (T)
- 6 *Slay spirit*
- 7 *Vision*
- 8 *Trap the soul*
- 9 *Shadow projection* (T)

## NEW SPELLS OF THE IRONTOOTH CLANS

The abbreviation "Shn" refers to shintaji clerics. The component "T" refers to the requirement that the caster be in a trance to cast the spell, as described on page 128. This refers only to shintaji casters; other casters need not enter a trance.

### Awaken Construct

Transmutation

**Level:** Con 6, Shn 5

**Components:** V, S, DF, XP

**Casting Time:** 24 hours

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** Mech or construct touched

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** Will negates

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

You *awaken* a construct (including a mech) with a humanlike sentience. To succeed, you must make a Will save (DC 10 + the construct or mech's current HD).

The *awakened* construct or mech is friendly toward you. You have no special empathy or connection with a creature you awaken, although it may serve you in specific tasks or endeavors if you communicate your desires to it.

An *awakened* construct maintains its construct characteristics (or gains the construct characteristics if it does not already have them). It gains Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores equal to 3d6 +1 per five caster levels (roll once for each ability). Steam-powered and clockwork mechs receive a +2 bonus to their Intelligence score, animated mechs (and traditional magical constructs, such as golems) receive a +2 bonus to their Charisma score, and man-powered mechs receive a +2 bonus to their Wisdom score. Undead mechs already

have a nonsentient intelligence and cannot be *awakened*. An *awakened* mech or construct gains skill points and feats based on its hit dice and ability scores, per the construct type.

An *awakened* construct or mech can speak one language that you know, plus one additional language that you know per point of its Intelligence bonus (if any).

XP Cost: 350 XP.

### Commune with Spirits

Divination

**Level:** Clr 5, Shn 5

**Components:** V, S, M, DF, T, XP

**Casting Time:** 10 minutes

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 1 round/level

Shintaji clerics and shintaji soul sealers may contact a spirit and ask questions that can be answered by a simple yes or no. You are allowed one such question per caster level. The answers given are correct within the limits of the spirit's knowledge. "Unclear" is a legitimate answer, because powerful beings of the Outer Planes are not necessarily omniscient. In cases where a one-word answer would be misleading or contrary to the spirit's interests, a short phrase (five words or less) may be given as an answer instead.

The spell, at best, provides information to aid character decisions. If you lag, discuss the answers, or go off to do anything else, the spell ends.

**Material Component:** Holy (or unholy) water and incense.

XP Cost: 100 XP.

### Detect Spirits

Divination [Spirit]

**Level:** Clr 1, Pal 1, Shn 1

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** 60 ft.

**Area:** Quarter circle emanating from you to the extreme of the range

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 minute/level (D)

**Saving Throw:** None

**Spell Resistance:** No

This spell operates as *detect undead*, except it detects only elementals, outsiders, and creatures of the incorporeal subtype (including incorporeal undead).

### Ethereal Banishment

Transmutation [Spirit]

**Level:** Clr 6, Shn 6

**Components:** S, M



**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** Creature touched

**Duration:** Permanent

**Saving Throw:** Will negates

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

By touching the target creature, the caster forces it onto the Ethereal Plane and prevents it from returning to the Material World. The subject of the spell becomes invisible, inaudible, and intangible to those in the Material World, able to see and hear all that goes on, but unable to interact with material beings without magical aid. Only a *limited wish*, *wish*, or *miracle* will end the effects of the spell and return the subject to the Material World.

## Ethereal Projection

Necromancy [Spirit]

**Level:** Clr 4, Shn 4, Sor/Wiz 6

**Components:** V, S, T

**Casting Time:** 1 round

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 1 minute/level (D)

This spell is similar to *ethereal jaunt* except rather than transporting the caster's body into the Ethereal Plane, it sends only his spirit, leaving his body behind in a deep, deathlike trance. His spirit has all of his normal abilities and ethereal duplicates of everything he wears and carries (except for living creatures like a familiar). His body suffers all of the damage his spirit receives and vice versa, making him vulnerable to harm from both the Ethereal and Material Planes. If either the body or spirit is killed, the caster dies.

## Ghost Touch

Transmutation [Spirit]

**Level:** Shn 2

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** Creature or object touched

**Duration:** 1 minute/level

**Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)

**Spell Resistance:** Yes (harmless)

*Ghost touch* gives the creature or item touched the ability to affect incorporeal creatures as if they were solid. A character affected by *ghost touch* can grapple or strike incorporeal creatures with unarmed attacks, and a creature affected by *ghost touch* can use natural attacks, a weapon can strike, and armor can protect against incorporeal attacks.

**Note:** This spell affects a living being or one of his possessions, not both.

## Greater Ethereal Projection

Necromancy [Spirit]

**Level:** Clr 5, Shn 5, Sor/Wiz 7

**Components:** V, S, T

**Casting Time:** 1 round

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** Permanent (D)

Like *ethereal projection*, except the caster can wander the Ethereal Plane for as long as he likes.

## Imbue with Skill Knowledge

Evocation

**Level:** Con 4, Shn 4

**Components:** V, S, DF

**Casting Time:** 10 minutes

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** Creature touched; see text

**Duration:** 1 hour/level

**Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)

**Spell Resistance:** Yes (harmless)

You can grant some of your skill knowledge to another creature. Only a creature with an Intelligence score of at least 5 and a Wisdom score of at least 9 can receive this bestowal. The number and rank of skills that the subject can be granted depends on its Hit Dice; even multiple castings of *imbue with skill knowledge* can't exceed this limit.

HD of Recipient	Skills Imbued
2 or lower	Up to 4 ranks in one skill
3-4	Up to 4 ranks in two skills; or 6 ranks in one skill
5 or higher	Up to 6 ranks in three skills; or 8 ranks in two skills

This imbued knowledge is shared knowledge: The caster maintains his current knowledge level, and the touched creature temporarily gains access to that knowledge.

## Implant Skill Knowledge

Evocation

**Level:** Con 8, Shn 8

**Components:** V, S, DF, XP

**Casting Time:** 10 minutes

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** Creature touched; see text

**Duration:** Permanent

**Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)

**Spell Resistance:** Yes (harmless)

You can permanently implant some of your skill knowledge in another creature. Only a creature with an Intelligence score of at least 5 and a Wisdom score of at least 9 can receive this bestowal. The number and rank of skills that the subject can be granted depends on its Hit Dice; even multiple castings of *implant skill knowledge* can't exceed this limit.

HD of Recipient	Skills Imbued
2 or lower	Up to 4 ranks in one skill
3-4	Up to 4 ranks in two skills; or 6 ranks in one skill
5 or higher	Up to 6 ranks in three skills; or 8 ranks in two skills

This imbued knowledge is shared knowledge: The caster maintains his current knowledge level, and the touched creature permanently gains access to that knowledge. The creatures' abilities are distinct, however, so the recipient is not affected if the caster dies, and the caster can improve his ability without the recipient also being improved.

The recipient creature cannot exceed its normal allotment of skill ranks. If this spell would put it past its normal allotment, it can choose to drop existing skills in order to retain the new ranks being bestowed.

Shintaji and constructor wizards often use this spell to enlighten their awakened creations and spirit mechs, although it can be used on natural living creatures, as well.

**XP Cost:** 650 XP.

## Identify Spirit

Divination [Spirit]

**Level:** Shn 2

**Components:** V, S, F

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** 60 ft.

**Target:** One spirit

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** Will negates

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

The shintaji casts the spell and indicates a single spirit he can sense (physically or magically) within range. The spell identifies the spirit's type (and subtypes, if any). The creature gets a saving throw against the spell; if it succeeds, or the spell fails to overcome the creature's spell resistance, the shintaji learns nothing.

## Invisibility to Spirits

Abjuration [Spirit]

**Level:** Shn 1

**Components:** V, S, DF

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** One touched creature/level

**Duration:** 10 minutes/level (D)

**Saving Throw:** Will negates

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

This is the same as *invisibility*, but affects only the perception of spirits.

## Journey of Soul Retrieval

Necromancy [Healing, Spirit]

**Level:** Shn 4



**Components:** V, S, M, F, T

**Casting Time:** 10 minutes

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** Dead creature touched

**Duration:** One hour and instantaneous (see below)

**Saving Throw:** None (see text)

**Spell Resistance:** Yes (harmless)

This ritual is similar to the *raise dead* spell, except it is more complex and more dangerous. The shintaji performs the ritual over the body of the dead creature, then sinks into a deep trance. His spirit travels out from the Material World and into the realms of the dead to retrieve the creature's spirit and return it to life. The creature cannot have been dead longer than one day per caster level.

The subject's soul must be free and willing to return, as per *raise dead*. A willing soul is still required to make a DC 10 Will save. If the willing soul is that of a cleric or paladin, his levels in these classes are added to the DC, as outlined per page 64 of *DragonMech*. As always, a shintaji caster grants a +4 competence bonus to the subject's Will save, as described in the shintaji class description. In addition, the nature of this spell automatically grants an additional +2 bonus to the subject's Will save, for the shintaji is actively seeking out his soul in the afterlife.

This journey to retrieve the soul can be difficult. Even if the soul passes its Will save, the caster must overcome a challenge in the Spirit World to restore the subject to life. This represents the difficulty of navigating the Spirit World, finding the soul, and overcoming any ties it may have to its current plane of existence. Generally, this challenge has a CR equal to the level or Hit Dice of the subject, although the DM may modify the challenge as necessary. The challenge may be overcoming a spirit, figuring out a puzzle or trap, or something else developed by the DM.



If the caster overcomes the challenge, the subject's spirit is free to return to life, as if a *raise dead* spell were successfully cast on it. Overcoming the challenge typically takes about an hour.

**Material Components:** Rare herbs and incense worth at least 500 gp, and a drum or other musical instrument (focus).

### Lay to Rest

Necromancy [Spirit]

**Level:** Clr 1, Shn 1

**Components:** V, S, DF

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** Corpse touched

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** Will negates (object)

**Spell Resistance:** Yes (object)

Cast on any corpse, this spell prevents it (or the spirit or soul associated with it) from ever being raised as any kind of undead, the same as if the corpse had been buried in hallowed ground. *Lay to rest* does not interfere with later restoring the creature to life in any way, such as *raise dead*.

### Lesser Astral Projection

Necromancy [Spirit]

**Level:** Clr 5, Shn 5, Sor/Wiz 7

**Components:** V, S, M, T

**Casting Time:** 30 minutes

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** See text

This spell is similar to *astral projection*, except only the caster can travel to the Astral Plane using the spell.

**Material Component:** Gems or crystals worth at least 300 gp.

### Magic Circle Against Spirits

Abjuration [Spirit]

**Level:** Shn 3

**Area:** Emanates 10 ft. from touched creature

**Duration:** 10 minutes/level

**Spell Resistance:** No (see text)

As *protection from spirits*, except that it encompasses a larger area and its duration is longer. It can also be used as a magical prison for a spirit, like *magic circle against evil*. This spell is not cumulative with *protection from spirits* or vice versa or any of the other protection or magic circle spells.

### Mass Ethereal Projection

Necromancy [Spirit]

**Level:** Clr 6, Shn 6, Sor/Wiz 8

**Range:** Touch (see text)

**Targets:** You and one other touched creature/three levels

**Duration:** 1 minute/level (D)

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

Like *ethereal projection*, except the caster and other creatures joined by linked hands project into the Ethereal Plane. The caster can bring one additional creature with him per three caster levels. Once ethereal, creatures no longer need to stay together. When the spell expires, all affected creatures return to their material bodies.

### Materialize

Transmutation [Force, Spirit]

**Level:** Shn 3, Sor/Wiz 3

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

**Effect:** Ray

**Duration:** 1 round/level (D)

**Saving Throw:** None

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

A pale blue ray springs from the caster's hand. He must make a ranged touch attack to hit the target. The ray reaches into the Ethereal Plane and can affect ethereal targets, but if the caster cannot see the target, he suffers a 50% miss chance and must guess at the target's location.

Any incorporeal creature struck by the ray is covered by a faint blue aura and forced into material form, even if it is normally incapable of materializing. The creature must remain in material form for the duration of the spell, after which it can become incorporeal again (and does so automatically if incorporeal is its natural state). The *materialize* spell does not inhibit any of the creature's other abilities, unless they rely on becoming incorporeal.

A *dimensional anchor* spell can be cast on the subject of a *materialize* spell, and the *dimensional anchor* will prevent creatures from becoming ethereal for a longer amount of time, although it has no effect on creatures that become incorporeal through other means. Incorporeal creatures can also cast this spell on themselves to materialize (assuming they do not already have the ability to do so). A character using *ethereal projection*, for example, could cast *materialize* to become solid and affect the Material Plane.

### Protection from Spirits

Abjuration [Spirit]

**Level:** Shn 1

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** Creature touched



**Duration:** 1 minute/level (D)

**Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)

**Spell Resistance:** No (see text)

This spell works like *protection from evil*, except it only affects creatures classified as spirits and affects them regardless of alignment. Instead of keeping out summoned and conjured creatures, the spell only prevents bodily contact with spirits (even incorporeal ones).

### See Spirits

Divination [Spirit]

**Level:** Shn 1

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

**Area:** Cone

**Duration:** 10 minutes/level (D)

**Saving Throw:** None

**Spell Resistance:** No

Allows the caster to see astral or ethereal objects and beings as if they were normally visible. The spell does not reveal illusions or allow him to see through opaque objects, nor does it reveal creatures that are simply hiding, concealed, invisible, or otherwise hard to see.

### Shadow Projection

Necromancy

**Level:** Clr 9, Shn 9, Sor/Wiz 9

**Components:** V, S, M, T

**Casting Time:** 30 minutes

**Range:** Touch

**Targets:** You plus one additional creature touched per two levels

**Duration:** See text

**Saving Throw:** None

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

This spell is exactly like *astral projection* except it sends a spirit form made of shadows to the Plane of Shadow rather than the Astral Plane. Since the Plane of Shadow touches upon the Underworld, travelers there can travel into the Underworld, forming new material bodies for themselves. The duration and effects are like those of *astral projection*.

**Material Component:** A black opal worth at least 1,000 gp, plus a silver bar worth at least 5 gp per person to be affected.

### Slay Spirit

Necromancy [Death, Spirit]

**Level:** Shn 6

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

**Target:** One creature

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude partial

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

Simply by pointing at a spirit and speaking a word of power, the caster causes that spirit to be torn asunder. This affects even spirits in ethereal form with no chance of spell failure. The spirit gets a Fortitude saving throw against the spell. Even if it succeeds, it suffers 10d6 points of damage and may be slain. If it fails the saving throw, it is automatically destroyed. Spirits slain by this spell can only be restored to life by *true resurrection*, *wish*, or *miracle*.

### Speak with Spirits

Necromancy [Language-Dependent, Spirit]

**Level:** Shn 3

**Components:** V, S, DF, T

**Casting Time:** 10 minutes

**Range:** 10 ft.

**Target:** One dead creature

**Duration:** 1 min./level

**Saving Throw:** Will negates; see text

**Spell Resistance:** No

You can tap into the Spirit World and ask several questions of a spirit. Shintaji Clan casters often use this spell to speak with deceased clan elders. You may ask one question per two caster levels. Unasked questions are wasted if the duration expires. The spirit's knowledge is limited to what the creature knew during life, including the languages it spoke (if any). Answers are usually brief, cryptic, or repetitive. If the creature's alignment was different from yours in life, the spirit gets a Will save to resist the spell as if it were alive. The shintaji's spirit empathy adds +2 to the DC for this Will save.

If the spirit has been subject to *speak with spirits* within the past week, the new spell fails. You can cast this spell to contact a creature that has been deceased for any amount of time, but you must have something previously owned by the creature in your possession to attract its spirit. This item may include bone fragments of the ancestor or any personal item.

This spell does not let you actually converse with the person whose soul has departed. It instead draws on the imprinted knowledge stored in the Spirit World.

### Spirit Claws

Evocation [Force, Spirit]

**Level:** Shn 2

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** Creature touched

**Duration:** 1 round/level (D)

**Saving Throw:** Yes (Harmless)

**Spell Resistance:** No

Faintly translucent fields of magical force surround the subject's hands, turning them into powerful elongated claws. While so transformed, the subject is considered armed even while making unarmed attacks. The subject's unarmed attacks do an additional 1d6 damage. Furthermore, since the spirit claws are a force effect, they can affect ethereal beings as if they were solid.

While using spirit claws, the subject cannot cast spells requiring components other than verbal, or hold anything in his hands. Any magic rings the subject wears are rendered temporarily inactive, but return to normal when the spell ends.

### Spirit Dart

Evocation [Force, Spirit]

**Level:** Shn 1

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

**Targets:** One creature

**Duration:** One discharge, plus one per two levels above 1st

**Saving Throw:** Will half

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

The caster creates a dart of mystic energy in his hand that he can throw at any target within range. The dart strikes unerringly, although the target is entitled to a Will saving throw. The spirit dart does 1d6+1 damage (half on a successful save), and an additional 1d6 damage if the target is a spirit. Since it is a force effect, the dart can hit ethereal creatures like spirits, but it has no effect on inanimate objects.

For every two class levels beyond 1st, the caster can throw an additional spirit dart, one per attack action, to a maximum of five darts at 9th level or above. Throwing a spirit dart does not provoke an attack of opportunity once the spell is cast. A caster "holding" remaining spirit darts is considered to be holding a discharged spell; therefore, casting another spell immediately dissipates any remaining spirit darts.

### Spirit Spear

Evocation [Force, Spirit]

**Level:** Shn 2

**Duration:** One discharge, plus one per two levels above 3rd

This spell is exactly like *spirit dart*, except as noted. A spirit spear does 1d8+1 damage (save for half damage), an additional 1d8 damage vs. spirits, and the caster gains an additional spear for every two levels above 3rd, to a maximum of five spears at 11th level or above.

## Spirit Wall

Evocation [Force, Spirit]

**Level:** Shn 4

**Components:** V, S, F

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. +5 ft./2 levels)

**Effect:** Wall whose area is up to one 10-ft.

square/level or a sphere or hemisphere with a radius of up to 1 ft./level.

**Duration:** 1 minute/level (D)

**Saving Throw:** None

**Spell Resistance:** No

A spirit wall is an invisible wall of force that exists solely on the Ethereal Plane (where it is visible as a faint, translucent surface). The spirit wall is immovable once cast, and immune to all forms of damage and unaffected by most spells (including *dispel magic*). A *disintegrate* or *disjunction* spell immediately destroys it, as does the touch of a *rod of cancellation*.

The spirit wall only blocks the passage of ethereal beings, so it is usually formed into a sealed hemisphere or sphere to keep spirits from simply moving around it through material objects. Ethereal beings cannot damage the spirit wall, except by the means described above.

A spirit wall can be formed anywhere the caster can see, and springs into being regardless of physical barriers or interruptions. However, if an ethereal object or creature would break its surface, the wall will not form and the spell fails.

**Focus:** A clear gem or crystal.

## IRONTTOOTH CLAN CLOCKWORK PUPPETS

The Irontooth Clans possess a culture unlike any other on Highpoint. Although as reliant on their mechs as the Stenians or Legion, some might say perhaps even more so, the Irontooth Clans depend upon their senses of martial honor and survival of the fittest. Reflected in every aspect of their society, from their fearsome mechs and brutal jousts, to their most terrifying members, the mech devils, these beliefs pervade Irontooth thought and creation.

No such creation is as representative as their clockwork puppets, the constructs they use to perform their most necessary tasks. Three specific types of clockwork puppets — squires, collectors, and creepers — serve as both basic servants and dire harbingers of an Irontooth clan's coming.

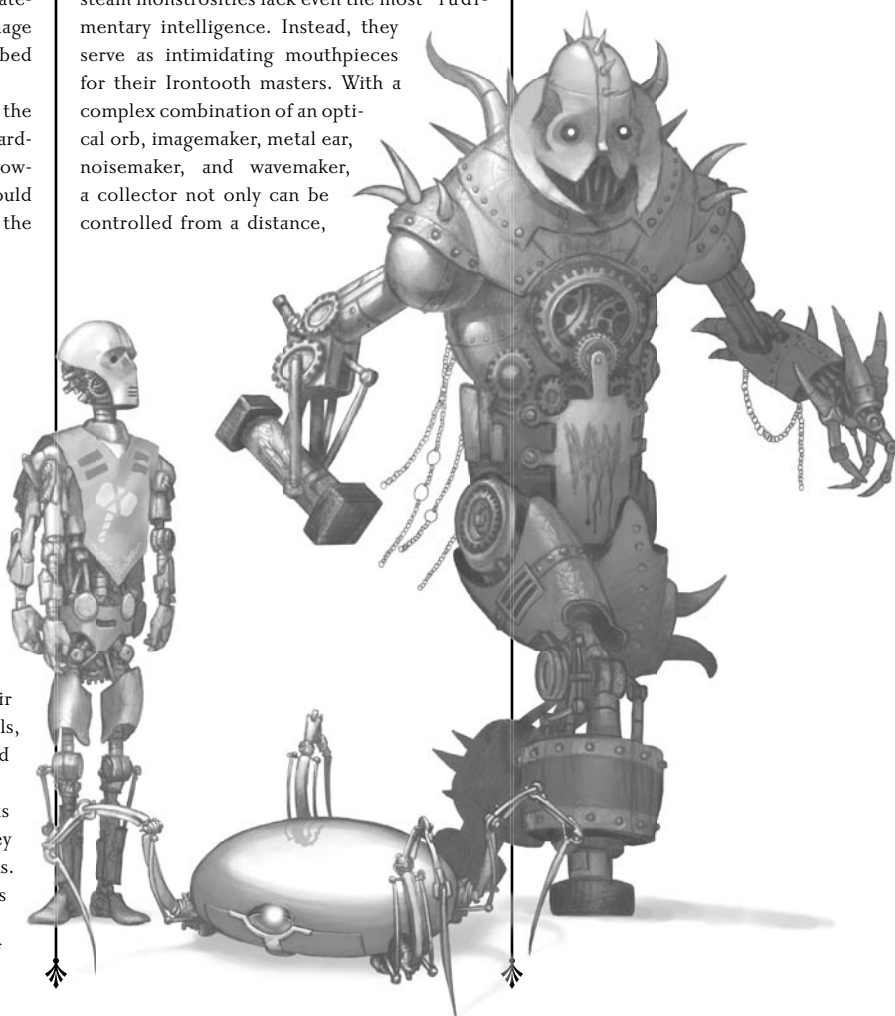
## Collector

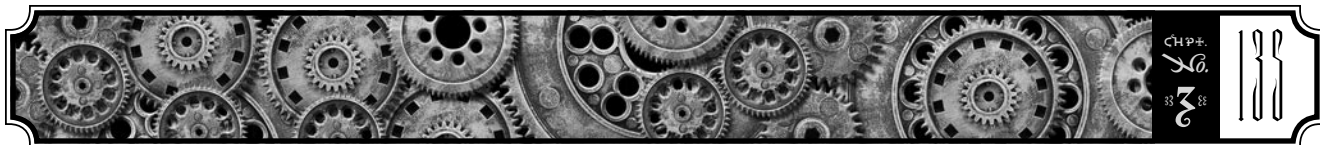
Known for their unmatched strength and devastating wrath, many of the Irontooth Clans are widely feared and loathed. This hatred stems from their reputation for impressing slaves and warriors into service, taking whatever goods or supplies they desire, and running protection rackets that protect in name only. However, despite the thuggish nature of such acts, fraternizing with the filthy and backwards peoples they prey upon is often considered the most tedious and undesirable of tasks. As such, the collector clockwork puppet was forged.

Collectors are brutish constructs, commonly towering nearly 20 feet tall, although some are considerably taller. Built to intimidate, these gigantic puppets bristle with spikes, savage painted images, and other terrible embellishments to make them appear as threatening as possible. Hulking and possessed of surprising speed, these powerful steel and steam monstrosities lack even the most rudimentary intelligence. Instead, they serve as intimidating mouthpieces for their Irontooth masters. With a complex combination of an optical orb, imagemaker, metal ear, noisemaker, and wavemaker, a collector not only can be controlled from a distance,

but conveys everything it sees and hears back to its controller. These same operators might also communicate with those around the collector, using the booming, mechanical voice of its massive body. Thus, operators can remain in the relative safety of their mechs, while their gargantuan thugs sow fear of the Irontooth Clans and take anything they so desire.

Although collectors see use primarily as fearsome extra muscle and porters, several particularly canny Irontooth Clan operators frequently put these clockwork puppets to effective and impressive use in battle. The stray settlements the Irontooth Clans raid are rarely able to organize a defense against such metal monstrosities. Collectors are crafted with the expectation that they will face little resistance, and prove useful as advance troops and allies for ground combatants. To the unknowing, their mere size suggests a strength and formidable nature greater than that which they actually possess.





**Collector, Clockwork Puppet:** CR 4; Huge construct; HD 6d10+40; hp 73; Init -1; Spd 60 ft.; AC 19, touch 9, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +13; Grp +8; Atk/Full Atk +16 melee (2d6+5, slam); SQ construct; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will -3; Str 20, Dex 8, Con —, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1.

**Collector:** Clockwork Puppet (x16) + Optical Orb + Imagemaker + Noisemaker + Wavemaker + Voice Command.

## Creeper

Despite the fact that thousands call themselves members of the Irontooth Clans, these groups are divided, lacking the unity and stability of other more organized nations. Although their skills and mastery of mechs are peerless on Highpoint's surface, the nomadic, wandering Irontooth Clans often seem far more barbaric than their city-mech dwelling neighbors. Despite their combined power and numbers being as great as many of their neighbors, lone clans are often less than a match for the unified forces of their enemies. This harsh reality forces the Irontooth Clans to act with a speed and precision their larger opponents can rarely match, speed and precision based on up-to-the-moment facts and experience. To perform so deftly, even in unknown territories, many Irontooth Clans have come to rely on infinitely useful clockwork puppets known as creepers.

Creepers are simple spidery mechs the size of large dogs. A wide, oval body of unmarred metal makes up much of the construct, its front discernable only by a single red eye set within its silvery frame. At equal points set around the puppet's body, four multiple hinged legs jut outward like a spider's. Each of these insectoid legs is augmented with its own powerful extra engines, giving it a speed uncommon for its size.

Creepers are incredibly versatile. Benefiting from speed and stealth, creepers make flawless scouts and infallible spies. From its crimson eye, this cyclopic metal insect can project a beam of light to illuminate its surroundings and relay all that it sees and hears back to its masters. Such real-time scouting information and tireless speed allows even one creeper to guide an entire clan, while multiple creepers can map an entire region in hours. In addition, their rudimentary intelligence, small frames, and variety of surveillance devices allow creepers to sneak into enemy territory and eavesdrop with frightening ease.

Since their creation, creepers have seen use in a variety of tasks. Though they lack the ability to relay their operator's commands, creepers

are effective messengers, some even being constructed with hollows for messages within their frames. Thus, a creeper can be dispatched with new orders to even the most isolated Irontooth operatives, reach them swiftly, and allow them to report directly to the creeper's controller.

In rare instances, creepers have been dispatched to run down solitary or small groups of enemies. While one creeper is a less-than-intimidating threat, a swarm of demon-eyed metal spiders skittering on one's heels can unnerve even the most resolute warrior. Most unexpectedly, creepers have become harbingers of the Irontooth Clans. Before even the smoke from their mechs appears on the horizon, a lone creeper visibly overlooking a village or enemy encampment can deal more psychological damage than a team of mech devils.

**Creeper, Clockwork Puppet:** CR 1/2; Small construct; HD 1d10+10, hp 15; Init +2, Spd 40 ft.; AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +0; Grp +0; Atk/Full Atk +1 melee (1d4, slam); SQ construct; AL TN; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will -5; Str 10, Dex 14, Con —, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1.

**Creeper:** Animator + Discriminator + Flywheel + Imagemaker + Light Generator + Clockwork Puppet (x2) + Optical Orb + Scanner + Voice Command + Wavemaker.

## Squire

Perhaps the key defining aspect of Irontooth culture is the joust. With a single battle disputes are settled, prestige is won, and lives are changed. As these highly ceremonial and strictly organized battles hold a great place of significance in Irontooth Clan life, it is no surprise that those who battle are afforded some of the greatest prestige in all the clans. Yet, like the knights who did battle before the lunar rain, these battlefield heroes are nothing without their own trusted mounts, the towering metal steeds that carry them into battle — their personal mechs. Also like the horse-mounted warriors of old, the most prolific mech jousters of the modern age require services and support unique to the needs of their mechs and professions. Consequently, from history and a time before the lunar rain, the squires of old were resurrected, and cast in steel.

Squires are clockwork puppets made to perform the countless tasks demanded by the Irontooth Clans' most intimidating and respected members, mech jousters and mech devils. Each of the man-sized constructs has a slender humanoid frame topped by a metallic head carved with three simple horizontal slits denoting a mouth and two impassive eyes. A squire's most notable feature is its two pairs of

arms; each shoulder joint holds a pair of limbs. All four arms end in fully articulated hands.

Squires are well equipped both physically and mentally to serve their owner in a variety of ways. Most often, squires are put to use fetching items for their masters, delivering messages across a camp ground, polishing a mech, loading or unloading equipment, or performing any of countless other menial tasks.

No matter how many squires a jockey has, an unskilled pilot cannot hide behind his puppets. On several occasions, skilled pilots have attacked and destroyed an inferior pilot's excessive number of squires. Many mech jockeys both openly berate and complain about their squires. It's not uncommon to see a jockey brutally bellowing commands to his squires before a joust, making demands and berating the unfeeling clockwork puppets in a manner that would be disgraceful if they were even the lowliest living servants. Jockeys have even been heard complaining and competing with one another over who has the stupidest or most incompetent squires.

Ironically, however, squires are often treated and maintained better than any other clockwork puppet. Many jockeys have tabards or four-armed robes, emblazoned with their personal emblems and colors. In privacy, jockeys often spend a great deal of time and money on coglayer's fees, ensuring that their squires are in flawless condition. To some jockeys, the only things more important than their mechs are their squires. Despite the eccentricities of their masters, whether brutal or pampering, squires remain simple emotionless constructs.

**Squire, Clockwork Puppet:** CR 1; Medium construct; HD 2d10+20, hp 31; Init 0, Spd 30 ft.; AC 14, touch 10, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +1; Grp +2; Atk/Full Atk +4 melee (1d6+3, 2 slams); SQ construct; AL TN; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will -5; Str 16, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1.

**Squire:** Clockwork Puppet (x4) + Animator + Discriminator + Iron Arm (x2) + Noisemaker + Optical Orb + Voice Command.

## SECRETS

### MOONWATCHER CLAN

The Moonwatchers, a small clan of human druids skilled in predicting weather patterns, disappeared from Highpoint almost a century ago. Before the lunar rains came, the





Moonwatchers dwelled in the high cliffs of the Boundary Peaks. Despite their isolated locale, they had extensive contact with outsiders. Most civilized societies had much to gain from the insights of the Moonwatchers, for the weather dictates everything from when to plant seeds and harvest them, to when times are best for traveling and transporting goods. Emissaries from cities and tribes large and small traveled to the Moonwatchers year-round, seeking their counsel on what the weather would be like for months to come.

The coming of the lunar rains wrought havoc upon the Moonwatchers. Worst of all, they knew it would happen; they, of all people, watched the moon most carefully. More than three generations ago, their own meteorological predictions had detected subtle but growing changes relative to historical weather patterns. The moon seemed to be having a growing influence on the weather, and with continued study the Moonwatchers soon realized the moon was getting closer to the surface world. It only took a few decades before they faced the inevitable conclusion that the moon would steadily bear down on them. They persuaded themselves that their conclusion must be wrong — how could such a thing happen? surely there must be a calculation error! — but in the last few years before the lunar rain began, there was no doubt. As the moon grew steadily larger in the sky, they knew that something horrible was about to happen.

But there was nothing they could do to prevent such a catastrophic disaster. They prepared by digging small caves where they could, but they could predict the full fury of what was to come. No cave would last for long. The lunar rocks crashed down from the sky, and the Moonwatchers withered. The lunar rain was hard on these wilderness dwellers, who lacked secure shelters. But the Moonwatchers had an edge, a very slight edge, which set them apart from all other surface dwellers: they could read the sky.

Applying generations of knowledge and accumulated insight, the Moonwatchers began studying the lunar rain. This was dangerous work, and, in the early days of the lunar rain, it was futile; the rains were so severe that no area was spared. The Moonwatchers lived desperate lives then, suffering frequent casualties as

they scrambled for shelter. But over time, they persevered — and they emerged from the early days of the lunar rain with a unique talent for forecasting the behavior of the moon.

The Moonwatchers learned to predict the severity of the lunar rain based on surface conditions on the moon, which they observed with polished optical lenses of their own manufacture. They followed the winds, and the interactions between surface and lunar conditions. They incorporated divine magics to answer the questions their own observations could not.

With a startling degree of precision, the Moonwatchers learned to anticipate the lunar rain. When it came to the largest meteors, they could tell to within a half-mile where they would impact, and approximately how many would fall on a given night. General conditions and weather patterns were similarly predictable; the Moonwatchers could tell how strong the lunar rain would be, and what areas of the surface might be safe due to wind conditions.

It took several years, but in time, the Moonwatchers became the only human group able to walk the world safely at night. Of course, many nights they too had to seek shelter, as even they were not immune to the most severe meteor storms. But if a night would be safe to travel, or if a particular path over a given veldt or beside a given valley would be sheltered from the lunar rain for a night, they would know, and use this knowledge to survive.

With the coming of the lunar rain, travelers no longer journeyed to seek the Moonwatchers' counsel. The Moonwatchers became a fading memory, and all assumed them lost. That is, until the Moonwatchers chanced upon Algor Marr one night. The councilmember of the North Star Clan was taking a walk on a particularly clear night when he saw something he couldn't believe: a large band of perfectly healthy human druids, making their way in the dead of night across the meteor-pocked plains. Algor approached them with peaceful intentions, and soon discovered that the Moonwatchers from old stories were still alive — and on a mission of their own.

After Algor heard their story, he organized donations among his own clan leaders and

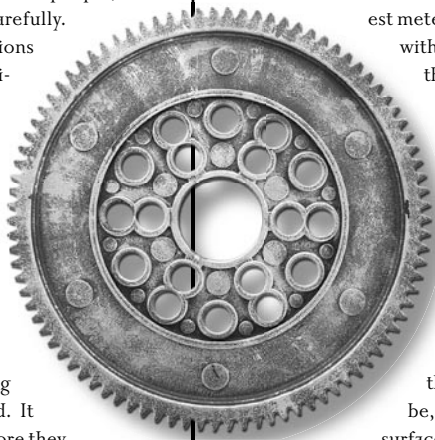
the leaders of a few other clans he trusted, including the Righteous Lancers, Lotus Clan, and Clan of the Middle Pass. They contributed materials and knowledge, and even a few interested clanmembers who wanted to travel with the Moonwatchers for a while.

Now the Moonwatchers travel the world in a small contingent of mechs, intent on their mission. During their many years of observing the moon, they learned more than they ever hoped to know. They mapped the major features of the lunar surface, before they crashed to the ground. They know where the largest lunar temples were located on the moon, and they know where they fell to earth. They know where concentrations of life were found on the lunar surface (though they're hesitant to use the term "cities" to describe these strange places they observed); they watched the lunar dragons fall from the sky; and they know how those same dragons behaved on the moon.

Most importantly, the Moonwatchers know *something* — even the North Star Clan doesn't know what — about life on the lunar surface. The entire Moonwatchers clan now seeks very specific lunar fragments, whose locations they have roughly mapped out. Some of these fragments have since been mined or explored by adventurers; others are as yet untouched. The Moonwatchers travel at night, using their meteorological skills to always stay a step ahead of the lunar rain, seeking out these enigmatic fragments for an as-yet-undisclosed purpose. There's a pattern to their quest, and a sequence of discovery that must be obeyed, but the only ones to understand this are the Moonwatchers.

Algor Marr is the sole Irontooth clan member to have regular contact with the Moonwatchers. They seek out his clan on certain astronomical occasions, which can be only be predicted by characters with the Moonwatcher feat or with a DC 20 Knowledge (astronomy) check. On a few occasions, Algor has brought other Irontooth clan leaders with him to meet the Moonwatchers. The druids share the North Star Clan's passion for collecting strange lunar relics, but they have much grander ambitions — and much more specific goals — than the North Star Clan can ever imagine.

Publicly, almost every Irontooth clan member has heard of the original Moonwatchers of the Boundary Peaks, and many of them know that these Moonwatchers have joined the Irontooth Clans. But no one seems to have met them. The rumors say that certain members of the North Star Clan have contacts among the Moonwatchers. To the rest of the Irontooth, though, they are simply the Lost Clan: brethren





they once knew in another time, and now know only through stories.

**Leader:** Whinden Forgel (Drd14/Mcj3)

**Clan Flag:** A white crescent moon on a black background.

**Mech Resources:** Dignitary (2), fangbiter (1). Package value: 32,072 gp

**Clan Size:** 29

**Composition:** 80% humans, 20% dwarves

**Alignment:** Neutral good

**Religion:** Most members of the Moonwatchers clan still worship the old gods, particularly the goddess of nature.

## THE CLASH

Mech devils are rarely a sociable lot. More at ease surrounded by the cold metal and crushing gears of their great mechs, they prefer the quiet efficiency of their machines to actual contact with other creatures. Competitive, crass, and egotistical, these masterful mech pilots attract few friends, and it's a rare occurrence when a jockey and mech devil socialize. This makes it more than understandable that mech devils deal with others of their type only when dueling on the battlefield. But there are exceptions to every rule. The Clash is one such exception.

The Clash is a team of mech devils devoted to one another as much as their mechs. Led by the daring Irontooth pureblood Jax Jacobs, his band of daring (some might say suicidal) mech devils pushes the limits of their abilities and their mechs for profit and the good of the clans — but most importantly, for the ultimate rush. Teamed with the metal magic of the human Anton Markosan, the crazed luck of the half-elf Vix, and the ingenious repairs and augmentations of the coglayer Regan Riglock and his construct ally Brute, the Clash is an unpredictable force to be reckoned with.

The Clash began as merely Jax Jacobs and Regan Riglock, childhood friends fascinated with mechs: one in piloting them, and the other in making and improving them. Growing up having adventures together, the pair's lives truly began when they finally obtained their own mech to control and customize as they pleased. Performing in numerous jousts and winning the vast majority of them, the dwarven pair first met Anton Markosan on the battlefield. Losing to the masterful human pilot, the dwarves and the human struck up an unexpected but good-natured rivalry that continues to this day. When Markosan began going to Riglock exclusively for his repairs, his alliance

with the dwarves seemed set. Months later, when asked for a name upon entering a tournament of mech jockeys as a three-person team, Jax dubbed them the Clash. That was almost two years ago and the name has stuck.

Since the formation of the Clash, friends and members have come and gone. Rasquel Sivbil, a gnome mech jockey of some talent, his partner Helena Wojinx, and an elven sorcerer called Sheng, all spent time teamed with the Clash. Unfortunately, a tragically ill-planned hunt for a particularly rampant lunar dragon ended Rasquel's life. Helena departed from the group soon after, headed to Stenian lands to mourn. The elusive Sheng disappeared next, after an argument with Jax and Anton about raiding a ruined elf stronghold on the edge of L'arile Nation's lands.

Today, the Clash consists of its three founding members and the enigmatic half-elf Vix. The seemingly crazed pilot and her Viper mech attacked Anton's Defender while traveling and did a surprising amount of damage to the large mech. Jax and his Juggernaut barely had time to intercede when, after taking barely a scratch, Vix surrendered but demanded to accompany Anton. Reluctant though they were, the Clash were impressed by the erratic pilot's skill. Vix has been a loose cannon among firebrands ever since.

Even though Jacobs and Riglock were raised among Clan Hawk, the Clash owes no affiliation to any one Irontooth Clan, though they all enjoy the clans' spirit of freedom and love of mechs. The group travels between the roaming clans, battling for their own glory and prestige in mech jousts. They also operate as a kind of mercenary band, happy to conduct raids on orc clans or hunt down lunar threats if the price is right. Even if money is not involved, Jax especially has a soft place in his heart for the plight of his clan brothers and sisters, and has taken on several jobs for free. This makes them popular heroes among the young and open-minded members of many clans, but most clan elders see them as little more than pompous, dishonorable upstarts.

However, even these elders cannot deny the good the Clash sometimes does, or the essential tasks they alone can perform. And so, the Clash wanders Irontooth Clan lands, upholding their people's free spirit and rebellious nature in the face of savage raiders, lunar threats, and the steel fists of other nations.



**Jax Jacobs**

Jax Jacobs thinks of himself as the quintessential mech devil: skilled in mech-to-mech combat, knowledgeable of his machine and how to push it to its limits, and dwarven in origin. As close to noble as an Irontooth Clansman can get, Jacobs is a pureblood descendent of one of the first Irontooth Clan's founders.

Just over a hundred years old, Jax is young and impetuous by dwarf standards. Brash and eager to take risks, his life revolves his addiction to danger and his Juggernaut-class mech, Crash Hammer (not to be confused with the orc mechs called crash axes, though Jax often pilots Crash Hammer in a similar manner). This often gets him and his companions into trouble, especially when he brags about his talents to other mech pilots, but his brilliant piloting skills are often more than enough to see them through. Good-naturedly arrogant and honestly likeable, what Jax lacks in tact he makes up for in skill and dedication to his friends and his clan.

Jax is an abnormality among his family, his clan, and his race, exhibiting a curiosity and free-spirited nature uncommon for most dwarves. It would be incorrect to say he's a flighty dwarf, but he's definitely more open to new opportunities and new ideas than most of

his race. With his noble background, Jax's family has expected great things of him and he's spent his entire life determined to meet his family's expectations — but on his own terms. Currently, he finds wealth and mechs to be the swiftest ways to get what he wants — but his goals become hazy past this point. Though his companions are happy to live high on the wealth from their tournament winnings and mercenary work, Jax would prefer to apply his good fortune to the betterment of his people. Unfortunately, he's yet to find or imagine an appropriate outlet, and thus takes jobs helping the clans wherever he can while setting aside a portion of his wealth for future endeavors. Already he's amassed quite a sum, which he keeps hidden somewhere on board his mech.

Jax Jacobs stands just over 5 1/2 feet tall and is slender for a dwarf. Unlike many dwarves, he shaves his entire head — beard, hair, and all — but like many mech devils, he sports an ornate tattoo. Jax's makes him look as though his face is made from steel, with images of rivets, metal seams, dents, and slightly rusted edges inked into his flesh. At his neck and jaw line, the tattoo becomes most elaborate as the inked steel seams part to “reveal” red and brown wires and gears beneath. Created by the finest tattoo artist of his home clan, Jax's tattoo is quite impressive, but can be more than a little disturbing to those that don't know him well. The ridged, metallic look of Jax's tattoo is made all the more effective by his sharply angled nose and prominent cheekbones.

Though his visage makes him stand out among normal folk, Jax's manner of dress singles him out even among other mech devils. While most mech devils have few clothes beyond their pilot's suits, Jax prides himself on his wealth and fashion sense and conveys this with his manner of dress. Always dressed stylishly, Jax's couture ranges from the highest and most in-vogue ensembles to altered pieces he's had custom designed. Such pieces are always meant to draw attention to his face or are studied with bits of metal to make him look more mechanical. Although he pretends to care little about his heritage, Jax secretly fantasizes about having a more princely life and plays that out through his dress. As such, when not slumming about his mech in a pilot's suit, he pays great attention to his clothes and goes out of his way not to soil them.

**Jax Jacobs, male dwarf Mcj10/Mcd4:** CR 14; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 14d6+28; hp 76; Init +4, Spd 20 ft.; AC 26 (+4 Dex, +8 armor, +4 natural armor), touch 14, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +10; Mech Atk Bonus +14; Grp +11; Atk +13 melee (1d10+7, +3 *flaming lobster*

*claw*) or +14 melee (1d8+4, +3 *shocking burst battleaxe*); Full Atk +13/+8 melee (1d10+7, +3 *flaming lobster claw*) or +14/+9 melee (1d8+4, +3 *shocking burst battleaxe*) or +18/+13/+8 mech (any mech weapon); SA Stunning attack, unarmed damage 2d6; SQ Agile mech +1, dwarf traits, extraordinary pilot, fast movement, hand speed, mech fingers (warrior instinct, skill transfer), patchwork repairs, push envelope 3/day, special skill uses; AL CG; SV Fort +8, Ref +12, Will +8; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 11, Cha 10.

**Skills and Feats:** Balance +23, Climb +18, Craft (mechcraft) +20, Jump +20, Knowledge (mechs) +20, Knowledge (steam engine) +20, Mech Pilot +21, Spot +4, Tumble +9; Exotic Weapon Proficiency (lobster claw), Great Fortitude, Greater Mech Fu, Mech Dancer, Mech Fu, Mechidextrous, Mechwalker, Natural Pilot, Quick Draw, Weapon Finesse.

**Possessions:** +3 *flaming lobster claw*, +3 *shocking burst battleaxe*, +4 *chain shirt*, *amulet of natural armor* +4, magnet bombs (6).

**Languages:** Common, Dwarf, Elven, Gnome, Orc.

## Anton Markoson

A native of the Legion city-mech Haven, Anton Markoson embraced Shar Thizdic's propaganda of human dominance at an early age. Serving as a member of his people's military, he sought to epitomize the fantastic potential that seemed to surround the growing and hopeful Legion by studying constructor magic. Although he obviously had a talent for it, Anton remained mostly secluded from the greater College of Constructors except for a few tomes of the weakest spells and magical theory that he was able to acquire. As a result, despite his interest (which remains even today), his resources and situation prevented him from pursuing his magic. Instead, Anton took up a much more achievable pursuit: to become a mech jockey.

For eleven years of his life, Anton served the Legion, defending the great city-mechs, battling the lunar threat, and guarding the boundaries of Legion land. All that changed with the order to attack an unarmed group of dwarven pilgrims crossing just within Legion territory on some religious retreat. Seeing that the group posed no threat, Anton refused to follow the order while the rest of his patrol began slaughtering the defenseless dwarves. Unable to allow such a massacre, he attacked and killed the two other members of his unit and saw the dwarves to safety. Thankful for saving them and understanding that he would not



be able to return home, the Irontooth dwarves invited Anton to follow them back to their clan and recuperate.

Disillusioned with his people and his leader, he took the dwarves up on their offer and for the next several months became immersed in the Irontooth way of life. Eager to learn more about the clans and their culture, Anton left his gracious hosts. Soon he found himself wandering from clan to clan, staying with them until clanmeets and the great jousting tournaments that always seemed to happen when two Irontooth clans came into contact. This practice continued for almost two years before he encountered Jax Jacobs and Regan Riglock.

Since falling in with Jax and Regan and forming the Clash, Anton has embraced his love of mechs, battle, and life in general. He has a passion for life and living that few can match and a respect for all peoples, regardless of race. He had always hoped that his vision was also the dream of the Legion, but he has long since abandoned such illusions and now travels to make his own changes to the world. A skilled mech pilot who's adopted the way of the mech devil through his years with the Irontooth Clans, Anton feels most alive when piloting a mech. He's been known to say that being in a mech makes him feel powerful, like he can really make a difference; that in a mech, he's a little like a god, and maybe just enough like one to make even just a little piece of the world right.

Anton Markoson is 33 years old, just over 6 feet tall, and has shoulder-length, grease-black hair. Tan skinned, slight of build, and freckled with moles along the edges of his face, Anton is an unassuming figure. As he is accustomed to wearing loose, light clothing that keeps him



free to either pilot his mech or cast the few spells he knows, it can be hard for others to guess what a talented pilot and mech devil he is. The only features that give him away as being more than a commoner are the heavy scars that run the length of his left arm and a pair of tattoos over his eyebrows.

The scars come from an accident he had while repairing a mech in the service of the Legion. While making adjustments, his arm became caught in a pair of malfunctioning gears and only by the swift application of the grease spell was he able to save his limb from being pulped. The scars remain obvious even more than ten years later, tracing a regular path of discolored skin from his wrist to his shoulder.

Like many mech devils, Anton bears tattoos, though his are not particularly elaborate: merely twin lines of five interconnecting gears that form trails just above and paralleling his eyebrows. These lines are the only tattoos Anton presents to the public. He actually has another across his back; scarred into his flesh in a style popular among certain Legion soldiers is the word "Legion" from shoulder blade to shoulder blade. Anton now loathes and regrets the mark and has quietly conferred with many clerics about the likelihood of having it magically removed, with no success. Anton has told no one else about the tattoo, fearing that it might offend his friends and the people he's adopted as his own.

Anton rides in a souped-up Defender mech, which he has upgraded to steel armor, combat spikes, and a Huge steam cannon in place of its melee weapon. In close combat, he fights unarmed with his mech's free hand.

**Anton Markoson, male human Con2/McJ10/Mcd2:** CR 14; Medium humanoid (human); HD 12d6+2d4-14; hp 35; Init +4, Spd 30 ft.; AC 21 (Dex +4, armor +7), touch 14, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +9; Mech Atk Bonus +12; Grp +9; Atk +11 melee (1d4+2/19-20, +2 speed dagger) or +16 mech (any mech weapon); Full Atk +11/+11/+6 melee (1d4+2/19-20, +2 speed dagger) or +16/+11/+6 mech (any mech weapon); SA Stunning attack, unarmed damage 1d6; SQ Extraordinary pilot, hand speed, mech fingers: warrior instinct, mech fingers: skill transfer, patchwork repairs, prohibited schools (illusion and necromancy); push envelope 3/day, special skill uses, summon familiar; AL NG; SV Fort +7, Ref +19, Will +13; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 9, Int 20, Wis 15, Cha 11.

**Skills and Feats:** Balance +10, Concentration +3, Craft (alchemy) +11, Craft (blacksmithing) +11, Craft (mechcraft) +17, Disable Device +7, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (local)

+13, Knowledge (mechs) +22, Knowledge (the planes) +15, Knowledge (steam engines) +22, Listen +10, Mech Pilot +21, Profession (engineer) +10, Spellcraft +24, Spot +10, Tumble +10; Brew Potion, Craft Magical Mech, Craft Steam Gear, Mech Dancer, Mech Fu, Mechidextrous, Mechwalker, Moonwatcher, Natural Pilot, Quick Draw, Scribe Scroll, Weapon Finesse.

**Possessions:** +2 speed dagger, +4 fire-resistant pilot's armor, cloak of resistance +5, periapt of health, potion of cat's grace (x4), stethoscope.

**Languages:** Common, Draconic, Dwarf, Elven, Orc, Undercommon.

**Spells Prepared** (4/5/5/5/4/3/1; save DC 15 + spell level): 0—acid splash, dancing lights, detect magic, mage hand, resistance; 1st—construct friendship, detect clockworks, enginemaster's grasp, mage armor, magic missile.

**Spellbook** (contains all spells currently prepared plus the following): 0—all cantrips; 1st—endure elements, grease, sleep, speak with constructs.

**Rag, Toad Familiar:** see MM.

## Vix

Little can be said about Vix except that she's probably insane. Easily the most erratic member of the Clash, she is also by far the most talented. Though her fellow mech devils Jax and Anton would never openly admit it, it may just be her touch of madness that makes Vix so willing to push her machine to unthinkable limits. Even in the brief time she's been with the Clash, her companions have seen her perform some truly amazing feats. Perhaps most remarkably: leaping onto the head of an orc mech more than twice her Viper's size and firing on the bridge at point blank range, slaying the entire crew and taking down the metal giant in less than two minutes. Although silently awed, Vix's companions dread the day that the half-elf's luck finally runs out and her madness finds them pulling her corpse from her mech's smoking wreck.

Vix speaks little, and when she does, it often seems to be merely the twitchy rambles of a mad woman. Her crazed diatribes are punctuated by moments of surprising clarity, often concerning brilliant tactics or amazingly creative solutions to mech-based problems. This clarity also often arises when she's piloting her mech, a Viper she calls Ray, or when she's on the bridge of a larger mech. When in the pilot's seat of a large mech, all traces of madness fade away, replaced by the cool confidence and nonsense orders of a hardened mech captain.

But, befitting her more usual persona,



Vix's insight and experience often turn into a startling savagery in the midst of battle. On more than one occasion, after performing a series of unbelievable and brutal maneuvers, Vix's companions have found her standing in shocked amazement, gazing dumbly, tears streaming down her face as if she was trapped within some horrible memory. The slightest jarring interrupts her thoughts and brings her back to the moment and her usual unpredictable personality.

Vix stands just under 6 feet tall and is lithe, even for a half-elf. She has short, choppy mouse-brown hair. She is ultimately unconcerned with her appearance and hacks her hair down to a wildly spiked mess when it begins getting in her way. On several occasions, when she doesn't have the time or interest to cut all of her hair, she's been seen to use a knife to absently slash away whatever tufts gets in her face and continue about her work. If the constant layer of grease and dirt were cleaned away, Vix would be revealed to be actually a quite lovely young woman. Her elven features are prominent, but her human side reveals itself in charming patches of light freckles that cover her cheeks, arms, and back.

However, any real beauty she might possess is usually overshadowed or downright shattered by her most unladylike manners and crazed actions. Vix's natural beauty is also somewhat compromised by countless, deep slashing scars that riddle her arms, legs, back, and chest. The half-elf is not shy about her scars and hardly seems to notice them, merely shrugging or ignoring those who ask about them.

What she will react to are questions about the prominent tattoos on both of her shoulders and on the back of her neck, and then only with nervous twitches or swift kicks to the stomach.

These deep purple tattoos are of sinister-looking, heavily stylized spiders with dozens of crooked legs that create a bizarre spiral. Constantly covered in heavy bruises, it looks as though Vix suffers heavy beating to these areas on a regular basis. But even more disturbing is that those familiar with the ways of the shadowy, cavernous underworld below Highpoint's surface might recognize these symbols as the sigils of a noble drow house.

Although Vix seems to have adopted Anton for some unknowable reason, the elder human has grown quite attached to the wild half-elf. Their relationship could not be called love, as Vix often seems only vaguely aware of anyone else's existence and Anton is more than a little afraid of the girl. However, Anton does definitely care for the girl and is sympathetic to her situation. He goes out of his way to make sure that she is comfortable and in good health, and in return, Vix is most docile in his company. Countless questions about Vix's past have piqued Anton's curiosity and he's subtly trying to learn more about the wild pilot, but she often avoids his questions, spouts seemingly meaningless answers, or merely ignores him. Regardless, Anton and Vix's relationship is like that of a man who's taken in a lost dog and become too attached to let his new pet go.

**Vix, female half-elf Mejl/Mcd6:** CR 16; Medium humanoid (half-elf); HD 14d6; hp 56; Init +5, Spd 30 ft.; AC 26 (+5 Dex, +6 armor, +5 deflection), touch 15, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +11; Grp +11; Mech Atk Bonus +16; Atk +16 melee (1d6+2/18-20, +2 *shock speed rapier*) or +14 melee (3d6+3, unarmed attack) or +21 mech (any mech weapon); Full Atk +16/+16/+11+6 melee (1d6+2/18-20, +2 *shock speed rapier*) +14/+9/+4 melee (3d6+3, unarmed attack) or +21/+16/+11+6 mech (any mech weapon); SA Stunning attack, unarmed damage 3d6; SQ Agile mech +2, dwarf traits, extraordinary pilot, fast movement, hand speed, mech fingers: warrior instinct, mech fingers: skill transfer, patchwork repairs, push envelope 3/day, special skill uses; AL CN; SV Fort +5, Ref +17, Will +5; Str 10, Dex 20, Con 11, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 15.

**Skills and Feats:** Balance +26, Bluff +7, Climb +18, Craft (mechcraft) +22, Diplomacy +4, Escape Artist +24, Jump +16, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (geography) +7, Knowledge (local) +10, Knowledge (mechs) +24, Knowledge (steam engines) +24, Mech Pilot +20, Listen +22, Open Lock +5, Search +10, Sense Motive +3, Sleight of Hand +10, Spot +8; Exotic Weapon Proficiency (buzzaxe, buzzsaw, flame nozzle, lobster claw, steam gun), Gearhead, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Moonwatcher,

Quick Draw, Nimble Fingers, Skill Focus (Craft [mechcraft]), Weapon Finesse.

**Possessions:** +2 *shock speed rapier*, +3 *moderate fortification pilot's armor*, ring of protection +5, ring of freedom of movement, amulet of mighty fists +3, wings of flying.

**Languages:** Common, Dwarf, Elven, Gnome, Halfling, Tortog, Undercommon.

## Regan Riglock

Like Jax Jacobs, Regan Riglock has an insatiable passion for machines that extends beyond merely mechs to all forms of steam and steel creations. Not nearly as impetuous or brash as his close friend Jax, Regan serves as a calming foil to Jax's wild spirit. Though the two dwarves of such wildly different demeanors would seem like the most unlikely of friends, more than one hundred years of companionship and countless adventures suggest differently.

Regan was born into the same Irontooth clan as Jax, but not nearly into as prestigious a family. His family worked as engineers with his clan's kabuto mech's gearforest, keeping the engines manned and at peak performance. The tangled mazes of pipes and gears within the mech's bowels were the playgrounds of his youth. Regan's parents were merely two out of many common engineers, and it seemed unlikely that Regan would ever have any brush with fame. At least, it did until the day he found an intruder in his metal-and-oil world. This interloper was another young dwarf who had run away from his parents and some unreasonably harsh punishment.

Eager to show someone else the wonders of "his" gearforest, Regan and young Jax Jacobs

became fast friends exploring the marvels of the great engines. After that day, Jax came back to visit Regan and explore further many times. The pair were soon inseparable. Though both their parents were surprised that their son had made such an unlikely friend, no one saw a reason to put an end to the boys' camaraderie, a friendship that has now endured for over a century.

Regan's primary interest has always been the physical application of technology. This led him to his passion for mechs as they are the largest, most advanced, most versatile, and most varied pinnacles of such technology. With Jax providing the funds he needs to tinker and research, as well as the majority of his repair and customization work, Regan has become an ingenious inventor and creative problem-solver. Though his dream is to design and create his own mech someday, the current pinnacle of his work is the customized clockwork puppet that he calls Brute.

Brute is a giant, standing just less than twenty feet tall. Created to serve and perform a variety of tasks, Brute has a strength and durability that rivals any other clockwork puppet in existence. Surprisingly deft at the work it conducts and seemingly capable of making judgments beyond those of normal clockwork puppets, the construct is something Regan is rightfully proud of. Jax is equally if not more impressed, as Regan never let on that he was even building a clockwork puppet until the automaton was finished. However, Jax has many questions about the puppet, some of which Regan has never answered to his fullest satisfaction. For example: Why did he hide the construct while building it? Why does it have a drill for an arm? And how did Regan create certain parts that he's never been able to reproduce since?

With these questions remaining unanswered, Jax carries the disturbing feeling that his lifelong friend might be hiding something from him. Regan too seems to have his own questions about "his" clockwork puppet, like: Why does it preemptively perform tasks without being asked? How does it complete its assignments faster and more efficiently with each additional trial? And why does it seem to almost have a personality all its own? The answers to these questions constantly play on his curiosity and, most recently, on his fears as well.

Though not as radically non-dwarven in his appearance as Jax, Regan is obviously not a stereotypical dwarf. Although his frame is just as stout and hearty as most of his kin, Regan forgoes growing a traditional dwarven beard, finding that such things only distract him and





get in his way when he works. Clean-shaven, he instead wears his hair long in the back and tied into a series of tight and complex braids. Regan feels about his braids much the same way most other dwarves do about their beards. Full of face and with thick, wild eyebrows, Regan otherwise is an unremarkable looking fellow — that is, while he's outside of his second skin. Regan rarely goes anywhere without his hydraulic armor, a magically enhanced suit that looks terribly unwieldy but in which he claims to feel most comfortable. While it makes him look nearly like one of his construct creations, he rarely leaves his mech without it.

**Regan Riglock, male dwarf Cog15:** CR 15; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 15d4+30; hp 69; Init +1, Spd 20 ft.; AC 27 (+4 Dex, +13 armor, +3 deflection), touch 10, flat-footed 26; Base Atk +7; Grp +7; Mech Atk Bonus +3; Atk +10 melee (1d12+3/x3, +3 *axiomatic thundering buzzaxe*) or +14 ranged (1d8+6, +6 *flame nozzle*) or +3 mech (any mech weapon on proficient mechs); Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d12+3/x3, +3 *axiomatic thundering buzzaxe*) or +14/+9 ranged (1d8+6, +6 *flame nozzle*) or +3 mech (any mech weapon on proficient mechs); SQ Machine empathy, integrated parts (8), steam powers; AL LN; SV Fort +8, Ref +12, Will +8; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 20, Wis 11, Cha 10.

**Skills and Feats:** Craft (blacksmith) +25, Craft (mechcraft) +29, Disable Device +27, Jump +21, Knowledge (mechs) +22, Knowledge (steam engines) +22, Mech Pilot +22, Spot +5, Tumble +9; Exotic Weapon Proficiency (buzzaxe, chattersword, lobster claw), Great Fortitude, Gearhead, Mech Hardened (barbagula, juggernaut, kabuto, viper), Mech Weapon Proficiency (bore puncher, chain tentacle, changler), Mechidextrous, Mechwalker, Natural Pilot.

**Possessions:** +3 *axiomatic thundering buzzaxe*, +6 *flame nozzle*, +3 *ghost touch hydraulic armor*, *ring of protection* +3, stethoscope.

**Languages:** Common, Dwarf, Elven, Gnome, Halfling, Orc.

**Steam Powers (20):** Brute, clockwork puppet (Clockwork Puppet (x16) + Animator + Discriminator + Voice Command + Drill).

**Brute, Unique Clockwork Puppet:** CR 6; Huge construct; HD 4d10+40, hp 62; Init -1, Spd 60 ft.; AC 19, touch 10, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +11; Grp +9; Atk +18 melee (2d6+7, slam) or +18 melee (1d4+7, drill); Full Atk +18 melee (2d6+7, 2 slams) or +18 melee (1d4+7, drill); SQ Construct; AL TN; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will -5; Str 24, Dex 8, Con —, Int 4, Wis 1, Cha 1.

## ZACK RODEBAUGH, ARTIST OF STEEL

Zack Rodebaugh was expected to become the most talented mech devil ever born, but he did not. Born of two extremely talented mech pilots — Tien Rodebaugh, a mech devil famous throughout the clans and beyond, and Iem Frestnova, a peerless joustier — Zack was raised amid gears and clashes of steel. Not only did all who knew of Tien and Iem's child expect great things from this future mech jockey, but his parents trained him daily in the ways of using and keeping up mechs of a wide variety of types. Yet their impassioned trials and lessons resulted only in disappointment as, despite his parents' fervor, Zack showed absolutely no interest in mechs, their designs, or indeed any pursuit of steel or battle. Instead his interests turned to drawing, painting, and nearly all other artistic paths he could find.

For the first twelve years of his life, Zack was constantly hounded by his parents to learn every facet of mech piloting and rudimentary coglaying. His disinterest caused him to rebel from time to time, but his parents' insistence that he was obligated to carry on the family tradition pressured him on. It was on his thirteenth birthday, during a meeting of several Irontooth Clans and while his parents were both preparing their mechs for their many daily jousts, that Zack slipped away. As the meet ended and his parents were distracted by their personal victory revels, Zack stole away on board another clan's mech. The following day, while his parents slept off their night's celebrations, Zack's new clan departed, unwittingly taking him with them.

Charming even in his youth, Zack had little problem ingratiating himself into his new clan, having fortuitously chosen the one traveling farthest away from his parents. Though his next several years were hard as he performed a variety of menial tasks to support himself and prove his worth to his clan, they were happy ones as they afforded him a chance to continue to refine his art. Discovering the range of feelings that his art could inspire and depict, he swiftly deemed himself a student of emotion. The majority of Zack's earliest works thus focus on simple humanoid figures, evoking a range of reactions from sympathy and sorrow to peace and joy.

Few who viewed his works were not stirred. None could deny that the youth produced works on the level of a master artist. But for Zack, the soft, ever-changing bodies of liv-



ing subjects were too malleable for his work. The simplest glint in the eye or arch of a brow could convey a range of emotions that, once mastered, ceased to be a challenge. Perhaps tapping into his parents' love of conflict and competition, Zack sought out more difficult subjects. What he found surprised even him: mechs.

After much deliberation and resistance steaming from his childhood, Zack began using a wide range of mechs as his subjects. Often humanoid in construction, the giant constructs' lack of soft lines, easily altered or recognizable features, and overall lack of emotion made them the perfect challenge. Without viewers of his works immediately sympathizing with the plight of a harmed figure, or empathizing with a happy one, mechs proved to be the perfect subjects, easily showing whether a piece's feeling lied within its subject matter or Zack's artistic skill. When finally his audiences began commenting that the machines seemed "sad" or "excited," Zack finally began to feel victorious as an artist.

Today, Zack Rodebaugh is 24 years old and still travels with Harvest Clan, the same clan he stowed away with eleven years ago. He rarely performs menial tasks anymore, spending much of his times painting and drawing in charcoals. This suits his clan fine, as Zack has no desire for great amounts of material wealth, thus donating much of what he makes to his clan elders. That which he donates comes from the profits he makes selling his works, sometimes to those he encounters at trade meets between his clan and others, but more often by commission, as





his name has become well known among mech jockeys.

This fame comes not just from his peerless skill at capturing mechs in a way their jockeys find favorable, but from his skill at freezing a point in time. This usually leads to pilots paying Zack to paint the climax of their day's jousts or the height of a particular championship. Holding to a kind of artistic integrity, Zack refuses to ever change his depiction of a joust or challenge from fact, regardless of how much his customers might be willing to pay. Though this often leads to pilots who pompously commission him to record their victories, then lose and refuse to pay for a masterful remembrance of their loss, Zack finds that he can often sell such a piece to the actual winner. Thus "the artist of steel," as he's come to be known in many circles, is never at a loss for business.

Over the past year, Zack has chosen a new canvas for his works, perhaps some of the largest ever used — mechs themselves. With his knowledge of both natural and unnatural forms, Zack has been able to cover whole mechs with massive depictions, each customized to its owner's tastes. Inspired to follow this path by a mysterious and innovative stranger, Zack was left with a barbagula, a note detailing a full-frame customized paint job, and a sizable sum in payment. When this first work (which many hold to be his most impressive) was complete, a masked figure wordlessly paid him an even more substantial sum and took the mech in the dead of night. Since then, his most usual work finds him covering the head, hands, or chest of mechs in specific patterns or images, with scales, feathers, or bestial visages being the most common.

As many mechs owned or operated by mech devils already have natural or fantastical names, this new trend has caused dozens of well-to-do mech jockeys to seek out Zack's clan and commission their own pieces. Zack enjoys this windfall of work as it gives him an opportunity to practice in an unusual new medium, and his clan doesn't mind the extra traffic due to the money it brings in, to say nothing of future wealth when Zack's current commissions requires future touch-ups. This style has spread through most of the Irontooth Clans and is already the envy of Stenian and Legion mech jockeys. It's even said that his father, the famous mech devil Tien Rodebaugh, has a fully painted mech that blazes with the fiery feathers and fierce visage of a giant mechanized phoenix of singular impressiveness and beauty.

At 5 feet, 10 inches tall, Zack Rodebaugh cuts a confident figure. Embracing a style all his own, the young artist is always dressed

in clothes of his own customized design and tastefully spattered with pigments of complementary shades. Even his hair, naturally a thick coal black, reflects this artistic customization, a tuft atop his forehead often changing shades, from dark blue one week to purple and red the next. Such shades serve as fine complements to his rich blue eyes and soft features.

Retaining a boyish look, Zack possesses a demeanor that can only be called imperious, a razor-sharp wit, and a deadly bluntness. Such a cutting personality serves to keep most people at more than arm's length, which suits him fine, as it gives him more time for his work. Those masochistic few that endure Zack's barbed speech find that he subjects himself to the same brutal criticism he does other and that he can ultimately be quite agreeable. Such agreeableness often comes after several pints of hard alcohol. Zack is prone to heavy imbibing, making his small circle of drinking friends some of his closest compatriots.

**Zack Rodebaugh, male human Brd5:** CR 5; Medium humanoid (human); HD 5d6+5; hp 22; Init +2, Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (Dex +2, armor +4), touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +3; Grp +3; Mech Atk +1; Atk +4 melee (1d6/19-20, +1 short sword) or +5 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow) or -3 (any mech weapon); Full Atk +4 melee (1d6/19-20, +1 short sword) or +5 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow) or -3 (any mech weapon); SQ Bardic music, bardic knowledge, countersong, fascinate, inspire competence, inspire courage; AL NG; SV Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +7; Str 11, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 17.

**Skills and Feats:** Appraise +6, Bluff +11, Craft (painting) +13, Diplomacy +17, Gather Information +13, Knowledge (arcana) +2, Knowledge (local) +8, Knowledge (mechs) +10, Sense Motive +10, Sleight of Hand +6, Spellcraft +2, Spot +4; Negotiator, Point Blank Shot, Skill Focus (Craft [painting]).

**Possessions:** +1 short sword, light crossbow, +2 leather armor, ring of feather fall, masterwork artisan's tools, 20 bolts.

**Languages:** Common, Dwarf, Elven.

Unfortunately for Zack Rodebaugh, his fame has not brought him happiness, only incessant personal conflict. The bringer of this distress calls herself Sylph.

Like Zack, Sylph is a runaway, though she escaped a brutally abusive father and a life that seemed like it could only end in a particularly brutal untimely death. Since her tenth birthday, she has wandered through several Legion chapters, stealing or performing whatever acts needed to surviving. Hard and world-weary,

Sylph understands how nature and society work. She has refined manipulation to a perverse art form. When she fell out of favor with her last "benefactor," she decided it was time to leave the Legion behind and find a people that more suited her wild lust for adventure and danger. Finding the Stenians far too rigid and wary, she fell in with a rowdy bunch of Irontooth Clan members, a path that soon led her to the same clan as Zack Rodebaugh.

As soon as Sylph met Zack Rodebaugh, she decided that she would have him in every conceivable way. Since the night of that meeting, Sylph and Zack have been lovers and an inseparable pair. Playing on Zack's love of beautiful things and deadly wit, Sylph easily integrated herself into his affections. Charming him with her tales of the greater world and drawing upon his inner sympathies with her stories of her past, Zack has a deep, seemingly unshakable affection for the creature he believes Sylph to be. Unfortunately, such a creature does not exist.

Sylph desires Zack for merely two reasons, his attractive appearance and his talent. Since she's entered his life, Zack keeps far more of this profits than he previously ever did and lavishes his lady-love with gifts and all manner of material affection. His obsession with his work has left Zack woefully inexperienced in the ways of true love, thus the warnings of his friends about Sylph's true intentions most often led only to denial and raised words, driving off more than a few and only further increasing his dependence on her. Sylph has also integrated herself into Zack's artistic life, making herself something of a manager for the highly demanded artist. Under the guise of only wanting what's best for him, she deals with all outside requests for the artist's time and work, charging employers ludicrous fees and only accepting the highest paying work. Thus, though Zack now brings in more wealth than ever before, the great majority of it goes directly to Sylph's pampered, vice-ridden, unfaithful lifestyle.

After nearly a year of manipulating Zack, Sylph started to get bored. Although she received everything she could possibly want, there was little challenge or adventure in her life. Also, spending so much of her time with the lovestruck artist began to grate on her patience and desire for freedom. She began saving much of the money Zack lavished on her and began contemplating when and where to move on. Then came the best thing that had ever happened in Sylph's life, even though she didn't realize it at the time.

It seems that Zack Rodebaugh's fame has not



limited itself to Highpoint's native denizens. This possibility was made fact when a lunar skinsteler infiltrated Zack's clan and worked its way through the group's ranks until it finally came upon Zack. The hard had little defense and, after a moment of stark horror, was overcome by the alien monstrosity. Since then, Zack's mind has been dominated by an alien consciousness. Though it controls his body, the skinsteler seems content with its position and has not drained Zack to dominate other hosts. Instead, it merely controls him, probes his memories and knowledge, and continues Zack's art. It seems that the lunar creature seeks further information about Highpoint's mechs, those that the Irontooth Clans use in particular. It has decided that Zack Rodebaugh is the perfect host to use to learn about the widest variety of mechs possible. This is true on multiple levels, both as Zack's education at his parent's hands and his years spent painting the "anatomy" of mechs had made him as knowledgeable as many coglayers. Also, as he paints jousts and mech battles, he witnesses his subjects using their fullest ranges of weapons, equipment, and techniques.

The only hurdle in the alien's plan of observation is that while it dominates Zack, it has access to none of his painting skill. Being that Zach's continued artistry and fame is integral to its reconnaissance, the alien consciousness has made a bargain with its host. The alien has agreed to free Zack's body several times a week so he might paint, but if he attempts to somehow escape its control or warn others of its presence, it will destroy his mind. Being that the only thing worse to Zack than being controlled by an otherworldly aberration is the inability to paint, Zack agreed to the alien's plans. Now, Zack's indulges his art less, spending more time wandering among the clan's varied mechs and using his influence to tour them. When he does paint now, it is always in seclusion and he leaves strict orders that he is absolutely not to be disturbed while he works. And so the skinsteler learns, but to what alien intent none could know.

The only one to notice Zack's change is Sylph. But rather than be disturbed by the wild altering of his habits and personality, her interest in Zack has been reinvigorated. Over the past months she's come to realize that Zack is no longer himself, though she doesn't know why and frankly doesn't care. Zack now demands only to take commission work from the pilots of the biggest and most powerful mechs, which in turn are often the wealthiest employers. In addition, he has lost all interest in money, and any wealth he might have kept

for himself or the clan he passes fully onto Sylph. Though his attention to her has waned almost completely, except for a random odd question from time to time, his inattention has allowed Sylph to dally with anyone she chooses any time. To this end, though she has no idea to what extent her lover has changed, Sylph also doesn't care, hoping only that Zack's change is a permanent one.

In his dominated state, Zach has finally realized the depth of Sylph's depravations and has overcome his heartbreak. Knowing that he can't count on her to aid him, he has turned to his art, the only aspect of his life that he controls, to free him. In the months since he's been controlled by the alien skinsteler, the moon has become more and more prominent in his pictures, as have figures with a subtle "wrongness" about them, hollow, lifeless looks unusual in the art of such a master. Being that his alien controller thinks nothing of his art and cannot sense his thoughts while he paints, Zach Rodebaugh, perhaps the greatest mech artist on Highpoint, subtly cries out for aid through his art.

**Sylph, female human Rog3:** CR 3; Medium humanoid (human); HD 3d6; hp 10; Init +3, Spd 30 ft.; AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +2; Grp +0; Mech Atk +1; Atk/Full Atk +3 melee (1d4/18-20, +1 *kukri*) or +5 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow) or -2 mech (any mech weapon); SA Sneak attack 2d6; SQ Evasion, trapfinding, trap sense; AL CE; SV Fort +1, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 11, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 16.

**Skills and Feats:** Balance +11, Bluff +9, Diplomacy +13, Disable Device +6, Intimidate +11, Open Locks +9, Search +8, Sense Motive +8, Sleight of Hand +11, Spot +8, Tumble +9, Use Magic Device +5; Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Mobility.

**Possessions:** +1 *kukri*, light crossbow, *potion of spider climb*, *potion of owl's wisdom*, 2 vials of bloodroot poison, 30 bolts.

**Languages:** Common, Dwarf, Halfling.

## THE VICTOR

Throughout the Irontooth Clans, there is one mech that brings simultaneous dread and awe to all mech devils: the Victor. A ch'i'rin-class mech glistening with fantastic, artistically etched inlays of silver and mithral, the Victor is both a beautiful sight to behold and one of the deadliest mechs in existence. A great deal of the mech's esteem would go to its masterful pilot, but no one has ever seen him,

and no one has any idea who pilots the great mech. Appearing without reason and leaving on a whim, countless stories circulate about the Victor and its adventures, but even the most fantastical of these don't suggest that the Victor and its pilot are one and the same.

Who she was before she was the Victor is unknown. Her own memories might suggest that she was raised by a reclusive coglayer priest of Dotrak, more interested in his creations and machines than his own kin. It was this competition with machines and never knowing real emotion that led her to eventually become a machine herself.

Today, should one find a way to break into the cockpit of the Victor, they would see nothing that looks like a pilot. Instead, a collection of magical enhancements lie fused into place upon a central trunk, creating a glimmering cylindrical pillar circled by magical stones and whirring mechanical appendages hooked into the mech's myriad systems. Attended by numerous advanced clockwork puppets, the Victor's methods and motivations are as unknowable as the creature she might have once been.

**The Victor, female dwarf Mcj10/Asm5/Mcd4:** CR 19; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 14d6+28; hp 76; Init +4, Spd —; AC 21 (+6 armor, +5 natural armor), touch 10, flat-footed 21; Base Atk —; Grp —; Mech Atk +29; Atk +29 mech (any mech weapon); Full Atk +29/+24/+19/+14 mech (any mech weapon); SA Stunning attack, unarmed damage +2d6; SQ Agile mech +1, assimilated, dwarf traits, extraordinary pilot, fast movement, impossible pilot, hand speed, mech fingers (warrior instinct, skill transfer), patchwork repairs, perfect knowledge, push envelope 3/day, special skill uses, wired; AL CN; SV Fort +15, Ref +18, Will +19; Str 12, Dex 28, Con 18, Int 16, Wis 11, Cha 10.

**Skills and Feats:** Balance +36, Climb +23, Craft (mechcraft) +21, Jump +29, Knowledge (mechs) +29, Knowledge (steam engine) +29, Mech Pilot +44, Spot +10, Tumble +24; Gearhead, Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Mech Dancer, Mech Fu, Mechanized Combat Practice, Mechidextrous, Mechwalker, Moonwatcher, Natural Pilot, Quick Draw, Speed Freak, Weapon Finesse.

**Languages:** Common, Dwarf, Elven, Orc, Tortog.

**Possessions:** +5 *heavy fortification greater fire resistance padded armor of ethereality*, *amulet of natural armor* +5, *circlet of blasting (major)*, *cloak of resistance* +5, *gloves of dexterity* +6, *lavender and green ellipsoid ioun stone*, *mantle of spell resistance*, *pale green prism ioun stone*, *pale lavender ellipsoid ioun stone*, *pearly white spindle ioun stone*.

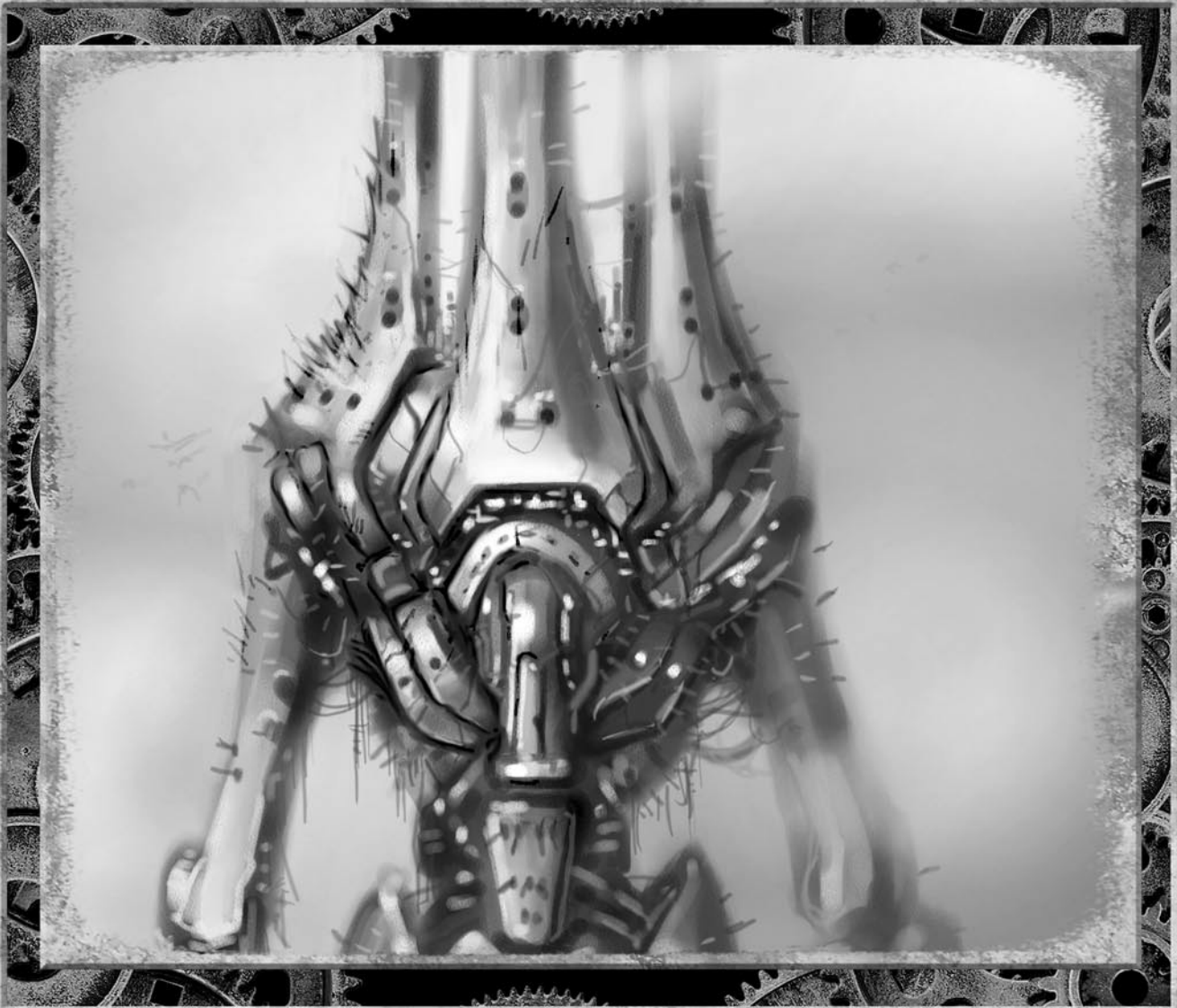
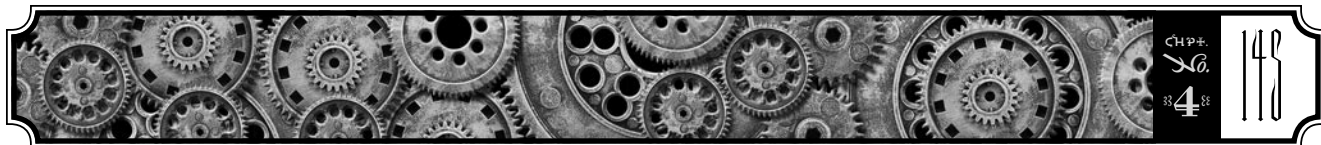


PLATE 5 *Tannanliel is literally a walking forest.*



# L'ARILE NATION

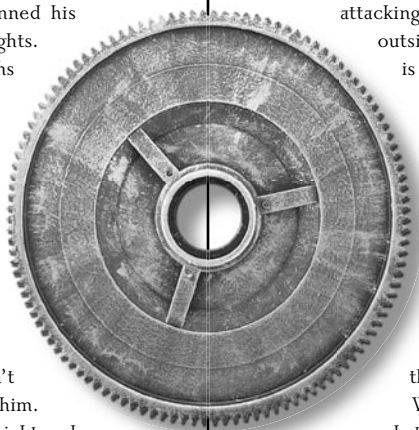
## EVERYBODY KNOWS...

THE ELVES RESPONDED TO THE LUNAR RAIN BY BRINGING THEIR WOODLAND HOMES TO LIFE. A LOOSE BUT POWERFUL ALLIANCE OF MAGICAL MECHS KNOWN AS THE L'ARILE NATION WALKS THE REMAINS OF HIGHPOINT'S NORTHERN FORESTS, OFFERING SHELTER TO THE SURVIVING ELVES. SOME SAY THEY HAVE ENOUGH POWER TO RETAKE THE CONTINENT FROM THE MOON'S CHILDREN, BUT SO FAR NONE KNOW IF THEY ARE WILLING TO FACE THE RUINED WORLD WAITING BEYOND THEIR BOUNDARIES.

Chief amongst the mechs of L'arile Nation is Tannanliel, the most powerful city-mech on the planet. Built by elven archmage Tannan, it's now the central rallying point of the elven mechdom. Even before the lunar rain, Tannan was known among the elves as one of their mightiest arch-mages. His spells are subtle, his enchantments enduring, and he weaves magic with an inventiveness that is almost human in its passion. A member of the noted White Congress, Tannan has been a wizard with few peers.

But the ongoing destruction of his native forests has fanned his creativity to new heights. While most elven mechs were small and stealthy, Tannan led a troupe of powerful mages in creating a tremendous city-mech. It bears the name Tannanliel, literally "the walking tree of Tannan," and it is both a haven and a weapon.

Moreover, Tannan hasn't let his power corrupt him. He could easily use his might and reputation to establish himself as a king among the elves, but he sees himself as their servant instead. His mech is at the forefront of L'arile Nation's most pitched battles with the lunar menace. Animating it is said to be a terrible strain upon him, one that may well cost him his life. And Tannan still carries on his work, fighting with every ounce of strength for his people.



Tannan's story is bound up with that of Tannanliel. The mech is literally a walking forest, as an entire grove of old-growth trees was combined to form its frame. This forest still lives, drawing water from below and sunlight from above, granting it power beyond most other elven constructs.

And Tannanliel has power to spare. It stands more than 2,000 feet high, giving it the strength to smash almost anything on Highpoint with one blow. Many spells have been woven into its structure for both attacking and defending. Even outside the L'arile Nation, it is regarded as the greatest mech created in this age.

Only the most stubborn Stenian gearwrights would deny that Tannanliel is beyond their own capabilities; the simple fact that it depends on magic, not steam, is a fatal weakness, or so they say.

With this tremendous combat prowess, Tannanliel has helped reclaim wide swaths of the northern forests. Orcish raiders, rogue mechs, even entire squads of lunar dragons have fallen before its fury. The only reason it hasn't taken back the entire northland is that it can only be in one place at a time. Enemies of L'arile Nation try to keep a close eye on the mech's movements, as nothing they possess can withstand it.

Tannan's one regret is said to be that his masterwork isn't even larger. Already the biggest mech on the endless plains, if not all of Highpoint, it houses more elves than anyone thought possible. But that still leaves countless individuals scattered through the shattered forests, making the best lives they can amid the lunar meteors and monsters. Tannanliel can't house every elf, but it works tirelessly to protect every last one of them.

## HISTORY

For countless centuries, the Lilat and Heréal forests have been home to a proud yet gentle elven people. Although elves are found across civilized Highpoint, these forests spreading across the northern endless plains are where they preferred to dwell. Some said that the elves were guarding a secret location in the heart of the woods, one known only to them. Others thought that powerful magic must be found there.

But the truth is that Highpoint's elves simply enjoyed the company of trees, especially the ancient ones that supported their villages. Even a being with a lifespan measured in centuries feels young and small among a stand of truly ancient redwoods.

When the lunar rain began, the elves of northern Highpoint were sheltered by their mighty forests. But endless pounding from the orb above took its toll. Proud trees that had survived for centuries were reduced to kindling, and as they fell, the elven way of life began to splinter. Cities like Bessemer and Lebra were destroyed by the misshapen lunar dragons. Everything that held elven society together was threatening to fall apart.

When word of the first dwarven mechs came to the north, most elves ignored it. Some thought it another sign that the world was going mad. Fortunately, a handful of wizards and constructors saw the potential in this idea. Even more fortunately, they overlooked the sometimes poisonous rivalry among powerful spellcasters, making their designs freely available to any elf who could understand them.

Most elves who understood mechs were happy to spread their knowledge, including a majority of the White Congress. The most respected elven mages' association, the White Congress dwelt in Lebra until that city was destroyed, and the bulk of its surviving members felt that sharing the secrets of magical mecraft was more important than some lofty

concern over privacy.

However, this decision was not without its opponents. A handful of dissenters worked to undermine this idea. Dubbed the Shadow Congress by their targets — for the group used no name known to outsiders — they fought the creation of mechs, turning to sabotage and outright attacks against existing ones. Several early elven mechs were destroyed this way, or cursed to suffer fatal flaws once activated.

The Shadow Congress was feared by most elves, until, in a series of pyrotechnic battles, their headquarters was demolished and their membership was scattered. It was during these conflicts that the wizard Tannan rose to prominence among mech designers. He was already known for his powerful designs, but his battles with the Shadow Congress demonstrated that he was also an expert tactician, as well as someone capable of holding a mech together despite grave damage.

As the Shadow Congress was being destroyed, another organized flight of lunar dragons descended to wreak havoc. This time the elves were ready for them, with a large force of mechs using tactics honed by their internal battles. The dragons' goal was never discovered, as the elven forces obliterated them. Combat was swift and bloody, and nearly half of the existing elven mechs were damaged beyond repair, but not a single dragon escaped.

In the wake of this clash, now known as the Awakening Battle, the elves realized two things. First, mechs were a powerful tool the likes of which had not been seen on Highpoint in living memory. Second, even with all that power, mechs were still vulnerable. If the elven mechs had not been gathered near each other thanks to the war on the Shadow Congress, the lunar dragons might have been able to pick them off one by one.

Elves are an independent race, quick to defy or evade rules that they don't wish to obey. Faced with the ongoing lunar menace, however, they agreed that cooperation was their best chance for survival. Mech designs were shared. The mech crews agreed to aid one another. Most of the elves agreed that secrecy was the wisest course for daily life, but when battle was

joined, all elves would participate. And when it was over, the survivors were to be sheltered and healed by other elves.

Word of this accord spread through the forests. Village-mechs that had kept to themselves for generations began to work together instead. The most powerful mechs exchanged messages regularly, coordinating patrols and sharing resources. When it became obvious that this feeling had taken hold, the elves called their new confederation the L'arile Nation, *l'arile* meaning "we endure together."

## RELIGION

Religion among the elves was a broad, simple thing in the days before lunar rain. They paid homage to dozens of spirits, powers, forces, and deities — but note that homage is not quite the same as worship. The elves asked these beings for help and protection, and in return gave offerings and performed other favors.

In some senses, it was almost like a business deal. An elf would commune with the

being it wished to ask for aid, whether through prayer or magic, and make his or her request. The chosen outsider would consider the request and name any demands it might have in return, and negotiations would continue until either a solution or an impasse was reached.

Most elves only dealt with peaceful forces.

Sacrifices were rare, and were often purely symbolic. Otherwise elves would agree to forfeit treasure or knowledge of their own in return for divine assistance, or perhaps to do things that the being wanted done in the mortal realm.

Although cordial, this relationship proved fragile when the lunar rain began. The beings that elves traditionally dealt with had less and less power to help. Spirits of nature were being smashed into nothingness, while more traditional deities were losing ground to their lunar counterparts.

In response, some elves turned to more

dangerous forces for aid. These elvish cults temporarily turned the tide, drawing on strange powers that most of their kin would not deal with, but it didn't last. These twisted spirits proved as weak as all the others, and the elves who had drawn on their strength came to unpleasant ends.

Most of them, that is. A few dark cults still survive under the protection of their devilish overlords. These are known as the zebatulaak, after the horrid creatures that sponsor them. They are hunted by L'arile Nation just as assuredly as it hunts the lunar monsters.

Religion among the modern elves is subdued at best. There are very few active clerics, and no major religions. Arcane magic is trusted far more than the divine, for arcane magic has never failed its adherents in a time of need. Individual elves may still have personal deities, nature spirits, or forces from beyond to which they feel a kinship, but organized religion is practically nonexistent.

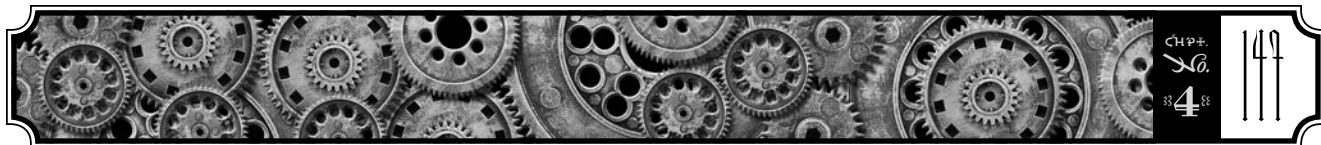
## MAGIC

The study of magic has always been esteemed among the elves. Mastery of the arcane arts was (and to some extent still is) the surest path to status in elvish society. At their height, the great woodland mages were among the most powerful beings that ever walked on the continent of Highpoint.

To help further their studies, many of these wizards (and other like-minded spellcasters) joined together in formal associations. The most famous of these was of course the White Congress, but many such existed, including the Verdant Sisterhood, the Order of Hidden Worlds, and the Agate Flame. Smaller groups usually concentrated on one area of magic, such as divination or animal spells, while the larger associations studied all things eldritch.

These conclaves were the closest thing to a central government that could be found in the Lilat and Heréal forests. Elves by their nature resist order and structure, and advancement in their society comes from the acclaim of one's peers. As elves value magic above most things, it being a subject that can easily occupy centuries of study, the powerful mages were natural leaders of their fellows.

Even the lunar rain didn't destroy this status. Although they were unable to protect all of the forests, the conclaves were capable of holding off the worst destruction from the areas around them. More elves began to gather near them,



especially around the city of Lebra where the White Congress had its fabled library.

Then the lunar dragons attacked. And attacked, and attacked, and attacked again. The fate of Lebra is well known — destroyed by wave upon wave of lunar dragons, the creatures working together such as they never had elsewhere. Many of the White Congress survived, but the wizardly associations were shown to be weaker than the elves had hoped. Other dragon attacks devastated other conclaves in similar fashion, for reasons not yet understood. It seemed as if the lunar dragons had a particular distaste for great concentrations of arcane magic.

In response to the destruction of the arcane societies, some elves turned their back on wizardry. Their world was shattered, overrun with monsters from the sky above, and so these elves reverted to a less studious life. They sought out the surviving druids and learned their ways. In the space of a decade, the number of elven druids in Lilat and Heréal tripled, and their ranks are still full. Many of these newer druids — often called “converts” by those who have long practiced nature’s magic — burn with fury, using their powers to attack rather than to preserve.

## DIPLOMACY

In the past, the elves were more open to outsiders than they are today. The philosophy of sneaking and hiding has made it difficult for the elves to maintain normal diplomatic relations.

The elves have always preferred to stay near their forest homes, but they still had contact with the rest of the world. Most elven leaders had powerful magic that allowed them to communicate with people hundreds of miles away. Often that wasn’t even necessary, as outsiders regularly came to seek elvish knowledge.

Gracious and cordial hosts, elves rarely turned away a traveler who seemed sincere. Whether their guests were seeking mighty spells or simple herb lore, the elves shared their homes, divulging as much as they deemed their visitor needed. This openness and courtesy brought all manner of people to the forests of Lilat and Heréal, and it bolstered the elves’ reputation with the rest of the world.

As a result, the elves had more allies than enemies. They offered aid to cities and tribes across the endless plains. The elves had contact with the cultures of the flatlands as well. Always careful to avoid military entanglements, the elves rarely marched forth to war. Instead they

offered advice and information when those they considered friends were threatened. For instance, the masons of Chemak were offered several new stoneworking techniques when threatened by orcs with siege engines.

On occasion, the orcish hordes would advance north into the forests, burning as they came. The elves long ago tired of negotiating with such untrustworthy creatures. For a time, they had attempted to arrive at a stable peace with the orcs, but after a few years or even months, the violence would always start again. This kind of instability is troubling to the elvish temperament. Since the days of any living elf’s great-grandparents, the two races have been at war, the only sustained conflict the elves have entered.

Their relations with other groups on the endless plains were good, if distant. In particular, the elves cultivated the friendship of the Wisp tribe. In return for information gathered by the Wisps in the outside world, the elves provided them with magical concealment. The Wisps would at times act as go-betweens for the elves, accompanying elven diplomats or acting as messengers.

Relations between the elves and the dwarves of Duerok were never friendly. The two cultures had much worth sharing, but their radically different lifestyles and philosophies made it difficult for them to understand each other. This gap became a chasm when the lunar rain began. Reports reached the forest of dwarves barring their gates to outsiders, even launching raiding parties to do battle with surface dwellers who sought shelter. True or not, these stories were widely believed, and scarred the attitude of many elves toward the dwarves.

Now, the L’arile Nation has become one of Highpoint’s major political forces, despite its leaders’ misgivings. Diplomacy takes time and resources that would otherwise be devoted to better mechs or stronger magic. But the elves have become one of the continent’s strongest forces in the battle against the lunar menace, and that kind of power creates friends and enemies no matter how it is wielded. Other mechdoms, and the city-states of Highpoint, take the L’arile Nation’s every action into account.

Of the other major mechdoms, the closest one is the Legion. This does not please the elves. The brash humans are no friends of theirs, and even accidental contact between the two often provokes Legion forces to attack. In particular, the two have sparred over control of the remaining timber in the forests’ southern edge. This aggression often ends badly for the humans, as elvish mechs are quite dangerous



when they have to fight, but so far the short-lived upstarts haven’t learned the advantages of diplomacy.

The Legion is also a long-term problem. Elves are clever enough to see that Shar Thizdic’s true plans are much broader than simply destroying lunar dragons. His army is trained to fight all manner of terrestrial enemies, and his rhetoric makes it clear that he doesn’t think humans have to share Highpoint with anyone else. As his mech fleet gets stronger, the L’arile Nation assumes it will move north and is planning accordingly.

On the other hand, the Stenian Confederacy has earned the elves’ gratitude. The elves are able to see the difference between the dwarves of Duerok and those of the Stenian Confederacy, and appreciate the contributions of the Stenians despite the wary attitude of Duerok towards refugees. Even with their centuries of research and invention, the elves had never considered anything as effective as mechs. While L’arile Nation designs are nothing like those of the Stenians, the dwarves are still credited with the original inspiration. This has overcome much of the ill will generated by the dwarves’ refusal to accept refugees when the lunar rain began.

The two mechdoms have some regular contact, and at times an ambassador from the L’arile Nation will travel among the Stenians. Given the distance between them, their radically different types of mechs, and their opposite social structures, neither group has much to offer the other aside from words of support. But these days even encouragement is valuable.

Of course, the elves have a long-term plan for the Stenian Confederacy as well. The dwarves are the only other power capable of challenging the Legion, and members of the L’arile Nation are subtly encouraging the Stenians in this direction. Information about Legion troop deployment is passed to interested dwarves, along with details of their mech construction and observations about Shar Thizdic’s menacing words. With any luck, the dwarves will find a way to blunt the Legion’s threat on their own.

The Irontooth Clans intrigue the L’arile



Nation. Again, geography has prevented the two from having much direct contact, but the elves are certainly aware of the mech devils' reputation. Always on the lookout for new ways to strike their enemies, some members of the L'arile Nation feel that ambassadors should be sent on a goodwill visit to the Irontooth. Their hope is that the freewheeling clans will be willing to share some of their formidable skills.

Others object to this idea. The animated mechs used by L'arile Nation pilots are usually weaker than their steam-powered counterparts, so arts like mech fu are not as useful to elvish pilots. Besides, the Irontooth are wild raiders. If they shared territory with L'arile Nation, the two would undoubtedly come to conflict. This group argues that seeking further contact is at best a waste of time. With the elves overall split on this idea, any such contact will be the work of individuals without the backing of their kin.

Historically, the elves have been at odds with the orcs, but in an ironic twist of fate, the relentless lunar rain has actually improved this situation. It has taken a terrible toll on the orc hordes, and even those who make it to the forest have trouble finding any elves to attack. This was never an intense war, but the elves still welcomed its absence. Now that orcs are developing mechs of their own, L'arile Nation strategists are considering how to stop them before they cast their eyes northward again.

The city-state of Glatek is a strong ally and a welcome one. It trades with most other denizens of Highpoint, making it easier for the elves to acquire goods that can't be had in the forest. As long as Glatek remains free, the elves will be able to trade timber and the occasional magic item with cultures far to the south and west.

L'arile Nation is aware that both the Legion

and the Stenian Confederacy would like to control Glatek, and the elves are working to secure the city's independence. Their mechs have started making regular trips there, and city leaders are being offered support behind the scenes.

Chemak, the walled city-state, is kept at a more cautious distance. It poses no direct threat to the elves and seems unlikely to attack L'arile Nation territory, so the elves maintain peaceful relations. But the city's militaristic mindset, plus its willingness to sit in one place and endure whatever happens, runs counter to elvish thinking.

Ominously, the elves have heard that Chemak has sent messengers to Shar Thizdic to discuss a possible alliance. It has been a long time since the city-state tried to expand its power into the endless plains, but with the help of the Legion, it could be done. This would also give Shar Thizdic an impregnable base of operations. At the moment, the elves know that his home on the city-mech Rebirth is vulnerable, thanks to its shoddy construction. As the fastest way to disable the Legion is neutralizing its leader, the elves don't wish to see him retreat to a place they can't reach, just in case the situation to the south becomes unmanageable by regular means.

## GEOGRAPHY

The Lilat and Heréal forests have sheltered the greatest beauty on Highpoint, but today even the most verdant grotto is just a reminder of the stands of oak, maple, and fir that once capped the continent. Most elves still remember their home as an uninterrupted canvas where nature expressed her art. Scattered throughout the trees were cities that were the center of culture, learning, craftsmanship, and social harmony.

This mythic vision of paradise was reality a century ago, but today the forests are stripped nearly bare and the cities are in ruins. The craggy hill sheltering a delicate grove was once covered in brush, ferns, and black earth. After the lunar rain burned away anchoring plants from the hillsides, the rain-soaked soil poured down the hills in mudslides that choked streams, snapped tree trunks, and drowned slower animals. Meteor craters and lunar dragon burrows create lined scars across more level areas.

Yet despite the burned edges of the leaves

and broken limbs across the forest floor, Lilat and Heréal have endured to strike awe into races who have known only ruins, wastelands, and the loud innards of mechs. The oldest, largest trees have survived and shelter the saplings that grow beneath them. Fast-growing grasses and broadleaf foliage outgrow the damage of the lunar rain to frame with green the burned stumps of blasted trees, and these stumps in turn create nighttime shelter for raptors, rabbits, foxes, and other creatures. So despite the continuing trauma they must endure, the catastrophe has not yet destroyed the primal spirit of these forests, and now with new tools at their disposal, the residents of these lands work to ensure it never will.

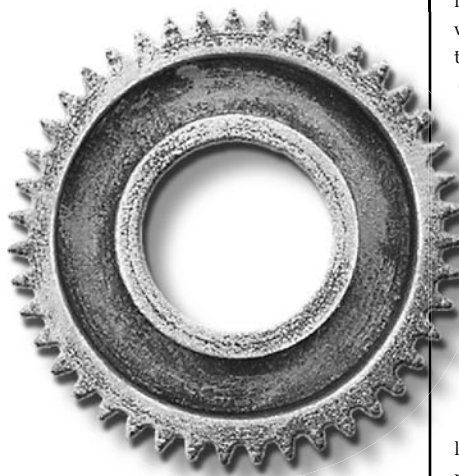
## HERÉAL

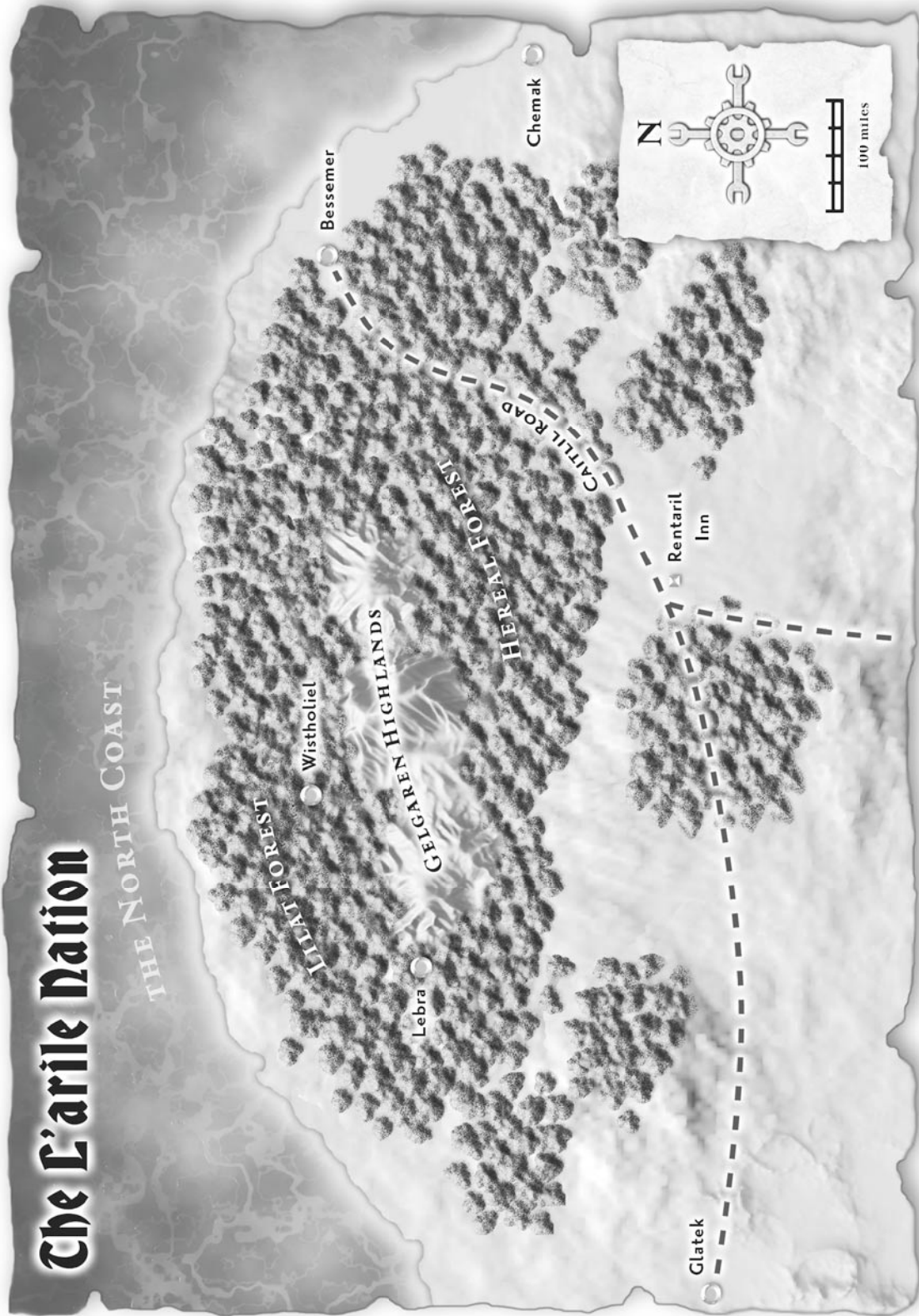
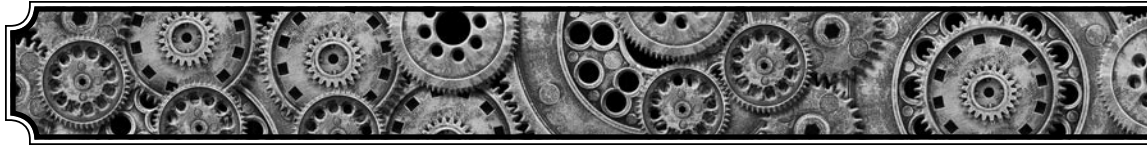
This is the southeastern forest and thus the region best known to travelers from the endless plains. It is divided from Lilat by the Gelgaren Highlands — a narrow region of low, rocky hills which were more barren than the surrounding terrain even before the lunar rains, but which now are desolate in comparison to other regions. The landscape, though harsh and uneven, is not particularly forbidding if you know a good route, but terrestrial dragons have nested here for generations. Now they fight to keep their lairs from the invading lunar dragons. To be caught in the area during a dragon battle is dangerous, and the dragons are more alert for intruders than they have been in the past.

Farther to the northeast, the land levels out and the two forests mingle more freely. An ancient trade route known as Caitlil once came north from Stilt City and Glatek to Bessemer, but now that the villages are in shambles or have become mobile, the road suffers from disuse. At the edge of the forest, the dangerous Rentaril Inn stands alongside the remnants of the Caitlil road. Once a combination fort, roadhouse, and trading post, the Inn is now a symbol of the dark bargains some have made to escape the lunar menace. Its presence helps guard the southern border of the L'arile Nation, although it would be a mistake to say that the elves control its power.

## The Rentaril Inn

The Rentaril family has run the inn at the edge of the Heréal forest for three generations. Once every year, just before the Endless Traders would start their journey west, the inn







used to transform from a hostel to bustling market. Merchants would come south from elven villages to trade with humans who would come north for forest goods. Vendors set up tents and simple stalls around the inn to barter for the best deals. The elves would return to their homes with products from the plains, and the humans raced south to Edge to supply the Endless Traders for their trek west.

This commerce was nourished and protected by the sturdy walls of the Rentaril Inn. The desire of the wealthiest merchants for warm meals and soft beds ensured the continuing wealth of the Rentaril family for generations. They maintained a small force of mercenaries to protect their guests and claimed the right to expel from the area anyone who caused problems. Many humans thought of these landlords as nobles, though they would have referred to themselves as stewards of the land.

With their wealth, the Rentarils were able to hire wizards to protect their inn from the lunar rain. The latest owner of the inn, Rynn Rentaril, was obsessed with protecting the area from the catastrophe, even after it was too dangerous to hold the yearly market. Local humans and elves had gathered inside and around the inn for protection, and Rynn felt responsible for their well-being. He sought more and more radical forms of magic to

protect his home and the people who trusted him. He began working with some of the earliest riftwalkers, funding their experiments in return for their protection from the rains.

All of this is historical fact, well remembered by the long-lived elves. The next part of the story is poorly understood, but can be reconstructed from the stories of the survivors. It started with an attack on the inn by a group of five lunar dragons. This had been expected, and Rynn had assured everyone that his mages would protect them. Those who were less trusting ran into the forest, and it was they who survived to tell the story.

From hiding, they saw three of the dragons fly away, but there was no way to know if they had been chased away or had finished

their destruction of the inn without approaching again. They returned, and at first they thought the inn had been smashed to its foundations.

They discovered that the inn and the people remained, but were nearly transparent and completely intangible. The

people stood still, but not paralyzed — they looked as though they were waiting for something. They didn't seem to notice each other or the returnees. Two lunar dragons even stood at one side of the inn, translucent tails flicking back and forth.

There was an audible gasp as one of the

figures looked into the distance in surprise. A smile broke out on her face. The woman shattered like a window, scattering crystalline shards of herself in a five-foot area. A curious survivor was caught in the blast, but he appeared unharmed. The shards vibrated and then reformed into the woman, who resumed waiting as though nothing had happened.

The effects of the blast were noticed only later, when the investigator discovered that minor cuts and scratches didn't heal. His clothes could not be patched and bruises remained discoloring his skin. Minor illnesses never seemed to leave him. The exposure to the shards had somehow left his body unable to heal and his equipment unrepairable. A nearby priest was able to dispel the effect, but rumors spread quickly.

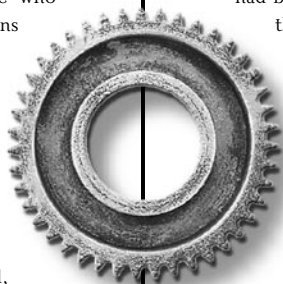
Living beings exposed to the shards will never heal until a cleric restores them through *greater restoration*. Reliable reports indicate that any object that encounters one of the bursts from the residents of the Rentaril Inn, including mechs or other large objects only touched in a small part of their entire structure, cannot be successfully repaired until the effects are dispelled by an equivalent spell.

Mages who later came to investigate confirmed that those around the inn are not in or between any of the near planes. In fact, everyone agrees that the inn remains in this plane. The odd riftwalker ritual created a state never seen before or since. One of the more eccentric theories claims that in an effort to be unreachable, the mages had given some of their claim to reality to other forces outside of the planes. The deal was meant to be temporary, but something went wrong, and now these forces use the inn and its inhabitants to give them some foothold. The existence of these forces is unproven and widely dismissed as a bizarre fantasy by the magical community.

Regardless, the Rentaril Inn is now a dangerous area avoided by terrestrial and lunar beings alike. Though disturbing and uncontrollable, it creates a barrier against Legion invasion as strong as any river or mountain, a necessary evil when compared to the easy route to the interior of Herèal that Caitlil would otherwise provide.

## Caitlil and Bessemer

Caitlil was the most heavily traveled route through the forest before the catastrophe, and Bessemer was a common destination of travelers and merchants. The road is now used as a path for mechs on missions for the L'arile Nation. The nation does not claim to





secure this area, but their mechs appear often enough that small settlements of refugees have gathered along its route hoping for safety through proximity to these warriors.

In better times, roadhouses had been built along the length of Caitlil to make the route comfortable and improve its safety. Local villages took responsibility for the care and upkeep of the buildings. The idea was for towns to be more attractive to those transporting goods for sale, so competition kept the quality of these structures high. Most were decorated with bas relief sculpture, festive paint, or tapestries. They were often built of stone or hardwood to withstand the thick snow of the northern winters.

While most the decoration and furnishings have been stripped away by the lunar rains or refugees desperate for some memory of their past lives, the solid structure of these buildings has allowed them to be used as shelters by the bands of homeless elves who wander Caitlil. Once the most sedentary people of Highpoint, the elves in this region are now nomads, traveling across the route in search of supplies and security.

While the elves have grown more wary of outsiders, the social divisions between villages have eroded in recent times, so that two groups of elven refugees that come upon the same secure location are likely to share it without trouble. They share stories of the time before the lunar rains and exhibit the books or art they were able to salvage from their village. When it comes to sharing resources, they may be less generous, but trade is common. Groups of outsiders are generally allowed to share the roadhouse but remain outside the circle of conversation and nostalgia; orcs and half-orcs are chased away if the band is strong enough to do so. The arrival of a L'arile mech crew is always celebrated, and they are constantly bargained with questions about current affairs and the situation on Tannanliel.

This sense of camaraderie is a result of the hard lives the elves have endured in recent years. Those who cannot get a place in the mech culture of the L'arile Nation must avoid hungry predators, lunar creatures, and the rains. Food is more plentiful in the forest than it is to the south, but that doesn't mean that residents of the forest have everything they need. In a culture used to focus and specialized study, everyone needs to participate equally in gathering, hunting, mending, and guard duty to ensure their survival.

Large population centers attracted the wrath of the lunar dragons, so they were abandoned early. Certainly that wrath came

down on Bessemer. The refugees in this ruined city know it would be foolish to try to rebuild even a fraction of its former sophistication and beauty, as that would certainly bring back predators and enemies they could not hope to defend themselves against. Still, these settlers cannot bear to leave their beloved city to ruin and decay. They scavenge constantly for pieces of their past, hoarding their treasure in small rooms and chambers that survived the destruction. Their goal is not the accumulation of wealth, which is meaningless in these desperate times, but the preservation of their cultural heritage.

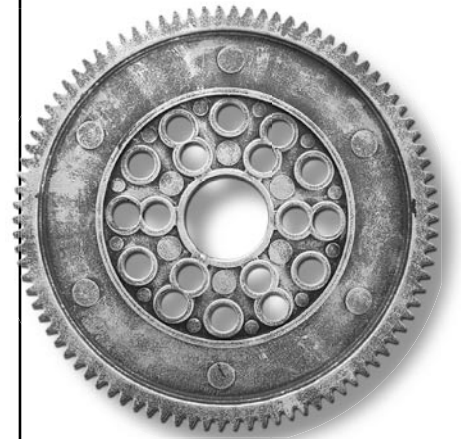
Because of their situation, the Bessemer refugees are more insular than their nomadic neighbors. They challenge anyone who approaches their hoards, and for good reason, as the riches of this city attract a number of treasure hunters and monster attacks are not uncommon, especially from the forestrats who are particularly common in the area. Although the city has collapsed for the most part, there is still enough shelter under the remaining trees and the abandoned farmland attracts enough game that many predators and primitive races have made the undefended city their home.

Caitlil, the overgrown villages along its route, and the shattered city at its end are now rugged locations, far less safe than the village-mechs that hold the more fortunate. Still, the traditional elven way of life was vibrant recently enough that you can still see the grace with which these people lived, whether it's in a sculpture preserved in a corner or a fallen arch that echoes the shape of the branches of nearby trees.

## Gelgaren Highlands

Many elven histories have survived, boxed and archived in the bellies of animated mechs or bundled protectively in a backpack amid roots and old clothes. One such history tells the story of the arrival of the chromatic dragons in the Gelgaren Highlands, five generations ago:

*They came to us by the dozens, like geese returning north. Such were their numbers we feared they came to tear us apart, and we armed ourselves for combat. But they ignored our cities and settled in the scrub-filled hills in the middle part of our lands, quarrelling amongst themselves for the best caves or valleys. After weeks of watching our new neighbors nervously, word came from the dwarven clans that these dragons had come up from deep below the surface, deeper even than their mines went. Something had frightened them from their lairs, so they fled to the surface seeking a new home.*



*There were those who compared the dragons to humans who come to our forests asking for sanctuary from some new warlord or chieftain who had taken power in the endless plains. But it was different, because this was an army come to live with us, not a few scared souls begging us for help.*

*In the end, despite all the dire predictions, the dragons did not expand their territory. The area became known as Gelgaren, meaning "tension," because there were constant calls to clear out the dragons completely. No one was brave enough to risk failure and the series of reprisals that would follow. Eventually these crusaders faded away, because there were no elven villages in that territory and the dragons never hunted near our towns.*

*Now, with the advantage of years, we think the dragons were as scared of us as we of them. They took the land because they had nowhere else to go, and so long as we left them alone they would find other areas to gather food and treasure — a tacit truce to keep our homes secure.*

It is rumored that the green dragon Zlaan came as a hatchling with that first wave of dragons. Zlaan is an ancient dragon who controls the entire Gelgaren Highlands, as much as any dragon can claim to control others of its kind. Even for a dragon, her age is extremely advanced. There have been groups of adventurers who went into Gelgaren to try for the fame of slaying the beast, but while she has never attacked an elven town, Zlaan has no hesitation about destroying those who violate her territory, and has not been shy to exhibit her breed's particular taste for elven flesh.

With the advent of the lunar rains, the dragons have had to fend off other attackers — the lunar dragons. The lairs that have been dug through the region over the last three millennia are perfect for the lunar invaders, and they have been aggressive in their attacks. Traditionally,





ancient dragons like Zlaan spend most of their time sleeping through the years, but this threat has caused her to rouse herself.

In a strange imitation of the mechs and city-mechs, Zlaan surrounds herself with smaller dragons and patrols her lands ceaselessly, taking shelter from the lunar rains in one of the many large lairs she claims. This has the disadvantage of leaving certain areas undefended for long periods of time, but she can be certain of eliminating the lunar dragons or other infiltrators when she passes by again.

Those who come uninvited to help fight the lunar dragons should not expect a welcome from Zlaan or her dragons. They see any outsiders as potential threats. Worse than encountering Zlaan on patrol would be to stumble upon a battle between the lunar and terrestrial dragons. Breath weapons fill the air and huge boulders, trees, and draconic bodies are flung around the vicinity. For now Zlaan has the upper hand, but the lunar dragons are becoming more and more numerous, and her ancient body is long past due for a decade-long nap.

Should Zlaan and the chromatic dragons fall, the lunar dragons operating from within the countless hiding places in Gengaren would

be a much greater menace. The L'arile Nation is uncertain how to help the dragons, if that is even desirable. They can't send mechs into the area without appearing to attack them, and efforts at diplomacy have thus far failed. The ancient wyrm is intelligent, but her pride and aggressive nature make it unlikely that she would ever accept aid from the elves. There is a strong faction within the L'arile that hopes the two sides will continue to battle each other to a stalemate.

## LILAT

The region north and west of the Gengaren Highlands is thicker and denser than the Heréal forest. Lilat is harder to navigate if you don't know the area well, which makes it perfect for those who wish to remain more isolated. Wizards, druids, and other mysteries are found here, with no equivalent of the trade route that connects the Heréal villages. The north coast is a steep, rocky slope to the sea even during high-water, although there are a few minor ports.

Heréal's reputation as an area of commerce and culture has faded into a memory, but Lilat remains better known through myth and legend than documents or anecdotes. Its residents are unknown because they choose to be, and are more independent than their southern neighbors.

## Lebra

The best-known landmark in Lilat is the former home of the White Congress. All that is left of its prestigious past is a meadow in the shape of the library, free of the debris that lies elsewhere. There are still some who live in this area, but now they cater to the treasure hunters rather than to mages. While not as vigorous as it was before the fall of the city, the economy of the surrounding forest in food and adventuring supplies is fairly lucrative. There are even some discussions of attempting to rebuild the city, but so far it is only talk.

The main obstacles are the dangerous phenomenon present throughout the city. When Lebra was destroyed, the wizards in the city were developing many experiments and rituals. Not all of them were shut down correctly or at





all, which leaves the city strewn with unmapped oddities. Some of the reported encounters include portals to other planes, odd creatures composed from other creatures, and even a room which will move you back in time one day if you spend the night there.

It is said the library of the White Congress, when it reappears in 501 years, will reappear on the spot where it disappeared in the city. Therefore, the residents reason, the White Congress will return and rebuild the city before that time passes. Until then, they get by as best they are able.

## The North Coast

There are no routes through Lilat that would allow large wagons to make it through the forest. In addition, there are few seaports on all of Highpoint that would make seafaring trade a lucrative pursuit. For these reasons, though the cliffs that make up the North Coast would allow buildings that would be the same horizontal distance from the waterline at all times of year, the elves have never had much interest in developing this resource.

Others, seeing this oversight, have taken advantage of the situation to create small port towns along the cliff. Mostly human, these ports are filled with smugglers, mercenaries, pirates, and others whose work encourages them to find ways around the standard routes through Highpoint. The L'arile Nation still refuses to clean out the area. Anyone on board a ship at sea caught in a severe lunar storm can forget about coming back to port, but there are still those today who take the risks.

The black market has been hit as hard as the legal markets in traditional illicit supplies such as poisons, drugs, and fenced treasure. However, a new market has opened in mech parts, and a ship hold is much more desirable for large pieces of metal than a horse-drawn wagon. The risk of a meteor piercing the ship makes water routes riskier, but in some cases the risk of land routes is about the same.

This is especially true of the route from the flatlands to Legion territory. The Legion will pay a good price for high-quality Stenian parts, and the overland route through the patrol routes of city-mechs is not ideal. Technically, the Stenian Confederacy forbids any steam technology to be traded with other mechdoms, especially one that has a history of kidnapping Guild members. So by taking the materials north from the Stenians instead of east, a Stenian citizen looking for a little extra gold can trade his goods to an independent sailor — which is technically legal, though the Justi-

cars may still find a reason to object — who can then sail east around the coast and then up the Tyratian River to meet the Legion procurement officials. Irontooth Clansmen, who are far less concerned about the wrath of the Stenian Confederacy, are known to trade scrapped Stenian mechs along this route regularly.

Though the economic motivations have changed, the port towns themselves change little. The buildings have moved back into the forest for protection. Pulleys carry cargo up and down the cliffs to the docks. There are actually two sets of docks — one is set to the perfect height for low-water, and the other is set for high-water. It is rare that cargo gets unloaded during these times, but supplies are generally taken on.

More importantly, the North Coast ports are a place to collect stories, warnings, and job offers. Taverns and brothels are the largest and most important buildings, with accommodations coming a close third. There are almost no permanent residents in these port towns, and usually the towns don't have a name, or at least not a name everyone can agree to. Often they're referred to by the name of the largest tavern in town, so sailors might tell each other to meet at the Giggling Goose or the Leaning Fir without meaning the bars themselves.

Although any race is welcome in these towns, government officials are not. A military officer or anyone claiming official power in the region will not wake up after spending the night. A large thieves' guild does hold some power in the region, and often acts as a quasi-governmental institution for the resolution of conflicts and general leadership.

## Wistholiel

The word is elven for "the city of the Wisp tribe," although that may be something of an exaggeration. The Wisp are a nomad tribe known for their abilities at camouflage. They are found in so many different places that many assume they are completely nomadic, and few able-bodied adults stay in Wistholiel for long.

The village is hidden deep in the heart of the Lilat forest and its location is a carefully guarded secret. It is here that the elderly Wisps care for the young of the tribe. Once they are old enough, the young are encouraged to leave the village and join a band to explore and gather resources for the tribe. When a group returns from their trip, their presence is celebrated, but they leave again within a few days.

The Wisps have no formal agreement to join with the L'arile Nation, but informally the Wisps have been helping the elves learn

what the Legion has been up to in the plains. In exchange, the L'arile have been known to give wandering groups of Wisps space in their mechs, but the tribe members never stay on the mech for long.

For the Wisps, their best weapons are secrecy and knowledge. Wistholiel is both their most dangerous secret and the repository of all their knowledge in the form of their elders. They would never reveal its location or bring an outsider there by choice. The tribe is small, and each Wisp personally knows every man, woman, and child who would be hurt if that knowledge were released.

Although the existence of the city is something of a rumor, an even more obscure theory says that the Wisps' abilities at hiding are generated by an artifact they keep in their village. If someone could steal that artifact, they could sell it to a mechdom for a huge price. It seems unlikely that the Wisps have such a powerful object, but many have gone looking for their village in the Lilat forest, never to be seen again.

## FACTIONS

The L'arile Nation is a loose group of allied mechs with no meaningful central authority. This doesn't make them weak or ineffective — L'arile territory is one of the safest places left in Highpoint. But their leadership structure is much less formal than that of their neighbors to the south and west.

Above all else, the members of L'arile Nation want to preserve and rebuild. They have salvaged the traditional elven way of life, grafting it into the structure of a mechdom in hopes that both things would be made stronger. Instead of risking their remaining forces in endless squabbles with lunar dragons (and other mechdoms), the L'arile elves use stealth and speed to avoid conflict when possible. If battle is needed, or if an enemy is caught unprepared, the elves strike with unrivalled fury, hoping to utterly destroy the foe before it can respond.

## STATUS AMONG THE ELVES

Elvish politics are subtle and courteous. Their leadership structure is a flexible thing, driven by consensus rather than force. But they have their disagreements all the same. Some are resolved through words, others by



simply moving to a different territory. And occasionally discord turns into a conflict of weapons and wizards.

Status among the elves is conferred because of one's wisdom and accomplishments, rather than by birth or wealth. Leadership in the L'arile Nation is therefore a loosely defined thing. Powerful wizards and revered elders have authority over others, but this authority comes from the consensus of those below them. Such government as exists is small, a skeleton when compared to the fleshed-out administrative body created by the Stenian Confederacy.

One position that confers instant status is that of mech pilot. The survival of the elves isn't the only thing riding with their mech fleets — the future of their forests does, too. A mech pilot is responsible for keeping his or her passengers alive, avoiding threats when possible and defeating them when not.

On the larger L'arile mechs, the pilot is also responsible for the saplings growing inside and outside the construct. Day-to-day care is the charge of elven foresters, but the pilot must make certain that the mech spends enough time getting sunlight and water for its charges. Care must also be taken lest the mech's movement jostle the saplings and impair their growth.

## THE WHITE CONGRESS

Its numbers are fewer and its library is gone, but the White Congress still has a vital influence on elven society. Many of its members have created mechs of their own, both village-mechs and battleworthy constructs. They no longer have one place they all call home, but this hasn't stopped them from working together and sharing research. Many of them dwell on Tannanliel, or visit for long periods, and messages fly thick and fast between the scattered mechs of the other members.

Since the lunar rain began, the White Congress has sharpened its focus. Its members are still interested in all areas of magic, but the century-long crisis has directed their work into more practical matters. One senior member of the White Congress is worth a hundred elven archers in combat. Many of them are more

dangerous than the mechs they now live on, as many lunar dragons have discovered too late.

This battle prowess, combined with the elvish respect for powerful magicians, has put many White Congress members at the top of the L'arile Nation's society. Their power and insight make them natural leaders. Even reluctant members of the White Congress find themselves assuming the status of elders when a crisis is at hand.

Their tight organization also helps. The repeated assaults on Lebra forced the White Congress to develop group tactics and various useful forms of communications. It also fostered a strong bond between the surviving members, who now respond to each others' needs without thinking twice.

More than one major decision that affected the L'arile Nation has been made by a handful of White Congress members who were dealing with the same problem.

And this has become a sore point among other elven groups, including several other wizardly associations. The White Congress outstrips all other organizations in terms of power and status. Deliberately or otherwise, its members often rise to prominence. Elves are generally a good-hearted people, and few of them think the White Congress is deliberately trying to take over the entire L'arile Nation, but it has become difficult for other groups to make their voices heard. Some arcane associations are in danger of disappearing as their junior members strive to join the White Congress instead.

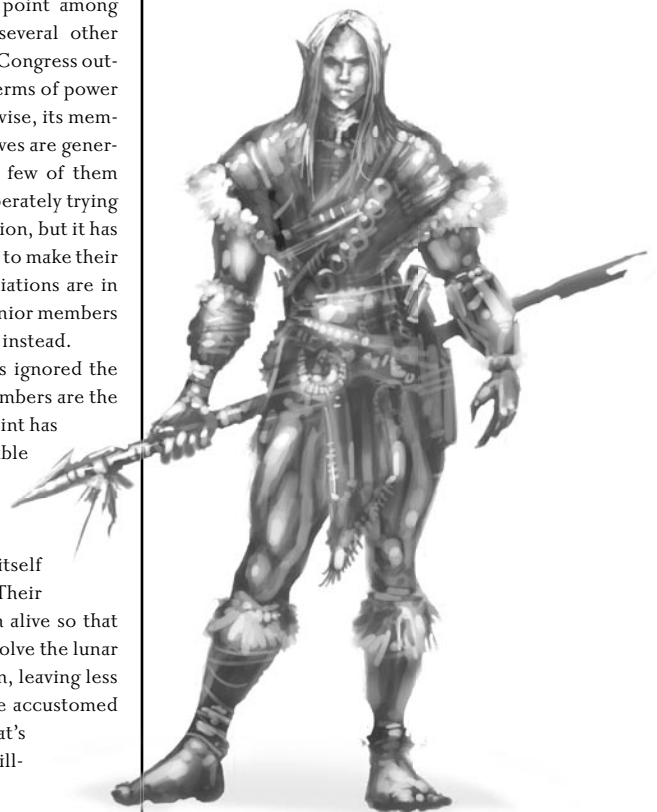
So far the White Congress has ignored the grievances left in its wake. Its members are the most skilled battle mages Highpoint has ever seen, and the most formidable elven mechs have generally been created among its ranks. Having given up so much already, the group is recreating itself in what elves see as a great hurry. Their task is to keep the L'arile Nation alive so that it can become strong enough to solve the lunar problem. That requires fast action, leaving less time for discussion than elves are accustomed to. For the good of Highpoint, that's a price the White Congress is willing to pay.

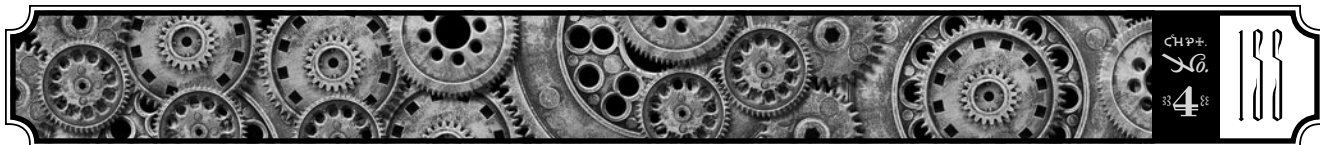
## THE CONVERTS

Elves have always been divided between their fascination with wizardry and their love of nature. Over long years, the arcane arts became dominant, simply because elves had become so attuned to the wild world that many of them no longer saw it as something that needed study. But others maintained their study of what they called "the green mystery." Some were simple foresters, and some were druids or rangers who maintained a deep link to the spiritual side of nature.

Before the lunar rain, such elves worked for the common good, keeping the forest healthy and free of monsters. Many still do. Others have been affected by the forces pounding at Highpoint, both the meteors from above and the divine assaults taking place on unfathomable planes. These people have a harsh, almost twisted, sense of the natural balance. The most infamous group of them are the Converts.

Druids all, the Converts worship nature with a zeal that would shame most paladins. They call themselves Converts because all of them were something else before they were druids





### A TYPICAL CONVERT

The Converts aren't evil, but they frequently endanger everyone else they come across. Many of their number took the druid's path after many years studying another discipline, such as wizardry. They might object to arcane magic on philosophical grounds, but the Converts are quite willing to use it to further their own goals.

A typical Convert uses summoned creatures to fight her battles, supporting them with both druid and wizard magic. In combat, most Converts summon physically powerful creatures, like wolves or hippogriffs, to get the benefit of their Augment Summoning feat. A Convert's combat skill is adequate but not impressive, especially since they avoid the traditional (and useful) elven swords and bows. They usually wear leather armor, reasoning that the protection it provides is a worthwhile trade for the 10% chance of an arcane spell failing.

Converts also have animals of their own. Owls are a common familiar, as the Spot check bonus they provide is useful in the shadowy groves where druids dwell. The druids of the northern forests have all manner of animal companions, but Converts almost always take a Medium viper. This makes it easier for them to recognize each other, and the viper is easier to smuggle aboard a mech than a wolf would be.

In battle, a Convert starts by summoning creatures with her spontaneous casting, sacrificing non-combat spells first. While these animals engage the enemy, the Convert uses magic to impede the foe's movement and to strengthen summoned creatures. If things are going well, the Convert will deploy offensive spells and items. If the summoned creatures can't handle the opposition, a Convert will flee at top speed, trusting her *trackless step* to help her avoid pursuit.

Coming from a wizardly background, most Converts look at the natural world with an analytical eye. They emphasize mental skills like Knowledge (nature) and Spellcraft at the expense of "softer" interactive skills such as Handle Animal or Heal. Their plans often show the same focus. A group of Converts might thwart a mech-building plan in order to stop the builders from uprooting trees, even though the mech would provide the region its only defense against a lunar dragon.

**Typical Convert, elf Drd3/Wiz2:** CR 5; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 4d3+2d8; hp 21; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+1 Dex, +2 armor), touch 11, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +3; Grp +3; Mech Atk +1; Atk/Full Atk +4 melee (1d8/x3, masterwork spear) or +5 ranged (1d4, masterwork sling); SQ Elf traits, low-light vision, trackless step, wild empathy, woodland stride; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +8; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 11.

**Skills and Feats:** Concentration +7, Handle Animal +3, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (nature) +14, Listen +9, Search +4, Spellcraft +10, Spot +6 (+9 in shadows), Survival +7 (+9 when above ground); Alertness (with familiar), Augment Summoning, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (conjunction).

**Possessions:** Masterwork spear, masterwork sling, leather armor.

**Languages:** Common, Elven, Gnome, Gnoll.

**Druid spells prepared** (4/3/2, save DC 12 + spell level): 0—*flare*, *guidance* (x2), *resistance*; 1st—*entangle*, *magic fang*, *speak with animals*; 2nd—*barkskin*, *flaming sphere*.

**Wizard spells prepared** (4/3, save DC 12 + spell level): 0—*detect magic*, *flare*, *message* (x2); 1st—*obscuring mist*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *summon monster I*.

**Familiar:** Owl (see entry in MM).

Most Converts carry several small magic items to aid them in and out of combat. A typical Convert will have four scrolls (*animal messenger*, *cat's grace*, *heat metal*, and *warp wood*) and a *wand of charm animal*. She also has a *wand of magic missiles* (level 3) for use on tough targets. More than one predator, whether on two legs or four, has found that the novice druid has an arcane bite.

—mostly wizards and rangers, but all manner of occupations are now found among their ranks. This conversion is more than unhappiness with a goal or career. The Converts believe themselves to be a new kind of druid for Highpoint's new age, and in order to join, a would-be initiate must renounce their previous life. This has led to hurt feelings, broken families, and occa-

sional bloodshed.

Their actions have much the same effect on the world at large. The Converts preach a message of uniting with nature, and their idea of unity is violent. Convert theology holds that the lunar disaster is the fault of the world's people. They cut down forests, tunneled into mountains, turned plains from prairie into

fields, and in doing so they weakened the world's spirit. This spirit, which less enlightened people wrongly see as a variety of gods, became vulnerable to assault by the world-spirit of the moon.

Converts believe that the world can become strong again only if its children return to a more natural state. They particularly oppose steam technology and other feats of applied engineering. However, magic is also suspect, especially when it is used for bizarre new creations like mechs. Such things are too far from the Convert ideal of small rural villages and solitary hermits, all living as equals with the animals, taking only what nature provides.

It might not be the most practical philosophy on Highpoint, but the reason it's problematic is that the Converts use force to achieve it. Villages are overrun with savage animals, fields are blighted, and mechs are attacked with *warp wood* or *rusting grasp* as part of the Converts' campaign. As the rest of Highpoint struggles to rebuild society, the Converts are working hard to finish pulling it down.

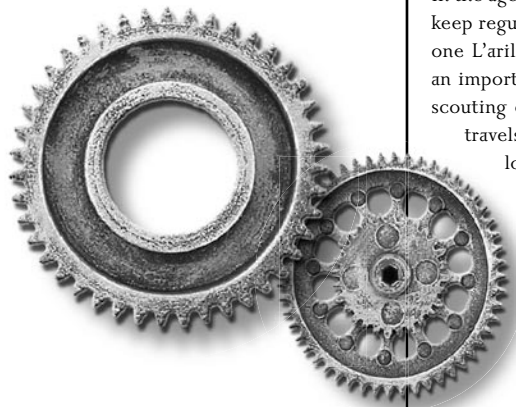
For all that, the teachings of the Converts appeal to many residents of the forest. The Converts offer a bold and simple solution to all the current problems — just return to the ancient ways of the woods and everything will sort itself out. So far they are only found in Lilat and Heréal, but the longer the lunar rain continues, the more their ranks may grow.

### THE CYARIEL

Although not founded in response to the Converts, the Cyariel have a mission directly opposed to the druids. They want to create more animated mechs, the bigger the better. Most members of L'arile Nation are content to live in or near a village-mech. The Cyariel would rather fill the forests with creations the size of Tannanliel.

Their name translates to "thousand-city" or "city of thousands." The group is not especially numerous, having perhaps two hundred dedicated members spread across a number of mechs. Their name refers to their goal. The Cyariel want to follow the example set by the Stenian Confederacy. In their dreams, the northern forests would become a safe zone much like the Confederacy, with a half-dozen or more mechs like Tannanliel working to keep it safe.

They pursue this end by any means available. Some have lived on the elven city-mech itself, learning what they could from the Order of



Tannanriel. Others have negotiated with powerful outsiders for secrets, or stolen plans from the steam cultures to the south and west. The Cyarliel are willing to consider using technology as a supplement to the arcane arts.

Speed is also one of their goals. The lunar rain has lessened in recent years, but monsters from the moon still prowl the land in great numbers. The Cyarliel want to have a second elfen city-mech operational as soon as possible, hopefully within another year. They had expected more cooperation from Tannan, but upon hearing of the group's mission, he apparently had them barred from advancing within the Order. Nobody knows quite why, and so they pursue their goal undeterred.

## THE SYLVAN SHARDS

Not a faction so much as a vocation, the Sylvan Shards are a group dedicated to keeping the fragments of L'arile Nation connected to each other. An outgrowth of an informal communication system that has existed in the forests for many years, the Shards travel through the woods on foot or in small mechs, carrying messages and spreading information.

Shards either travel alone or in small groups composed of individuals with mixed abilities. Before the lunar rain, they traveled between villages, receiving food and lodging as payment for their services. Membership in the Shards was informal, and often an elf would work as a Shard for a few months or years while pondering some complicated problem. One of the most famous, the late ranger Tyrnan Blackfell, is said to have discovered his deadly double-dagger fighting technique during a six-month stint as a Shard.

When the elves had stationary homes, it didn't matter that Shard service was sporadic.

In the age of mechs, the group works harder to keep regular routes. They carry messages from one L'arile mech to another now. Shards play an important role in coordinating attacks and scouting enemies, as they see things in their travels that diviners don't always think to look for. Even so, the group has no official structure. It is held together by pride and a respect for its older members.

This means that almost any sort of person can be found among the Shards. Bards, spies, outlaws, crusaders, philosophers — for free room and board, plus the chance to perhaps snoop through someone else's private affairs, almost anyone can find a benefit in being among the Sylvan Shards.

## CITIZENS OF L'ARILE NATION

### Cylla, the Green Jynni

**Cylla, female elf Rng19:** CR 19; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 19d8-38; hp 48; Init +7; Spd 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (good); AC 23 (+3 Dex, +6 armor, +2 natural armor, +2 deflection), touch 15, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +19; Mech Atk +9; Grp+18; Atk +19 melee (1d6/x3, +1 handaxe) or +25 ranged (1d8+3/x3, +3 seeking longbow); Full Atk +19/+14/+9/+4 melee (1d6/x3, +1 handaxe) or +23/+23/+18/+13/+8 ranged (1d8+3/x3, +3 seeking longbow); SA Spells; SQ low-light vision, camouflage, evasion, favored enemies (aberrations +4, magical beasts +4, plants +2, vermin +4), hide in plain sight, swift tracker, wild empathy +23, woodland stride; AL N; SV Fort +10, Ref +15, Will +12; Str 8, Dex 16, Con 6, Int 13, Wis 23, Cha 14.

**Skills and Feats:** Diplomacy +3, Handle Animal +22, Heal +8, Hide +14, Knowledge (geography) +21, Knowledge (nature) +23, Listen +25, Move Silently +14, Ride +11, Search +17, Sense Motive +14, Spot +25, Survival +28 (+30 above ground, or to avoid natural hazards and getting lost, or when tracking); Alertness, Animal Affinity, Empower Spell, Endurance, Heighten Spell, Improved Initiative, Improved Precise Shot, Manyshot, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Self-Sufficient, Track.

**Possessions:** +1 handaxe, +3 seeking longbow, dagger, bracers of armor +6, amulet of natural armor +2, ring of protection +2, periapt of wisdom +4, gloves of dexterity +4, wings of flying, ring of 3 wishes (1 wish remaining), boots of elvenkind, cloak of elvenkind, wand of summon nature's ally IV

(44 charges).

**Spells** (5/5/4/3; save DC 16 + spell level): As 19th-level ranger.

The ranger Cylla, known by the nickname "Green Jynni," is one of the oldest elves living in L'arile territory. Her five hundredth year saw the beginning of the lunar rain. Since the advent of mechs, she has lived on a village-mech called Lindentop, where she teaches her craft to younger souls. Although she is still a formidable archer, these days she prefers to use magic to resolve conflict. Cylla has given up having animal companions, as she is tired of burying them every few decades.

Cylla looks every one of her 600 years. Her face is wrinkled and her gait is slow. But her hand is yet steady and her eyes miss little. At one time she was a firebrand, cutting through the forest in pursuit of the elves' enemies, but these days she is content to pass on her knowledge while waiting for death to claim her.

### Nevchen Basalt, Fiendish Collector

**Nevchen Basalt, male half-fiend elf Wiz12:** CR 14; Medium outsider (Augmented Humanoid) (Native); HD 12d4+12; hp 42; Init +4; Spd 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (average); AC 21 (+4 Dex, +3 armor, +1 natural armor, +3 deflection), touch 17, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +6; Mech Atk +3; Grp+7; Atk +7 melee (1d4+1, claw) or +11 ranged (1d8/19-20, masterwork light crossbow); Full Atk +7/+7 melee (1d4+1, 2 claws) and +2 melee (1d6+1, bite) or +11 ranged (1d8/19-20, masterwork light crossbow); SA *Smite good*, spell-like abilities, spells; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, DR 10/magic, SR 22, immunity to poison, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +9, Will +11; Str 12, Dex 19, Con 13, Int 25, Wis 17, Cha 17.

**Skills and Feats:** Appraise +7 (+9 with alchemy), Concentration +14, Craft (alchemy) +18, Decipher Script +20, Knowledge (arcana) +22, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +22, Knowledge (the planes) +22, Listen +5, Search +9, Spellcraft +22, Spot +5, Survival +3 (+5 on other planes or underground), Use Magic Device +8; Brew Potion, Craft Magical Arms and Armor, Craft Rod, Craft Staff, Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Forge Ring, Scribe Scroll.

**Possessions:** Staff of evocation, wand of magic missile (37 charges, CL 5th), masterwork light crossbow, cold iron dagger, bracers of armor +3, ring of protection +3, headband of intellect +6, scrolls of arcane sight, gaseous form, lesser globe of invulnerability, passwall, and hold monster (all CL 12th).



*Spells* (4/6/6/5/4/4/3; save DC 13 + spell level): As 12th-level wizard.

Nevchen Basalt has his father's eyes – blazing yellow orbs that reflect the demonic pits where he was conceived. He is a wicked creature, happy to turn against those who do him a favor, but he lacks the malice necessary to become a true monster. Instead he prowls the ruins that dot the northern forests, searching out awful knowledge and finding secrets best left untouched. Nevchen is willing to share his information, and also the works of his skilled hands; in his opinion, bargaining is better than fighting. He has assembled one of Highpoint's best collections of dangerous arcane knowledge and tainted magic items, hiding it in the ruins of a remote elven village.

Nevchen smells of rotten flesh, and a nasty ichor drips from his scaly green skin. His gnarled hands end in claws, his mouth has wicked needle teeth, and crooked wings unfold from his back. He enjoys the disgust that he causes in other creatures, and he often adopts a supremely polite attitude to enhance the contrast.

### Tulena Hickorywild, Lore Hoarder

**Tulena Hickorywild, female elf Brd7:** CR 7; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 7d6; hp 33; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+3 Dex, +3 armor), touch 13, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +5; Mech Atk +2; Grp +5; Atk/Full Atk +9 melee (1d6+1/18-20, +1 rapier) or +9 ranged (1d6/x3, +1 shortbow); SA *Spells*; SQ Low-light vision, bardic knowledge +11, bardic music; AL CG; SV Fort +2, Ref +8, Will +3; Str 11, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 6, Cha 19.

*Skills and Feats:* Appraise +7, Diplomacy +10, Gather Information +15, Knowledge (history) +14, Knowledge (local) +11, Listen +6, Perform (oratory) +15, Perform (wind instruments) +15, Search +3, Spot +0; Lore Hoarder, Skill Focus (Knowledge [history]), Weapon Finesse.

*Possessions:* Masterwork studded leather, +1 rapier, +1 shortbow, ink, quills, parchment, scroll cases.

*Languages:* Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Giant, Gnome, Sylvan.

*Spells* (6/5/5/3; save DC 14 + spell level): As 7th-level bard.

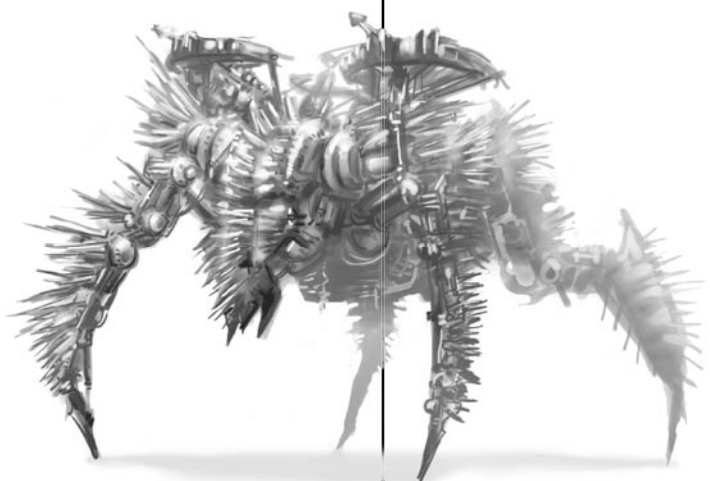
Tulena is on a quest. Her mission in life is to collect every scrap of elven history and culture before it's destroyed by the lunar rain. She travels from one mech to another, collecting and sharing tales. Unfortunately for this mission, while Tulena's memory is quite good,

she's gullible and easily distracted. More than one elven elder, preparing to share the collected knowledge of a village-mech, has discovered that Tulena has wandered off to follow an interesting-looking badger or maybe to track down an unusual birdsong. She means well and her notes are extensive, but by the time she's saved the L'arile Nation's culture, the lunar rain will probably be over one way or another.

Tulena is short, standing barely 5 feet tall. Her hands are perpetually stained with ink, and she's often humming a fragment of some new song she's learned. Talking with her can be distracting, as she's often leaping between three or four subjects at a time. However, if combat happens, her concentration improves tremendously.

## MECHS OF L'ARILE NATION

L'arile mechs have little resemblance to their counterparts in other mechdoms. Their graceful wooden forms are unmistakably elven, and next to solid Stenian and armored Legion mechs they look hopelessly fragile. But the potent magic animating L'arile mechs makes them an even match for their engine-driven counterparts. Steam power might be overtaking magic across most of Highpoint, but in the great northern forests, arcane power is proving that its day is not yet done.



### BLACK ROSE

**Size:** Gargantuan

**Power Source:** Animated (dispel DC 26)

**Payload Units:** 10

**Height:** 20 ft.

**Space/Reach:** 10 ft. by 10 ft./10 ft.

**Crew:** 1 (weapons: 2)

**Firing Ports:** 10

**Hit Dice:** 16

**Hit Points:** 88

**Critical Thresholds:** Not subject to critical hits

**Base Initiative:** +3

**Speed:** 50 ft.

**Maneuverability:** Good

**AC:** 6

**Hardness:** 5 (wood)

**Base melee attack:** +1

**Base ranged attack:** +3

**Unarmed damage:** 1d10+1d6+4 plus poison

**Trample:** largest Medium; safe Small; damage 3d6

**Saves:** Fort +0, Ref +2, Will –

**Abilities:** Str 18, Dex 16, Con –, Int –, Wis –, Cha –

**Mechcraft DC:** 34

**Base Planning Time:** 68 days

**Base Cost:** 1272 gp

**Total Cost:** 22,526 gp plus cost of poison

**Labor Requirements:** 1,920 man-hours

**Construction Time:** 24 days (10 average laborers plus 1 overseer) plus rituals (3 days)

**Options:** Combat spikes, poison

#### PAYLOAD USAGE

PLU	Use
1	Pilot
1	Ballista crew
8	Onboard weapons
10	Total



TABLE 4-1: MECHS OF L'ARILE NATION

Mech Name	Faction	Size	Power	Price (GP)
Black Rose	L'arile Nation	Gargantuan	Animated	22,526
Breath of Heréal	Elves (unique)	Colossal	Animated	380,425
Runemechs	L'arile Nation (8 unique mechs)	Huge	Animated	43,173
Warlock	L'arile Nation	Colossal II	Animated	404,469

TABLE 4-2: ONBOARD WEAPONRY – L'ARILE NATION

LOCATION	ARC OF FIRE	WEAPON (DAMAGE, RANGE IN FT., OTHER)	PU	CREW
Black Rose Onboard Weaponry				
Right shoulder	90° forward	Linked Huge ballista (3d6/x3, 120, poison)	4	2
Left shoulder	90° forward	Linked Huge ballista (3d6/x3, 120, poison)	4	0
<b>Total</b>			<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>
Breath of Heréal Onboard Weaponry				
Head	90° forward	<i>Wand of blindness/deafness</i> (level 15) (250 ft., duration permanent (dismissable))	1	1
Torso	180° forward	<i>Wand of spectral hand</i> (level 15) (250 ft., duration 15 minutes)	1	1
Torso	180° forward	<i>Wand of spectral hand</i> (level 15) (250 ft., duration 15 minutes)	1	1
Right Arm	180° forward	<i>Wand of summon monster IV</i> (level 15) (60 ft., duration 15 rounds)	1	1
Left Arm	180° forward	<i>Wand of summon monster IV</i> (level 15) (60 ft., duration 15 rounds)	1	1
<b>Total</b>			<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
Runemech Onboard Weaponry				
Right arm	Melee	Huge +2 <i>keen sword blade</i> (2d8+6/17-20)	1	1
<b>Total</b>			<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
Warlock Onboard Weaponry				
Right arm	Melee	Gargantuan barbed sword (2d12+8/19-20/x3, <i>continual flame</i> )	8	1
Head	360°	<i>Wand of fireball</i> (level 10) (10d6, 800 ft., 20-ft. radius spread)	1	1
Head	360°	<i>Wand of lightning bolt</i> (level 10) (10d6, 120-ft. line)	1	1
Head	360°	<i>Wand of shout</i> (level 7) (5d6, 30-ft. cone burst, deafens)	1	1
Head	360°	<i>Wand of acid arrow</i> (level 9) (2d4/round, duration 4 rounds, 760 ft.)	1	1
Right shoulder	180° forward	<i>Wand of fireball</i> (level 10) (10d6, 800 ft., 20-ft. area)	1	1
Right shoulder	180° forward	<i>Wand of lightning bolt</i> (level 10) (10d6, 120-ft. line)	1	1
Right shoulder	180° forward	<i>Wand of shout</i> (level 7) (5d6, 30-ft. cone burst, deafens)	1	1
Right shoulder	180° forward	<i>Wand of acid arrow</i> (level 9) (2d4/round, duration 4 rounds, 760 ft.)	1	1
Left arm	180° left	<i>Wand of fireball</i> (level 10) (10d6, 800 ft., 20-ft. area)	1	1
Left arm	180° left	<i>Wand of lightning bolt</i> (level 10) (10d6, 120-ft. line)	1	1
Left arm	180° left	<i>Wand of shout</i> (level 7) (5d6, 30-ft. cone burst, deafens)	1	1
Left arm	180° left	<i>Wand of arcane eye</i> (level 10) (line of sight/unlimited range, duration 10 minutes)	1	1
Torso	45° rear	<i>Wand of fireball</i> (level 10) (10d6, 800 ft., 20-ft. area)	1	1
Torso	45° rear	<i>Wand of lightning bolt</i> (level 10) (10d6, 120-ft. line)	1	1
Torso	45° rear	<i>Wand of shout</i> (level 7) (5d6, 30-ft. cone burst, deafens)	1	1
Torso	45° rear	<i>Wand of arcane eye</i> (level 10) (line of sight/unlimited range, duration 10 minutes)	1	1
<b>Total</b>			<b>24</b>	<b>17</b>

The first Black Rose (also called the Wicked Rose and the Thorn of Fury) was originally designed by druids in the Lilat forest. They wanted a mech capable of hunting monsters, and they didn't have the resources to create a mithral-coated, wand-wielding engine of destruction. They took their inspiration from a species of shrew found deep in the groves of Lilat. The tiny rodent is highly venomous, able to fell creatures many times its size and strength with one bite.

So is the black rose mech. This slender construct is covered in smooth wooden spikes, and each spike is magically infused with poison

capable of sapping an enemy's strength. It also has a pair of shoulder-mounted ballistas linked to fire at the same target, and many rose crews fire poisoned bolts at their targets.

Few living targets care to endure the rose's venomous thorns for long. Even creatures capable of defeating the mech in direct combat will often retreat rather than risk being poisoned. Multiple black roses working together are capable of rendering a target immobile in seconds. This kind of assault has been dubbed a "death blossom."

But what works well against the living is useless against other mechs. The black rose is

in trouble if facing an attacker with immunity to its poison. It still has its formidable ballistas, but they have trouble penetrating metal armor, and their arc of fire is limited by the mech's construction. Most black rose crews avoid confrontation with hostile mechs.

In appearance, the rose is a slender mech with long, spindly limbs and shoulders that hunch forward. Its head rides low, nearly parallel with its shoulders, allowing the ballistas to fire freely. The entire thing is covered with spikes and spines ranging from a few inches to three feet in length. Its arms and legs bow outward from its body to keep the spikes from



hitting each other when the rose is moving. It looks ungainly, but the rose moves very smoothly.

The process of creating a black rose mech causes its entire structure to take on a rich ebony hue, giving rise to its name. This unnatural color has a glossy sheen that catches and reflects light back at its source, canceling any bonus to hide that its dark color might otherwise grant.

The black rose is not generally made with magic immunity, as that cancels its innate poison.

## Special Rules

**Poison:** The black rose is naturally poisonous, much like a snake or spider, and every time it succeeds at an unarmed melee attack its target must save against this poison. The type of poison is selected during the mech's creation and cannot be changed thereafter. It requires three doses of the desired poison, which must be an injury-type poison; all three doses are consumed during the three-day ritual that animates the mech.

Most black roses use poisons that drain the target's Strength, giving them an extra advantage in melee. A common choice is the venom of a Large scorpion (Injury DC 18, initial 1d6 Str, secondary 1d6 Str, cost 200 gp per dose). Black rose crews often use the same poison on their mech's ballista bolts, adding to its threat. This also poses a threat to the crew, as described in Chapter 8 of the *DMG*, unless they have been trained in poison use.

In addition to the cost of three doses, the poison option increases a mech's cost by 10%. It can only be added to a magically powered mech (such as an animated or an undead mech). The mech in question must have combat spikes or another innate way of penetrating the target's flesh. A mech's ordinary unarmed strikes are not capable of spreading poison, and the weapons it holds do not benefit from this advantage.

## BREATH OF HERÉAL (UNIQUE)

**Size:** Colossal  
**Power Source:** Animated (dispel DC 26)  
**Payload Units:** 16  
**Height:** 35 ft.  
**Space/Reach:** 15 ft. by 15 ft./15 ft.  
**Crew:** 2 (weapons: 5)  
**Firing Ports:** 12  
**Hit Dice:** 32

**Hit Points:** 176

**Critical Thresholds:** Not subject to critical hits

**Base Initiative:** +3

**Speed:** 60 ft.

**Maneuverability:** Good

**AC:** 2

**Hardness:** 6 (wood, Colossal)

**Base melee attack:** –2 (but see description)

**Base ranged attack:** +3 (but see description)

**Unarmed damage:** 1d12+6

**Trample:** largest Large; safe Medium; damage 4d6

**Saves:** Fort –2, Ref +0, Will –

**Abilities:** Str 22, Dex 16, Con –, Int –, Wis –, Cha –

**Mechcraft DC:** 38

**Base Planning Time:** 76 days

**Base Cost:** 2,543 gp

**Total Cost:** 22,925 gp plus 200,000 gp for *permanent invisibility* plus 157,500 gp for wands, for total cost of 380,425 gp

**Labor Time:** 3,840 man-hours

**Construction Time:** 48 days (10 average laborers plus 1 overseer) plus wands and rituals (4 days)

**Options:** Quiet movement, *permanent invisibility*

### PAYLOAD USAGE

PU	USE
2	Crew
9	Passengers
5	Wands
16	Total

Rajikli Thelani is a necromancer. When most people hear that word, they think of a ghoulish mastermind breaking all of nature's laws. Even her fellow elves have a fear of her specialty. This is a pity, as Rajikli is one of the nicest and most thoughtful children of the forest. For all of her long years, she labored to show that necromantic magic could be used to benefit living things.

No longer young when the lunar rain began, Rajikli used her magic as best she could to stave off the deaths it caused. She also began to turn it against the lunar creatures that invaded her native Heréal. Rajikli was known to be a powerful wizard, if a bit eccentric in her choice of specialty, and she gathered a small community to herself. Keeping them alive and safe was her main concern.

The advent of mechs made this easier, and before long Rajikli was the leader of a small village-mech. As is the elven way, she drew a number of like-minded souls into her orbit. Not many elves follow the path of necromancy, and even though her voice was respected among the

leaders of the L'arile Nation, her little community of death mages was feared and shunned by many of its peers.

Rather than bemoan her fate or give in to bitterness, Rajikli decided to prove that she and her specialty were nothing to fear. Taking her most dedicated apprentices, she designed and built a mech called the Breath of Heréal. With this mobile weapon, she would defend not only her community but elves all across the forest.

The mech itself is unremarkable as a design, perhaps even underpowered. But it is a potent weapon nonetheless. It stalks its targets quietly, having been designed specifically to move in silence. And more importantly, the entire mech is invisible. It prowls the forest like a ghost, ambushing enemies of the elves and destroying them without warning. Many of its victims never even realize they had been attacked by a mech.

A small number of elves accompany Rajikli as the Breath traverses the forest, and they have learned to adapt to an invisible home. Most importantly, Rajikli has cast a *permanent see invisibility* on all of the Breath's residents. Without this spell, they would have trouble moving around inside the mech, much less finding it if they left. They have also studied the art of stealth so that they will not draw attention to their home, inside or outside of it.

If combat seems imminent, combatant elves move to their battle stations and Rajikli uses *mass invisibility* to hide any others; note that this spell is broken for everyone if any of its members attack, so the elves are careful to avoid such a situation. Often, all of the elves will be shielded by this spell, as they have become experts at indirect combat. The wands of *summon monster IV* are excellent weapons, as summoning a creature and directing it to attack does not cancel an *invisibility* effect. Other subtle attacks are commonly practiced.

When these tactics fail, the mech often retreats rather than lose its concealment. Even though the Breath itself is permanently invisible, it doesn't take much intellect for its enemies to see visible elves apparently sitting in midair and deduce that all is not as it seems. Although the Breath leaves tracks behind, they are large enough that they are easy to overlook, as the would-be tracker is often standing in the middle of a footprint while vainly searching for smaller clues.

Another good option is to attack from a distance, which is the purpose of the *wands of spectral hand*. The Breath can wait in concealment some distance from the enemy as its crew uses these wands to deliver a variety of unpleasant ranged touch attacks. Even though these crew members may well be visible, they



are also as much as 250 feet away in a thick forest, so picking them out is difficult. Several unpleasant spells can be delivered by a *spectral hand*, including such necromantic favorites as *ghoul touch* and *bestow curse*. *Shocking grasp* is another good option, and it receives a bonus to hit metal-clad mechs.

Finally, the *wand of blindness/deafness* is positioned for the pilot's use. Rajikli treats this as a weapon of last resort, only to be used against grave threats and truly evil targets, as the effects of this low-level spell are quite difficult to undo.

Creating and arming the Breath, and making it possible for its crew to see it, has taken a toll on Rajikli. A great deal of her life force has gone into making the Breath work, and as she enters her sixth century she worries that she might not have more vitality to spare. She tires easily these days. More of her leadership duties are going to her chief apprentice Tavashno (necro 9). He is a competent spellcaster, but only Rajikli can use the powerful magics necessary to make the Breath function at its best.

As a result, she has been seeking out greater and greater challenges in recent months. Once the Breath of Heréal would retreat from danger, returning later with a careful ambush, but now Rajikli is guiding it into direct conflicts. Tavashno worries that his mentor is giving up on life and trying to strike as many foes as possible before her time is up. When he has broached the subject, Rajikli simply smiles and says that there is no time to waste in the battle to cleanse her forest. This might be the case, but the Breath is not designed to succeed in head-to-head confrontations, and its crew has become concerned.

## Special

**Quiet Movement:** This mech is designed to move silently even at its normal cruising speed. It is considered to have 4 ranks in the Move Silently skill, and it also receives its Dex modifier, giving the Breath of Heréal a total skill check of +7. The mech's pilot may use this ability as a full-round action. All the modifiers listed in Chapter 4 of the PHB apply when a mech tries to move silently. For example, if the Breath is trying to move silently at two-thirds speed (-5) through a shallow bog (-2), its total modifier is +0. Modifiers that affect the mech's pilot, such as the Stealthy feat or having a cat familiar, do not help a mech move silently. Quiet movement increases a mech's base cost by 15%.

### Rajikli Thelani, Elven Necromancer

Rajikli Thelani is nearly 600 years old, making her venerable even among the elves. She has spent her long life upholding the honor of necromancy. Although this magic is often turned to evil uses, Rajikli and her pupils try to prove that death magic can be used in the service of life as well.

In the days before lunar rain battered the forest, this group's mission was primarily one of comfort, helping others understand the role of death and perhaps to occasionally pierce the veil for a distraught mourner. Necromancy is a powerful battle magic, but Rajikli believed that such spells should only be used against "abominations" such as the undead, evil outsiders, and aberrations. Two or three centuries ago, she even had a regular stream of visitors from across Highpoint who wanted to consult her for their own battles against the undead.

The lunar rain began just as Rajikli was thinking about leaving Highpoint forever. She was of no mind to hurry her death, but she had started to wonder if her continued existence had any purpose. Despite 500 years of work, her efforts to improve necromancy's reputation had made little impact. If not for the gauntlet hurled down by the moon, Rajikli would likely have ended her days in quiet contemplation on another plane, removed from her skeptical kin.

Instead she was energized by the idea of mechs. Her chief apprentice, Tavashno, who is also her great-nephew, recruited enough assistants to build the Breath of Heréal. Giving it *permanent invisibility* was also his idea. Rajikli

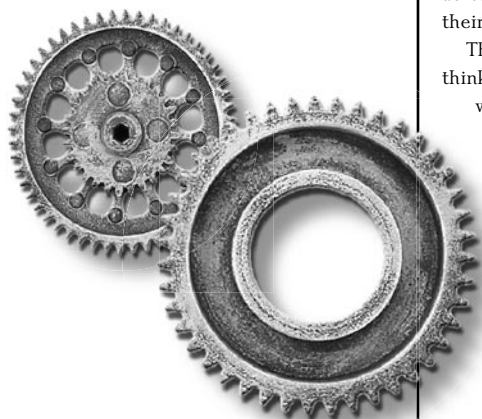


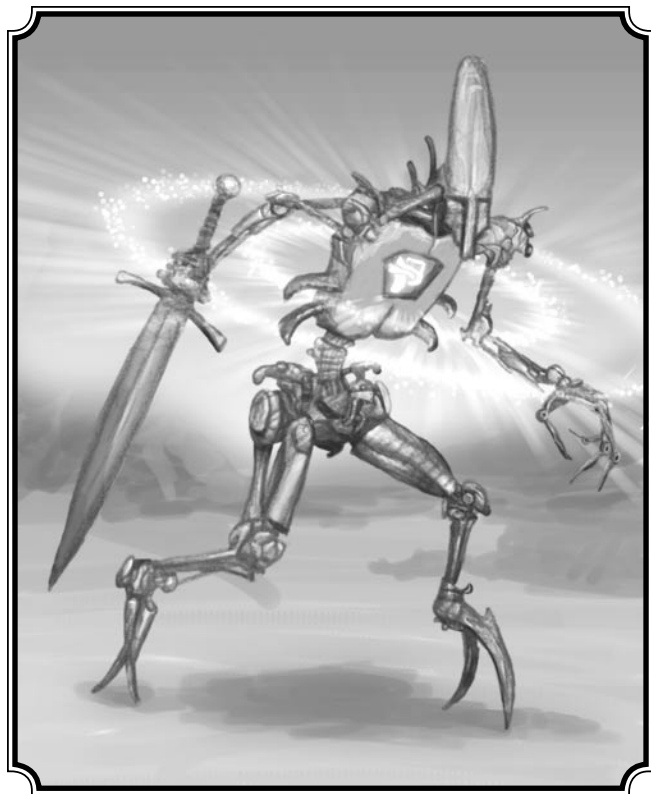
relies on him more than he knows. He has recently taken an elven craftswoman named Shilia as his bond partner, and Rajikli is looking to them as the foundation for a new sect of necromancers. She is subtly encouraging her younger relative to school his wife in magic, as well as overtly training him to take control of the Breath.

Rajikli knows that her time will be over soon. She has pushed the mech and its crew into danger not for her own goals, but to prepare Tavashno for the long dangerous years she sees ahead. The aged necromancer fears that the lunar assault is moving into a more dangerous phase. Meteors don't rain from the sky as they once did, but now the lunar gods themselves are establishing a foothold on Highpoint, and with them will come dangers that the elves cannot imagine. She wants her great-nephew to be at the forefront of the battles to come, both for L'arile Nation and for the sake of necromancy.

Rajikli looks the part of a necromancer, dressing in black clothing with bone-white trim. Her long silver hair hangs nearly to the floor. Rajikli's eyes are covered with a milky film, but her sight is as sharp as ever.

**Rajikli Thelani, female elf Ncr15:** CR 15; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 15d4-15; hp 27; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+2 Dex, +2 natural armor, +2 deflection), touch 14, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +7; Grp +5; Mech Atk +3; Atk +6 melee (1d4+2, masterwork dagger) or +10 ranged (1d6+1/x3, +1 *shortbow*) or +1 mech







New pilots can't easily join because they cannot be attuned to the *symbols* in existence. So far none of the Runemech pilots have died or left Tannanliel's service, and it is not likely that new pilots will be needed for quite a while.

## Special

**Permanent symbol:** Each Runemech has one arcane symbol inscribed on its chest. Four different symbols were used, each one placed on two mechs. Each symbol is triggered whenever any creature within 60 feet looks at it. Thereafter it stays active either for the spell's duration or until it meets other criteria.

Each Runemech's *symbol* is inscribed within a 1 ft. x 1 ft. x 3 inch alcove in its chest. This compartment is slightly recessed and a door built into the mech's chest can be pulled over it, blocking the *symbol* from view. Tannan didn't want the *symbols* to be triggered just because someone wandered into the wrong hangar and looked up. Whoever sits in the pilot's seat of a Runemech can operate the controls for this door; opening or closing it is a standard action.

If anyone tries to move the door from outside the Runemech, they have to contend with the superior lock holding it in place (Open Lock DC 40, plus any penalties for hanging off a presumably active mech while picking locks). If the lock is in place, moving the door is a DC 40 Strength check. Without the lock, the DC drops to 30.

The full descriptions of each *symbol* are found in Chapter 11 of the PHB. Each *symbol* was cast as if by an 18th-level caster, giving it a total duration of 3 hours once activated. The *symbols* on the Runemechs are:

**Fear:** This causes enemies to panic, forcing them to flee at top speed in a random direction. Victims can take no action other than flight. They immediately drop whatever they are holding, and they have a -2 penalty to all saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks. This effect lasts 18 rounds. The *symbol of fear* remains active until the duration expires or until it affects targets with a total of 150 hit points, whichever comes first. After 10 minutes of dormancy, it can be activated again. Resisted by a DC 29 Will save.

**Sleep:** All creatures of 10 HD or less in this *symbol's* range fall into a catatonic sleep for 3d6x10 minutes. They cannot be awakened by nonmagical means. The *symbol of sleep* has no hit point limit, so it remains active for 3 hours. Resisted by a DC 28 Will save.

**Stunning:** Those affected by this *symbol* are stunned for 1d6 rounds. Victims drop every-

thing they hold, and while stunned they cannot take any actions. They also take a -2 penalty to AC and lose any Dexterity bonus to AC. The *symbol of stunning* remains active until the duration expires or until it affects targets with a total of 150 hit points, whichever comes first. After 10 minutes of dormancy, it can be activated again. Resisted by a DC 30 Will save.

**Weakness:** All creatures within range of this *symbol* take 3d6 points of Strength damage. The *symbol of weakness* has no hit point limit, so it remains active for 3 hours. Resisted by a DC 30 Fortitude save.

## WARLOCK

**Size:** Colossal II

**Power Source:** Animated (dispel DC 26)

**Payload Units:** 32

**Height:** 50 ft.

**Space/Reach:** 25 ft. by 25 ft./25 ft.

**Crew:** 4 (weapons: 17)

**Firing Ports:** 21

**Hit Dice:** 64

**Hit Points:** 352

**Critical Thresholds:** Not subject to critical hits

**Base Initiative:** +2

**Speed:** 60 ft.

**Maneuverability:** Good

**AC:** 2

**Hardness:** 10 (50% wood, 50% iron, armor plating, Colossal II)

**Base melee attack:** +0

**Base ranged attack:** +2

**Unarmed damage:** 3d6+8

**Trample:** largest Huge; safe Medium ; damage 5d6

**Saves:** Fort -2, Ref +0, Will -

**Abilities:** Str 26, Dex 14, Con -, Int -, Wis -, Cha -

**Mechcraft DC:** 42

**Base Planning Time:** 84 days

**Base Cost:** 5,325 gp

**Total Cost:** 26,657 gp plus 375,000 gp for wands plus 2,812 gp for resist energy, for total cost of 404,469 gp

**Labor Requirements:** 7,680 man-hours plus wand creation

**Construction Time:** 48 days (20 average laborers plus 2 overseers) plus wands and rituals (5 days)

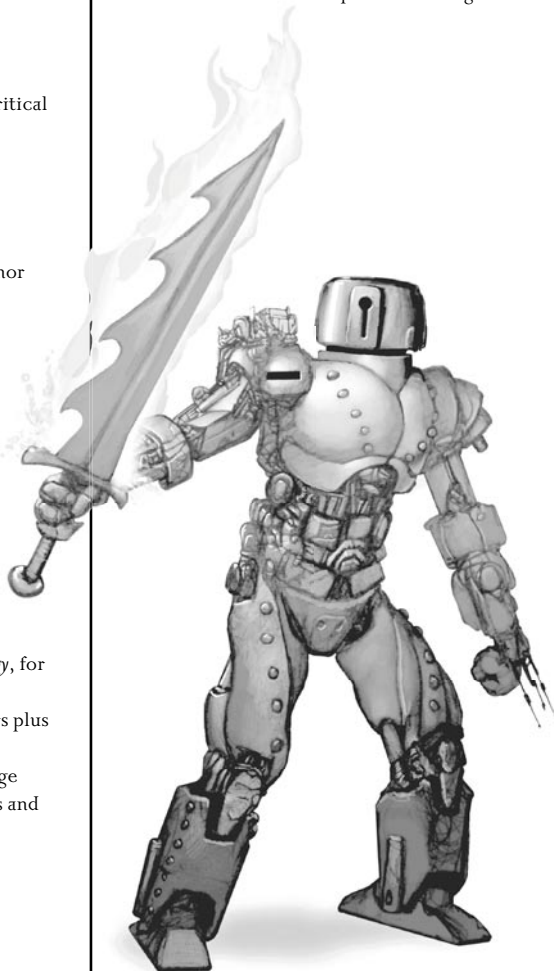
**Options:** Armor plating, fast legs

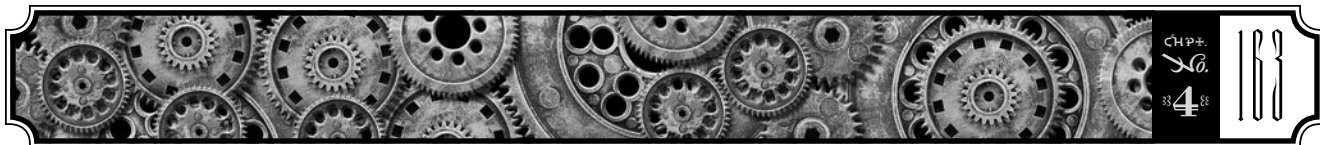
### PAYLOAD USAGE

PU	Use
4	Crew
8	Barbed sword blade
16	Wands
4	Open (cargo or passengers)
<b>32</b>	<b>Total</b>

The warlock is a huge mech bristling with wand emplacements. It has a massive barbed sword in one hand, blade wreathed in flame, and unlike most elven mechs it is partly armored in iron. It presents a terrifying profile.

As it should — the warlock is a heavy assault mech designed to tackle anything smaller than a city-mech. It is quite expensive to build and it requires a well-trained crew of wizards or sorcerers with good tactical sense, but the warlock has proven itself in several deadly encounters. The lethal wands ringing its frame can release a barrage of several different energies capable of killing most





foes and driving the rest into headlong retreat.

The warlock has four different wand cockpits, one each in its head, right shoulder, left arm, and rear torso. Each cockpit is equipped with a quartet of wands designed to complement each other. In ideal circumstances, the warlock will begin firing on its targets from several hundred feet away, closing the distance and bringing different wands to bear to keep enemies on the defensive. If circumstances are less than ideal, the warlock is still capable of giving a fierce fight across 360 degrees at almost any range.

Three of the wands in each cockpit are identical: *fireball*, *lightning bolt*, and *shout*. Most warlocks begin combat at a great distance, using multiple *fireball* strikes to weaken large enemies and rout clumps of smaller ones. If that fails to finish the fight, the warlock closes as rapidly as possible to bring its *lightning bolt* wands to bear, switching back to its *fireball* wands to strike massed targets.

The combination of these two powerful spells is usually enough to overcome any opposition, but if circumstances permit, *shout* is used against enemies at close range. *Shout* is useful for disrupting enemy communications, as it can deafen a great many targets at once, and this spell is the primary weapon against boarders and other nearby foot troops. Its only disadvantage is limited range. The head- and shoulder-mounted *shout* wands are only useful against other mechs or targets in the air.

Its head and right shoulder cockpits also have wands of *acid arrow*. This spell also has a very long range, and while its damage is not nearly as impressive as *fireball*, it continues to affect the target for several rounds. This makes it an ideal sniper weapon, especially as it doesn't permit a saving throw. More than one hostile spellcaster has found himself the victim

of this spell, breaking his concentration and giving the warlock and its allies time to close in. Also, *acid arrow* and *shout* both do damage without setting anything on fire, which can be useful in the forest.

The left arm and rear torso have mounts for wands with *arcane eye*. This spell rarely sees use during combat, as it takes a full 10 minutes to cast, but it is an excellent means of scouting. Each eye can cover more than half a mile before its duration expires. This lets the warlock's crew investigate strange terrain and threatening targets without needing to approach directly.

Indeed, most warlock crews try to stay as far away from the enemy as is practical. This isn't a result of cowardice — being on a warlock's crew is known to guarantee an exciting life — but because the warlock is a poor melee combatant. The L'arile Nation doesn't advertise this fact, but the warlock's strength barely keeps up with its size, meaning that it has trouble hitting most targets with its impressive sword. Even the addition of heavier iron armor hasn't done much to improve its melee prowess.

Fortunately, the warlock is a dangerous enough mech at a distance that few enemies wish to get closer. Its barbed sword (an idea lifted from a Legion design) is a dangerous weapon when it does connect, and most warlock crews enhance this impression by casting *continual flame* on the weapon. When it does hit, the barbed blade is also useful for holding an enemy in place so that the wands can do their work.

The four cockpits are connected by a series of metal speaking tubes, another innovation borrowed from other mechs. This helps the crew coordinate their actions in combat. Under normal circumstances, when one individual is speaking and not much external noise exists, the listeners can hear clearly. If multiple crew members are talking at once, or if the noise outside is particularly loud (such as when the warlock is in melee combat with mechs or other large foes), it takes a DC 15 Listen check to understand what is being said.

Every warlock is designed to look intimidating. While their individual ornamentation is different, their basic structure is similar. Its body and limbs are not as slender as most elven designs, to support the weight of its iron armor, giving it proportions similar to a human. Its right arm is mounted normally and terminates in the massive sword described above, but its left arm is instead set to swivel from the shoulder and cover a 180 degree arc.

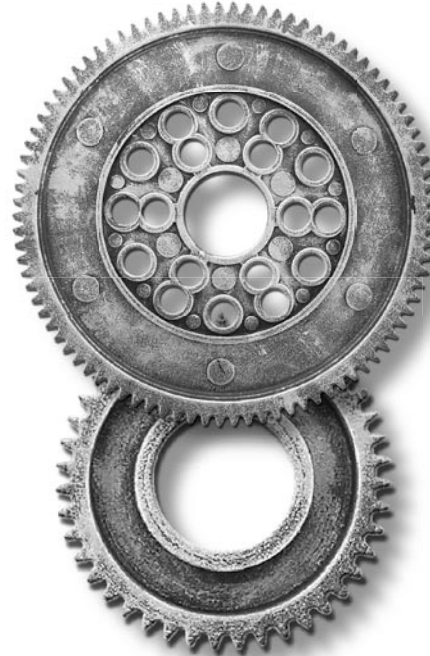
The left arm ends in a featureless "fist" with several wands jutting out. Its head looks

the same, and is built to swivel at the pilot's direction, letting it command the entire field of battle. A third cockpit is built directly into the right shoulder, offering improved protection from harm at the cost of maneuvering room. This position has an excellent view of everything in front of the mech, but the gunner stationed here has to wriggle between a set of narrow wand emplacements.

The fourth cockpit is found at the base of the mech's back, and while it is similarly cramped, the occupant rarely has to deal with heated combat. The individual in this post will often cast other spells to aid the mech and its crew.

## Special

**Energy Resistance:** As a byproduct of the warlock's creation, its pilot can order the mech to *resist energy* 3/day, giving it energy resistance 10 against the chosen type of energy (acid, cold, electricity, fire, or sonic). This ability is identical to the spell of the same name as if used by a 3rd-level caster, giving it a duration of 30 minutes per use. Only one such resistance can be active at a time, and if the pilot triggers a new one it cancels any active resistance. Pilots who fear that their crew is being careless with fireball often use this ability. Activating it requires the use of a command word, and each warlock has its own unique command.





**TABLE 4-3: TANNANLIEL PAYLOAD USAGE**

PU	Use
1,645	Crew
12,765	Comfortable living and working space for 4,000 elves
500	Expansive space for 100 members of the Order of Tannanliel
830	Onboard weaponry
128	Greater ring of energy resistance (fire)
128	Ring of spell turning
64	Runemech hangar
128	Visiting mech hangar
256	Crafting space to create mechs up to Colossal IV size
<b>16,448</b>	<b>Total</b>

**TABLE 4-4: TANNANLIEL ONBOARD WEAPONS**

LOCATION	ARC OF FIRE	WEAPON (DAMAGE, RANGE IN FT., OTHER)	PU	CREW
Head	180° forward	Colossal javelin rack (x8) (2d10, 200 ft.)	16	2
	180° backward	Colossal javelin rack (x8) (2d10, 200 ft.)	16	2
	180° forward	8x Long range wand (see next page)	8	8
	180° backward	8x Long range wand (see next page)	8	8
Right shoulder	180° right	Colossal javelin rack (x8) (2d10, 200 ft.)	16	2
Left shoulder	180° left	Colossal javelin rack (x8) (2d10, 200 ft.)	16	2
Torso	90° forward	3x Staff of abjuration (effects vary)	3	3
	90° forward	3x Staff of evocation (effects vary)	3	3
	90° forward	3x Staff of transmutation (effects vary)	3	3
	90° forward	40x Long range wand (see next page)	40	40
	90° backward	20x Long range wand (see next page)	20	20
	90° backward	Staff of abjuration (effects vary)	1	1
	90° backward	Staff of evocation (effects vary)	1	1
	90° backward	Staff of transmutation (effects vary)	1	1
	90° backward	Staff of transmutation (effects vary)	1	1
Right arm	180° forward	3x Staff of abjuration (effects vary)	3	3
	180° forward	3x Staff of evocation (effects vary)	3	3
	180° forward	3x Staff of transmutation (effects vary)	3	3
	180° forward	20x Long range wand (see next page)	20	20
	180° forward	10x Medium range wand (see next page)	10	10
Left arm	180° forward	3x Staff of abjuration (effects vary)	3	3
	180° forward	3x Staff of evocation (effects vary)	3	3
	180° forward	3x Staff of transmutation (effects vary)	3	3
	180° forward	20x Long range wand (see next page)	20	20
	180° forward	10x Medium range wand (see next page)	10	10
Right leg	180° forward	3x Colossal III ethereal catapult (8d6, 400 ft.)	192	18
	180° back	Colossal III ethereal catapult (8d6, 400 ft.)	64	6
	360°	3x Staff of abjuration (effects vary)	3	3
	360°	3x Staff of evocation (effects vary)	3	3
	360°	3x Staff of transmutation (effects vary)	3	3
	360°	10x Long range wand (see next page)	10	10
	360°	15x Medium range wand (see next page)	15	15
	360°	10x Short range wand (see next page)	10	10
	360°	10x Long range wand (see next page)	10	10
	360°	15x Medium range wand (see next page)	15	15
Left leg	180° forward	3x Colossal III ethereal catapult (8d6, 400 ft.)	192	18
	180° backward	Colossal III ethereal catapult (8d6, 400 ft.)	64	6
	360°	3x Staff of abjuration (effects vary)	3	3
	360°	3x Staff of evocation (effects vary)	3	3
	360°	3x Staff of transmutation (effects vary)	3	3
	360°	10x Long range wand (see next page)	10	10

## CITY-MECH TANNANLIEL

Even the residents of Durgan-lok and Nedderpik agree that no mech is mightier than Tannanliel. It towers over the endless plains, standing nearly half a mile high, a living fortress and mobile arsenal. Its tremendous size gives it great strength, but Tannanliel's greatest weapons are the elves living inside it. Their arcane power has made this walking forest the scourge of lunar monsters and roving bandits. More importantly, the elves' desire to rebuild their world has made Tannanliel a center of research and understanding.

### Stats

**Size:** City-mech F

**Power Source:** Animated (dispel DC 30)

**Payload Units:** 16,448

**Height:** 2,000 ft.

**Space/Reach:** 700 ft. by 700 ft./1000 ft.

**Crew:** 1,645 (weapons: 280)

**Firing Ports:** 1,644

**Hit Dice:** 644

**Hit Points:** 3,542

**Critical Thresholds:** Not subject to critical hits

**Base Initiative:** -2

**Speed:** 220 ft.

**Maneuverability:** Poor

**AC:** 2

**Hardness:** 25 (wood, City-mech F) plus damage reduction 10/slashing

**Base melee attack:** +18

**Base ranged attack:** -2

**Unarmed damage:** 6d12+26

**Trample:** largest City-mech C; safe City-mech A; damage 14d6

**Saves:** Fort -3, Ref -1, Will -

**Abilities:** Str 62, Dex 6, Con -, Int -, Wis -, Cha -

**Mechcraft DC:** 78

**Base Planning Time:** 156 days

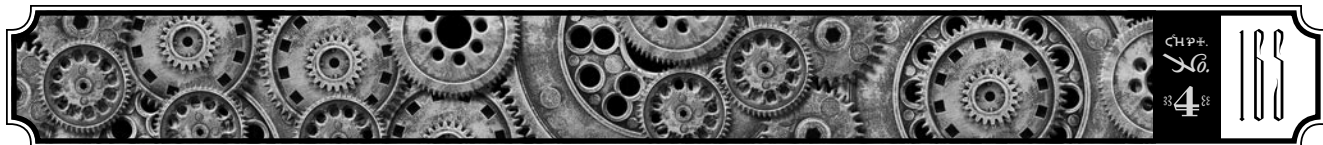
**Base Cost:** 2,603,480 gp

**Total Cost:** 2,753,654 gp plus weapons and magic items

**Labor Time:** 3,932,160 man-hours

**Construction Time:** 246 days (2,000 average laborers plus 200 overseers) plus magic items and rituals (14 days)

**Options:** Hangar (192 PU), permanent resistance, damage reduction 10/slashing, fast healing 25



## Combat Tactics

Tannanriel has more power than anything mortals have created on the face of Highpoint. This doesn't eliminate the need for tactics, but it does simplify things. If the target can be quickly dispatched with long-range spells, that's what Tannanriel's crew does. As the distance closes, medium- and short-range magic is brought to bear as well, and squads of elven archers unleash a rain of arrows. In melee, Tannanriel's enormous fists can pulverize most foes, and it can also deploy the Runemechs to disrupt enemies or let elven infantry attack. Usually the only question is whether Tannanriel's target can retreat fast enough.

However, the archmages realize that if the city-mech's crew becomes complacent, some enemy will find a way to overcome Tannanriel's formidable defenses. So the combat crew is drilled repeatedly in wand discipline and long-bow marksmanship. The city-mech has never been defeated, nor has it retreated.

Wands are the key to Tannanriel's combat prowess. More than 200 wands are deployed around the mech at all times, supported by four dozen powerful magic staffs. Many of the city-mech's residents have some wizard levels, so this is an efficient means of defense. The exact composition of wands varies from one combat to the next, as they eventually run out of charges, but a wand is always replaced by one with a similar range.

(Unless you are playing an elaborate tactical game using all of Tannanriel's capabilities, assume that any given wand can be found in a convenient location. Likewise, not all of the city-mech's wands could easily be turned to fire in the same arc. The leg-mounted wands received a 360-degree fire arc to reflect the fact that any given wand at that altitude can probably be found in the desired position. If you require more accuracy, assume that the mech's leg wands are mounted in four blocks of 90-degree facing.)

Long-range wands carry spells that can cover great distances. Given that half of Tannanriel is at least 1,000 feet above ground most of the time, these wands are used at higher elevations. They are usually created by a caster of 10th level, giving them a range of 800 feet. Half of the wands in Tannanriel's arms and torso are assumed to be within 800 feet of ground-level targets during combat, and the city-mech's pilot can direct the mech to bend or kneel to bring the rest into play if necessary. Most of these wands have a save DC of 14 plus the level of the spell they contain; an average wand creator has an Intelligence of 16 and the relevant

Spell Focus feat.

Common long-range wands include *acid arrow*, *fireball*, and *ice storm*. These are three of the few damage-causing spells a wizard can cast at long range. *Fireball* is found most often, but the other two have their uses as well. *Ice storm* causes damage without allowing a saving throw, and *acid arrow* inflicts damage over several rounds. *Ice storm* is also useful for cleaning up any forest fires caused by the *fireball* wands.

Many of the wizard's best spells are found in the medium-range category. These wands have a range of 200 feet, enough to target anything within one of Tannanriel's strides. Common medium-range wands include *blindness/deafness*, *confusion*, *hold person*, *lightning bolt* (range 120 feet), *magic missile*, *phantasmal killer*, and *web*. Several of these wands work against the victim's Will save, so they are often turned against targets that show a great deal of physical prowess, as strength and willpower are often not found in the same creature. If a situation calls for it, some of these wands will be swapped out for *dispel magic*, *glitterdust*, or *stinking cloud*.

Tannanriel only has a few short range wands, striking at a range of 50 feet. Not many enemies get that close to the mech's legs, and the ones who do had best be dispatched quickly. Common short-range wands include *cause fear*, *crushing despair* (30 feet), *deep slumber*, *enervation*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *ray of exhaustion*, *scorching ray*, *shout*, *sleep*, and *slow*. Few of these spells cause damage, but they leave the victim vulnerable to more offensive effects.

The torso and limbs are also equipped with powerful staffs from the schools of abjuration, evocation, and transmutation. Skilled wizards and specialized sorcerers wield these, commanding the wand-firing troops and augmenting their attacks. Those who hold this position are known as Arcana, a rank similar to lieutenant, allowing them to direct spellcasters in combat. The Arcanas of evocation and transmutation are expected to focus their energy on the most dangerous targets, while the Arcana of abjuration is charged with supporting Tannanriel's defenses. This latter Arcana, also called the Defender, is responsible for alerting the mech's crew to boarders and other security problems.

Underneath the Arcanas are the Scepters, the equivalent of sergeants. There are five Scepters for every Arcana. Each of them wields a *lesser metamagic rod* keyed to their position—most of them receive rods with *Extend Spell*, but one of each five has *Empower Spell*. This lucky elf is the High Scepter, in charge of all the others and reporting directly to the Arcanas.

Beyond wand and staff use, Tannanriel's

tactics are similar to any other city-mech. It has javelin racks to deter flying foes, and a quartet of *ethereal catapults* is mounted on each leg in case an enemy shrugs off spells. Archers are positioned at every firing port. Skilled infantry with sword and spear are prepared to leap out of sally ports and engage the foe on foot. And of course there are the Runemechs.

The Runemechs are trained to fight in close coordination with each other. They have to function that way, as few elves aboard Tannanriel can approach them without suffering from their *symbols*. Runemechs are at their best when fighting hordes of smaller enemies. Where several divisions of elven foot soliders would once descend to deal with orc hordes or dangerous nomads, now all it takes is two or three Runemechs to immobilize or rout the foe.

In the few occasions where the enemy has mechs as well, the Runemechs have proven surprisingly useful. Each *symbol* affects targets within a 60-foot radius, and it doesn't matter if that target is sitting at the controls of a mech. If a Runemech gets close enough, its power can even reach the pilot of a Colossal II mech (or a low-slung Colossal III). And well before that happens the *symbol* will do its work against the rest of the enemy mech's crew, most of whom will easily fall prey to it.

If this tactic fails to immobilize the target mech, however, the Runemechs are trained to retreat quickly. They aren't designed for sustained combat with large mechs. Runemechs have impressive swords and excellent armor, and they have been augmented to be stronger and sturdier than other animated mechs of their size. But they are still small compared to most other mechs, and a few blows from a Colossal axe blade could cause them serious damage. Runemechs are formidable when fighting normal infantry, but against large foes





they should pick their battles carefully.

The Runemechs with the *symbol of sleep* are called into service most often, as they can defeat literally hundreds of foes in short order. More than one orc warband has fallen before this power, its members dropping into sleep and not even waking when elven swordsmen descend to administer the coup de grace. A single step from Tannanliel's massive feet is equally effective at dispatching the sleeping foes. If the Runemechs are working with ordinary units, the commanders of the regular troops are equipped with *wands of dispel magic* to help rouse any of their own soldiers who strayed too close to the mech.

The Runemechs with *symbol of weakness* are also capable of affecting as many foes as they can catch in a three-hour period. Although their ability doesn't render a foe helpless as fast as the *symbol of sleep*, it will occur repeatedly. Every time a target enters the *symbol's* range, they must make their saving throw or suffer the effects again. After two or three encounters, the strongest foes will often be immobilized. These two Runemechs are sent after any particularly large enemies, sapping their energy and leaving them unable to defend against the Runemechs' swords.

Against other mechs, the Runemechs with *symbol of stunning* are perhaps the most useful. They can render a mech motionless and its defenders helpless, then walk away and let an elven boarding party teleport aboard. This tactic is often used against targets with heavy weapons. In other circumstances, these Runemechs try to support their comrades, using their *symbols* to set targets up for a killing blow.

A *symbol of fear* is one of the most potent weapons against large groups of foes, and Runemechs with this *symbol* often target massed enemies. However, they can also potentially affect powerful foes. If the Runemech has a chance, it will approach such a foe without revealing its *symbol*. Once it closes in, the pilot opens the door and hopefully catches the enemy without using up any of its hit point limit on smaller targets. Runemechs with the *symbol of stunning* can also use this tactic.

Keep in mind that the Runemechs of *fear* and *stunning* are limited by the targets' hit points. This limit is based on current hit points, not the total number possible, so these Runemechs often try to injure dangerous foes first and then unleash their *symbols*.

Another tactic used by Runemechs is to close the doors on their *symbols* once the magic

is activated. An active *symbol* radiates power whether or not its victims see it, and foes who haven't faced the Runemechs might not discover the source of the magic that's breaking their ranks and immobilizing their troops.

## Appearance

Outside: Tannanliel is the epitome of elven mech design. Despite its height, the city-mech is slender and graceful. Its wooden exterior is a variety of colors and textures, capturing all the hues of the forest. It even smells like the outdoors, a fresh and leafy scent that gladdens the elvish heart.

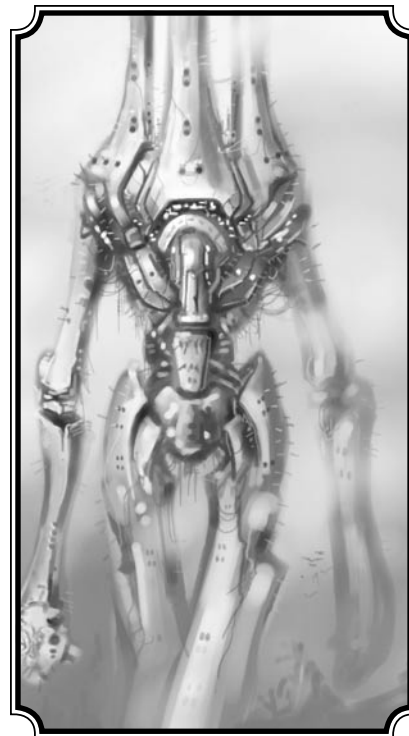
The mech is actually made of living trees. Tannan's magic wove together hundreds of trees, their roots and branches twining together to form a bond as strong as riveted steel. Its leaves still turn to follow the sun and change colors when autumn comes. Vines grow along its exterior, and many birds and small mammals still make their homes on its limbs.

This living armor is one of the city-mech's greatest defenses. Not only does it resist attack and heal itself, but it actively thwarts boarders and other attackers in melee range. Anyone climbing its exterior is treated as if under the effects of an *entangle* spell (no saving throw) as the branches and vines lash out to hold them. The immense trees that form the mech's outer layer also strike interlopers with their limbs. While the mech is in active combat, foes within 15 feet of Tannanliel's exterior are subject to one melee attack per round (+12 attack, 2d6+9 damage) as the branches strike with treant-like strength. Tannanliel has rudimentary awareness, enough to tell friend from foe under most circumstances.

Tannanliel's proportions are similar to an elf. The most unique feature it has is the cluster of towers rising from its head and shoulders. These towers add another 200 feet to the height listed above. The Order of Tannanliel makes its home here.

It isn't immediately obvious, but the exterior of Tannanliel is actually dotted with arrow slits and ports for firing magic wands (DC 20 Spot check). Many of these openings are masked by foliage. As the mech's trees grow and change, some of these holes move up to a foot in any direction. Tannanliel's crew knows spells that can change its external arrangement, but when possible they let the mech grow as it wishes.

The lower part of Tannanliel's legs hosts two important features. First, its mech hangars are

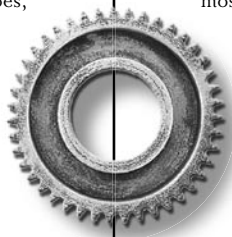


found here. Each leg holds four Runemechs, one of each kind, along with 64 PU of docking space for visiting mechs. Second, many farming terraces are found along the legs, stretching from mid-thigh down to 30 feet off the ground. These terraces are one of the few places where steel is found on the mech's exterior, as screens of metal mesh are used to keep boarders from entering. These screens admit sunlight and water, but enchantments on them repel grappling hooks and ropes of all kinds.

Both of Tannanliel's arms have a thick metal band running along the wrist. These are magic rings of enormous size (128 PU each) that have been fused into its frame. The crimson iron band along its right arm is a *greater ring of energy resistance (fire)*, removing one of the largest dangers facing a wooden mech. The simple platinum band along its left arm is a *ring of spell turning*. This is usually used to stop spells that might disrupt Tannanliel's operation, such as *dispel magic* or *disintegrate*.

**Inside:** Visiting Tannanliel is like walking through a forest. Floors and walls are formed by the branches of living trees. Leaves create the feeling of roofs. A series of carefully planned openings all around the mech allow sunlight to enter, and in many places mirrors direct that light farther inside. This natural illumination is enhanced with magic, including frequent use of *continual flame* spells.

Whenever possible, the city-mech's resi-



## THYWN THISTLEDOWN, THORN WARRIOR

Thywn is a restless soul. She has served with the Thorns aboard Tannanliel for some time, long enough to show great promise as a swordswoman. She has even been invited to attend master classes given by archmage Agravael Hammerfang. Many of the Thorns would be thrilled with this opportunity. After three months of it, Thywn is bored.

A youngster of 125 years age, she chafes at life aboard a mech. Her early life was filled with tales of the goddess Cynavar Sworddaughter, and they lodged in Thywn's heart. The Thorns welcomed her despite her age, as her prowess with a blade was obvious, and Thywn expected that adventure would follow. It has, but not fast enough. The Thorns take the field against enemies, but usually in support of Tannanliel's onboard arsenal or following in the wake of the Runemechs. Thywn wants more.

She hasn't quit the Thorns yet, but she's looking for a better offer. Anyone telling tales of adventure will have her attention whether they want it or not. Thywn would be happy to take a leave of absence from her duties and test her sword arm under the open sky. Having spent most of her life aboard a city-mech, she doesn't realize the protection it offers, and she doesn't realize how much danger is lurking beyond Tannanliel's range. Even if she did, she'd want to charge it with sword held high.

Thywn can be a friend, confidant, rival, teacher, or annoying tagalong. It's hard not to like her cheerful exuberance, and she is useful in a fight. She also takes risks in the name of excitement that most sensible adventurers would avoid. What Thywn really wants is a chance to duel the greatest warriors of Highpoint. Although she realizes she isn't ready for it just yet, she reasons that any danger she survives is good training. It never crosses her mind that others might not desire that kind of training.

**Thywn Thistledown, female elf Ftr3:** CR 3; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 3d10; hp 25; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+3 Dex, +3 armor, +1 shield), touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +3; Grp +5; Mech Atk +1; Atk/Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+2/18-20, masterwork rapier) or +7 ranged (1d6+2/x3, masterwork composite shortbow (+2)); SQ Low-light vision, elf traits; AL CN; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 8, Cha 10.

**Skills and Feats:** Climb +8, Listen +2, Search +4, Spot +2, Tumble +6; Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Disarm, Weapon Finesse.

**Possessions:** Masterwork studded leather armor, masterwork light wooden shield, masterwork rapier, masterwork composite shortbow (+2), 20 arrows.

**Languages:** Common, Elven, Gnome.

Thywn has dedicated herself to the sword, and she is a formidable combatant for her character level. She likes to charge into combat, relying on natural agility and the Dodge feat to protect her as she targets the most dangerous melee fighter available. "Strike first and strike hard" is her motto. She prefers to inflict as much damage as possible, only using Combat Expertise if her targets have shown that they can survive her blows and then wound her in return. Thywn also enjoys using special maneuvers against her enemies. In particular, she likes to disarm them and then use her move action to scoop up the lost weapons.



dents live as they always have. Their new home is vertical rather than horizontal, and they lack some flora and fauna, but in many ways Tannanliel is like a gigantic treetop village. Families (and groups of elves sharing a common interest) live on wooden platforms suspended in the branches with simple rope bridges connecting everything.

This ideal life isn't always possible. Tannanliel is a mighty engine of war, and some sacrifices have been made for military necessity. The city-mech's interior is composed of large chambers connected by corridors, and doors made of steel, mithral, or enchanted wood can be shut to separate one section from another. Some of the mech's best areas have been given over to soldiers for training. And noise is a problem within the confines of a mech, especially to keen elven ears.

That said, life aboard Tannanliel is very comfortable. The elves here have more space than the residents of most other city-mechs, and they have been able to rebuild a society that resembles the life they led before the lunar rain.

## Life on Board

Tannanliel is a pure magocracy. The Archmages welcome as many elves on board as they can, but those who can use arcane magic are favored citizens. Wizards are the most valuable in this system because, unlike sorcerers and bards, they can easily share spells with each other. Keeping Tannanliel alive and functioning takes a great deal of specialized magic, and so far no sorcerer or bard has naturally manifested these unique spells.

Every elf is allowed to pursue their interests; prohibiting this would be an affront to the elven soul. But every elf who shows aptitude is encouraged to take up arcane studies. Tannan makes no secret of the fact that he wants to train as many new mech designers as possible and send them out into the world to create their own homes.

Also, every elf of age is expected to contribute to Tannanliel's defense. The city-mech has a regular military corps divided into two companies. The Thorns are mundane troops, using swords and bows in battle and manning the handful of siege weapons. Their magical counterparts are called the Suns. Although both are valued, the Suns are considered an elite order, and their members have great status aboard the mech. In fact, more than one skilled Thorn has hung up her sword to become a wizard in hope of joining the Suns instead.

The Thorns are the larger group, having 500

active members compared to the 350 Suns. Only a quarter of either company is on duty under normal circumstances, although all of them participate when Tannanliel enters combat. The ranks of the Thorns are bolstered by the other elves on board. Given the elven fondness for swordplay and archery, up to 2,500 additional combatants can be brought into action if necessary. When this happens, these recruits take up longbows and post themselves at arrow slits, with their strongest members guarding Tannanliel's entrances.

Most of the Suns have assigned roles to play, using the wands and staves that form the backbone of Tannanliel's offense. Some of them have other assignments based on their knowledge and experience — for example, each of Tannanliel's major entrances is guarded by an abjurer who augments the Thorns stationed there. A small group of diviners are found in the mech's upper levels during combat, providing guidance and thwarting surprises.

Some of the mech's residents join the Suns in times of crisis. Many of the elves have enough arcane training to use a simple wand, and as many as 1,500 of Tannanliel's residents are willing and able to help in this fashion. However, it's rare for more than one-tenth of that number to be called. The Suns are numerous enough to cover all the wand stations under most circumstances, and if Tannanliel is in enough trouble that its regular citizens are being mobilized, many of them will be diverted to help the Thorns with security and infantry maneuvers.

Despite the fact that Tannanliel has two combat units with special names and assigned duties, it is hardly as militaristic as a Stenian or Legion mech. Most of its citizens know enough of combat, wizardry, or both to be useful in its defense, so Tannan and the other archmages make use of them. When he first created his city-mech, Tannan established a requirement that every resident would help defend it. In keeping with elven tradition this requirement is enforced through social pressure rather than harsh laws. So far none of Tannanliel's citizens have complained, and few have shirked.

Furthermore, defending the city-mech only takes a small portion of most elves' time. The rest is spent as it was before the lunar rain began. Elves study the things they enjoy or find needful, then gather with like-minded souls to share knowledge. Those with more practical or artistic temperaments devote themselves to the work of their hands instead, with similar outcomes. Almost every subject is studied and every craft practiced by someone aboard Tannanliel.

But the lunar rain has worked a change in the interests of the elves. Theory and whimsy have faded as the fight for survival has gotten harder. The art of war is a matter of great interest; swordplay is being taken to new levels here, especially among the Thorns. Magical studies often focus on spells that harm enemies and drive them back.

Less violent interests are also followed, but these too are affected by the current state of Highpoint. Many of Tannanliel's elves are skilled horticulturists, capable of working miraculous deeds with plants. Finding rare flowers and breeding exotic trees were once their mainstay. Now they study and plan to return Highpoint's forests, and thereafter the rest of its terrain, to its former state.

Finally, many elves search for ways to drive back the lunar menace forever. The remains of the White Congress have a strong presence on Tannanliel, and they would like to have their library back. They still have most of five centuries to make the world safe for its return, but to an elf that span of time is not so long. This generation might not see it done, but their children must.

More than 4,000 elves live on Tannanliel. Not many more can fit comfortably. For short periods, Tannan will allow large numbers of refugees, but unless they possess vital skills, they will be discharged once the mech reaches a relatively safe place. However, groups of elves often give up their citizenship and take to life aboard mechs of their own creation. This creates room for between 20 and 100 new residents at a time, depending on the size of the exodus.

## Getting on Board

Tannanliel doesn't have as many visitors as other city-mechs. Many people are drawn to its home territory, curious about this massive artifact and the magic that animates it, but the journey is dangerous. Also, one of Tannanliel's purposes is to battle the mightiest of lunar monsters. Those who would travel to the city-mech are advised to have an armed escort.

But these risks don't keep everyone away. The elves have many things that others seek, particularly arcane knowledge and cunning woodwork. Moreover, if Tannanliel isn't engaged in active combat, the surrounding

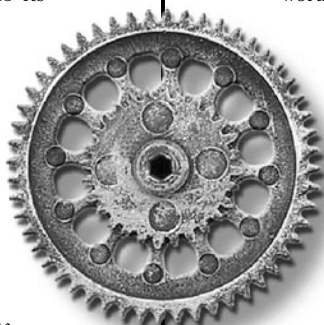
area is actually one of the safest zones on Highpoint. Enough traders and explorers visit the city-mech to keep it informed of outside events, and these travelers sustain a robust market.

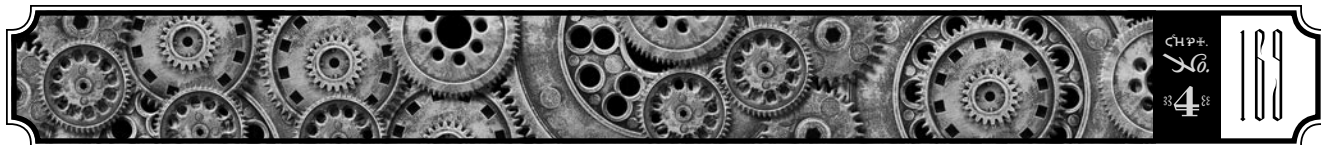
Visiting Tannanliel is much easier than becoming a citizen. The former involves the casting of some divinations and perhaps the surrender of dangerous items. To become a citizen, however, one must be a resident of the Lilat or Heréal forests. In practical terms this means only elves and a handful of half-elves can live on Tannanliel. The city-mech takes on as many refugees as possible, but the desire to protect all of elvenkind must be balanced against the need to make life on board worthwhile.

Visitors are screened for hostile intentions and latent enchantments. All those coming aboard will be questioned first by the guards, augmented by *detect thoughts* and *detect magic*. Some of Tannanliel's residents also have *permanent arcane sight*, and these blue-eyed elves are called to examine questionable visitors. *Detect evil* was used in the mech's early days, but after a group of "evil" adventurers was turned away and then went on to slay a troublesome lunar dragon, this practice was ended.

If the guards and spellcasters are satisfied that a visitor's business is not a threat, they are invited aboard. Tannanliel has a number of small trading areas scattered around its structure, and three large markets are found in the central torso. The lowest of these markets is for goods ranging from common to exotic; it has no official name. In elven fashion, the residents of Tannanliel have dubbed it the Nameless Market. This is a vast space in the lower torso that resembles an old deciduous forest, with mighty oaks acting as pillars to support a roof 40 feet and higher overhead. Merchants are found at all levels from the floor to the treetops, connected by rope ladders and sturdy wooden bridges.

Tannanliel's upper torso houses the Blade-fair, where arms and armor are sold. Residents and visitors alike are permitted to bear any arms they wish aboard Tannanliel, but outside the Blade-fair all visitors must keep their weapons tied down or otherwise fastened so they will be hard to draw. Residents do not have this stricture. The Blade-fair has many trees within its precincts, most with an unusual silvery bark





that resists careless blades (hardness 10). The ceiling here is low, no more than 20 feet, and all merchants are found at ground level. Small enclosed courtyards for testing weapons line the sides.

Higher still is the Sanctum, a place for spells and magic items to change hands. The entire Sanctum is surrounded by *permanent walls of force* so that the energy inside doesn't escape and damage Tannanliel. The trees that create and support this market are all outlandish colors and strange shapes, and merchants can be found at all levels of the 60-foot dome.

A unique enchantment pervades this place, woven by Tannan to prevent sorcerous dueling from taking place. Anyone in the Sanctum who casts arcane spells from certain schools must first make a Concentration check (DC 15 + level of spell). If they fail the check, the spell is aborted before it can be cast (so the caster does not lose it). The restricted schools are conjuration, enchantment, evocation, and necromancy. Certain residents wear amulets that override this effect, allowing them to cast normally here. Visitors who want to use one of these amulets must persuade an archmage to give them one for the duration of their stay (unless they simply take one from a resident, which is not wise).

When not shopping or visiting residents, guests of Tannanliel have quarters near the main Thorn barracks in the middle torso. This is convenient to all major areas of interest, and the presence of soldiers makes it a secure place. Visitors can also stay with resident elves, and it isn't uncommon for one of the city-mech's families to take in an old friend for a week or two.

## Government and Factions

Tannanliel is a magocracy, and five archmages are its undisputed leaders. This quintet is responsible for the mech's functioning, constantly altering the complex web of enchantments that sustain the city-mech. In theory all five are equals.

But one is clearly first among equals. Tannan created this mech, and even now he understands it better than the other four combined. The archmages make their decisions by talking and achieving a consensus, and their informal rule is that four of them can override one objector. Tannan is never overridden.

For his part, Tannan is modest and cooperative. He realizes that the others defer to him, even when he tells them not to, and so he weighs his thoughts carefully before speaking. Often he lets the other four archmages ham-

mer out all sides of an issue before he gives an opinion, and at times he even takes a stance he doesn't believe in just to make sure it gets a fair hearing. He invited each of these other wizards to join him and guided them as they built Tannanliel, but he has worked mightily to show that they do not owe him deference.

The other archmages are:

**Agravael Hammerfang (Cjr17/Rog3):** An unusual elf by any measure, Agravael has lived among dwarves and claims to have visited the wet desert. He is a sturdy fellow with a loud voice and a love of simple jokes. Agravael is also a skilled conjurer with a wide range of combat experience; in his spare time he teaches sword technique to the Thorns. His last name, he says, was given to him by the dwarves of Duerok two hundred years ago. Illusion and enchantment are his prohibited schools.

**Ipáro (Wiz20):** Although she is said to rival Tannanliel in power, Ipáro has so far deferred to him. She is a wizard of great subtlety. Her skill with words is similar, and she has solved more than one crisis among the city-mech's residents with a well-timed comment. Ipáro was a junior member of the White Congress when the lunar rain began and has risen through its ranks with great speed. It is whispered that she and Tannan are bonded to one another as partners, but neither of them discusses this with outsiders.

**Halloma Theilma (Evo18):** She is the most straightforward of the archmages. If a conflict breaks out among them, Halloma is probably the source of it. She isn't evil or misguided, though. Halloma is just passionately devoted to the elves' survival, and she wants the end of the lunar rain to come sooner instead of later. She has also proven to have great talent as a mech pilot, helping Tannan bear the burden of combat when even the other archmages falter. She is a member of the White Congress. Necromancy and abjuration are her prohibited schools.

**Shadidith (Wiz15/Exp4):** The art of the constructor is relatively new, and the archmages are too old to have specialized in this form of magic. Shadidith is the closest they have to a full-fledged constructor. He studies magical constructs the way dragons study heaps of treasure — picking through them for jewels he can take. Quiet but intense, his main interest is creating better mechs and golems. It annoys him that Halloma is a better pilot than he is.

The five archmages not only have primary control of Tannanliel, they are the senior members of the Order of Tannanliel. This organization is relatively new, but it has quickly become the single most important group aboard the

mech. It concentrates on the study of magical constructs — mechs, golems, and all such creations. Tannanliel organized this group to aid the archmages in running the city-mech.

All practicing wizards and constructors who live aboard Tannanliel are considered members of the Order, and interested sorcerers can join if they have aptitude for such magic. Status within the Order is derived partly from one's overall prowess and partly from familiarity with the Order's specialty. As the Order helps maintain and direct the city-mech, its members hold great status. Members can learn powerful spells and rituals related to mechs and other constructs, and to advance through the Order's ranks, they must contribute to that body of knowledge.

Some powerful wizards who have little interest in constructs have found themselves subordinate to journeymen specializing in this field. Mages who have spent centuries studying other branches of magic resent their diminished status aboard Tannanliel even as they enjoy its protection. They still command a great deal of respect among the elves, and although they are not formally organized, they often call themselves the Old Scholars.

This group of traditionalists often interferes with the rest of the Order. They do not intend to cause harm to others, but they believe the elves are in danger of forsaking their grand traditions in favor of what they call "stolen dwarfish ideas." The answer, they say, is not more mechs but more magic. Even as they engage in the study of mechs (a difficult subject to avoid aboard Tannanliel), they seek to show that no mech is as potent as a well-trained wizard. They have no leader as such, although a charismatic evoker named Larwyn Beechfire (Evo17) often speaks on behalf of them.

The two military companies, Thorns and Suns, are under the direct control of the five archmages who head the Order. Many Thorn commanders and all of the Suns' leaders are members of the Order themselves. Their ranks almost always reflect status within the Order. So far no battles have broken out over the chain of command.

Aside from the Order and the fighting companies, the elves of Tannanliel have a loose and unstructured society. The population of a dozen elven villages created its first generation of residents. Those who lead the remnants of these groups are called the Twelve Elders. They act as a body of judges and advisers, and while their authority comes from social sources rather than legal ones, it is rare that the archmages feel a need to overrule them. It should be noted that Larwyn Beechfire is also one of



## AGRAVAEL HAMMERFANG, TANNANLIEL ARCHMAGE

Agravael Hammerfang (born Agravael Leaflight) has the energy of three elves. His sword arm is quick, his wits are quicker, and his tongue runs away with him at the worst times. He also has a good heart and he shares Tannan's zeal for the elven cause. The two have been friends since before the lunar rain began.

A quick study, young Agravael spent some time learning the ways of the rogue and the swordsman even as he pursued the conjurer's art. At an age when most elves are looking to further their studies in a village full of like-minded souls, Agravael packed up his things and went adventuring. Nobody heard from him for 70 years.

When he returned, he was full of stories. Agravael claimed to have lived in Duerok, crossed the land with the endless traders, run the tunnels of Vermil, dueled the great warriors of the savage zuleps in the west, and even to have run a cliff-climbing business in the city of Edge. All these tales are true, even though Agravael's outlandish style made it difficult for others to believe him. He gravitated toward powerful mages who understood his love of adventure, such as Tannan and Iparo. Some say that he is attracted to Iparo, but he brushes that aside with a laugh.

Although he was eventually invited to join the White Congress, he declined the responsibility. He did assist them in their battles against lunar dragons and in the defeat of the Shadow Congress. In the process, he matured, giving up his boastful ways and working to help less powerful elves. Tannan saw him as a natural choice to help run the great city-mech Tannanliel, and Agravael jumped at the chance.

This hasn't quelled his love of adventure, and he still slips away from the mech when possible. Alone or with Iparo (an excellent combatant in her own right), he tracks down dangerous monsters and lost ruins. As time passes and the strain on Tannan grows, he has fewer opportunities for this kind of escapade. He compensates by training promising members of the Thorns.

Agravael is the archmage that PCs are most likely to meet, as he enjoys spending time with new people, especially seasoned adventurers who will swap tales with him. He also enjoys exchanging new conjurations and practicing swordplay. Whether training or engaged in real combat, his +3 *short sword of speed* is the only weapon he carries. A real conjurer, he says, doesn't need to lug unnecessary gear around — that's what magic is for.

The conjurer has an unusual familiar, a grig sprite named Peecho. The sprite seems quite

happy to serve Agravael, although wizard and familiar are both close-mouthed about how this strange event transpired. Peecho is well-intentioned and he follows Agravael's instructions. His great weakness is that he sees himself as superior to other familiars, including Tannan's raven Keyrark and Iparo's cat Avalanche. The grig refuses to use the fiddle magic of his people, apparently as a condition of his service to Agravael.

Agravael is average height for an elf and has a solid build. His hair is dark blond and falls to his shoulders. He prefers comfortable clothing, always including a *black vest of useful items* (similar to the robe of the same name, but only holding half as many items).

**Agravael Hammerfang, male elf Cjrl7/ Rog3:** CR 20; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 17d4+3d6+40; hp 107; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 22 (+4 Dex, +8 armor), touch 14, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +10; Grp +10; Mech Atk +5; Atk +18 melee (1d6+3/19-20/x3, +3 *short sword of speed*) or +5 mech (any mech weapon); Full Atk +18/+18/+3 melee (1d6+3/19-20/x3, +3 *short sword of speed*); SA Sneak attack +2d6; SQ Elf traits, low-light vision, evasion, trapfinding, trap sense +1; AL CG; SV Fort +8, Ref +12, Will +11; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 22, Wis 10, Cha 14.

**Skills and Feats:** Appraise +8 (for mechs), Concentration +22, Craft (mechcraft) +26, Decipher Script +16, Disable Device +13, Escape Artist +6, Hide +6, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +16, Knowledge (geography) +16 Listen +15, Mech Pilot +14, Move Silently +9, Open Lock +11, Search +9, Spellcraft +28, Spot +5, Survival +2 (when underground, or when avoiding natural hazards and not getting lost; +4 when doing so underground), Use Magic Device +7 (+11 with scrolls); Alertness (with familiar), Combat Casting, Combat Expertise, Combine Spell, Craft Magical Mech, Craft Wondrous Item, Improved Disarm, Improved Familiar, Maximize Spell, Scribe Scroll, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (short sword).

**Possessions:** +3 *short sword of speed*, *bracers of armor* +8, *ring of blinking*, *staff of conjuration*, *wand of summon monster IV*, *vest of useful items*, masterwork thieves' tools, spellbook, spell component pouch.

**Languages:** Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Orc, Undercommon.

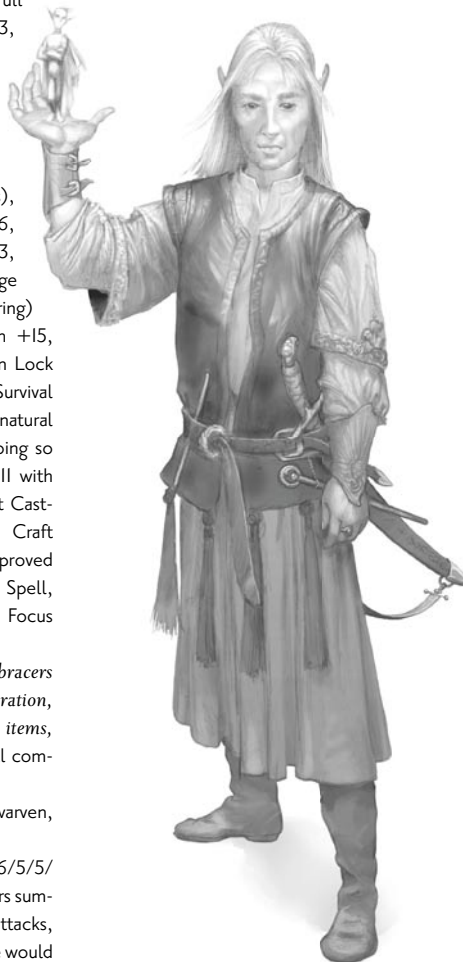
**Wizard Spells Prepared (5/7/7/6/6/6/6/5/5/5, save DC 16 + spell level):** Agravael prefers summoning monsters, hurling flashy ranged attacks, and using spells that enhance attributes. He would rather use a spell that sometimes has a really cool

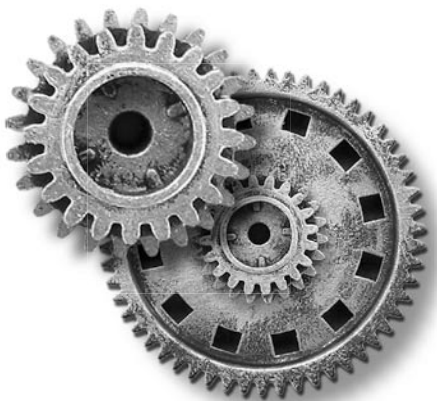
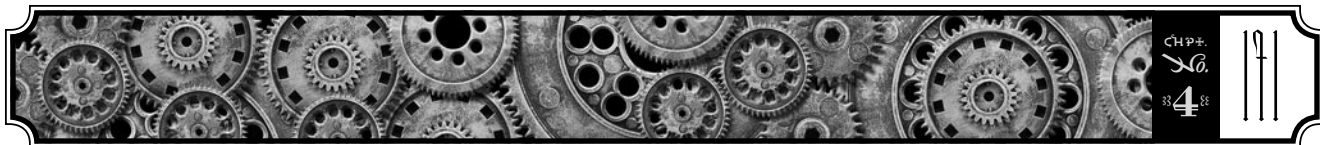
effect than a reliable but boring spell.

The young Agravael leapt into danger with a sword in his hand, hurling spells once the battle was joined. He now realizes how fortunate he was to survive. He still enjoys melee, but he starts combat with a ranged volley of conjured creatures and offensive spells to weaken his target. Peecho supports him with spells and bowfire.

At close range, Agravael is more dangerous than most wizards. He enjoys using his rogue skills to sneak up on opponents, especially if he has time to enhance his abilities first. His usual adventuring gear consists of a +3 *short sword of speed*, *bracers of armor* +8, *ring of blinking*, *staff of conjuration*, *wand of summon monster IV*, *vest of useful items*, and masterwork thieves' tools. Most other things he summons or creates as he needs them.

Agravael's prohibited schools are enchantment and illusion, both of them too wispy and indirect for his taste.





these Elders, giving him another platform from which to influence the city-mech.

Some level of coordination is found among the elves who tend to the living mech's physical needs, and this extends to those who farm and garden along its exterior. They work with each other and the Order to make certain that all elves have enough to eat and that Tannanliel is free of blight or harmful insects. Elves working in this capacity usually wear a green sash around one arm or tied around their foreheads so that others can identify them. Occasionally the wilder elven druids will attempt to turn this society to their own ends, but so far they have not found a lever to move it. These elves are akin to a handful of gravel, not a boulder.

At first the residents of Tannanliel had a wide range of interests, and even now most specialties can be found on board. But the city-mech has become more and more an instrument of war, so those dwelling here are changing their focus. Hand combat, weaponsmithing, scouting, poisons, and archery are gaining more practitioners every month. Schools of magic that lend themselves to battle — conjuration, evocation, transmutation, and even necromancy — are studied more as their quieter cousins recede into the background. Although none of these changes have generated new factions as such, they all have an effect on the governance and operations of Tannanliel.

## Society

Tannanliel is both a weapon and a library. It allows the elves to turn a massive arsenal against their foes even as it acts as a mobile fortress. However, it is also a repository of elven culture and history. This dual nature is reflected in the culture of the elves living on board.

The Order of Tannanliel controls the mech's

operations, and they are always waging war against the enemies of the elves. This gives daily life an unusually military character, at least for an elven settlement. Armed troops are common, security against the outside world is tight, and the city-mech's regular battles intrude on daily life. The elves of Tannanliel are always prepared for a fight. A culture that disdained castles now occupies the mightiest citadel on Highpoint, and many elves are reconsidering their roles as a result.

However, nowhere on Highpoint is the elves' traditional life preserved better than aboard the city-mech. They still dwell among living trees. They gather together to share knowledge and ideas. And unlike many of their kin, they do not need to find a place to hide every time the lunar rain strikes. Patient elves look on Tannanliel as another incarnation of the White Congress' lost collection of books. The only difference is that the city-mech houses lives rather than words. In time, these elves say, the lunar foe will be driven back and the elves who emerge from Tannanliel will help lead their race to even greater achievements.

## Economy

The elves have used coinage for a long time, and it is one of the few great cultural achievements they credit to another race. L'arile lore has it that dwarven traders traveled to the forests once upon a time. They introduced the idea of using gold, silver, and copper as a means of exchange. It simplified things for the elves, at least when negotiating with greedy short-lived races, and they grew to see its value among themselves as well.

Tannanliel is not the economic powerhouse that other city-mechs are, as it has fewer visitors, but it does a brisk trade with the rest of the L'arile Nation. It exchanges fine armaments and excellent magic items (especially wands) for more mundane goods. The city-mech is remarkably self-sufficient, as it loses no space to an internal engine system, but it still needs more provisions than it can provide on its own. Many of Tannanliel's residents at any given time are recent refugees who need basic possessions.

Those traders who do seek out the mech are usually interested in the Bladefair or the Sanctum. This in turn attracts visitors who have a need for exotic weapons or powerful magic. A surprisingly large portion of Tannanliel's economy is driven by adventurers, explorers, and others looking to carve out a new destiny from the moon-shattered landscape.

## Organizations

The L'arile Nation is largely a loose alliance of organizations that have different interests but share the desire to survive. Tannanliel is no different. Every elf on board is undoubtedly part of at least one group with a collective identity, and perhaps even a name and symbol. Often this is no more than a guild dedicated to a particular craft or a scholars' association with a common interest.

A few of them merit special mention:

**The White Congress:** Many of this group's surviving members made their way to Tannanliel. Tannan and two of his archmages belong to it, and the other two are on friendly terms with the organization. They continue to work for the preservation and expansion of arcane knowledge. Joining the Tannanliel chapter of this organization is difficult, however, as any existing member can veto an applicant without giving a reason. This ancient tradition helped preserve the security of the famous library, but it seems to be practiced more widely these days than in the past. Tannan is trying to change that, but change comes slowly.

**Fires of Battle:** This band of militant evokers is always on the front lines when Tannanliel enters combat. Many are members of the Suns. A few other like-minded spellcasters, including Agravael Hammerfang, often see action with this group. Two Runemach pilots and several Scepters are part of this organization. Their confrontational style puts them at odds with more conventional elves, but they have pioneered a great deal of useful magic in the fight against the lunar menace. Any elf who shows skill with evocation may be invited to join, although a condition of joining is sharing all knowledge of that school with the rest of the membership.

**Bladefair Buyers:** As Tannanliel's economy has grown, so have the dreams of its merchants. A few of the Bladefair's skilled weaponsmiths and vendors have united under this name to form a semi-secret guild. They share techniques with each other and have established a uniform pricing policy. Although no law prohibits this kind of collusion, it is unusual among the L'arile Nation, and other resident merchants debate whether they should oppose the Buyers or imitate them. Their organizer is Tashki (Exp5/Ftr2), an elf who gave up adventuring when he realized he could make money faster in a vendor's booth.

**The Rune of Sorrow:** Enemies of the L'arile Nation have learned to fear this group. It has sworn vengeance on those who harm elves in any way, and its members exact that vengeance



in spectacular ways. Many elves disapprove of the Rune's violent tendencies. Others take heart in their exploits. Orcs, Legion mechs, and dire monsters have all fallen to the Rune's prowess with arrow and spell. Their headquarters are aboard Tannanliel, although their members can be found anywhere. The typical Rune is an elven Ftr2/Wiz2, although rogues and sorcerers are often found among their number. Their leader's identity is unknown; he or she leaves notes with instructions, all signed with a unique *arcane mark*.

**Greatoak Council:** This peaceful order is devoted to restoring the forests of Highpoint. It grew out of two of the original twelve villages of Tannanliel, and its members have helped advance the magic that sustains the city-mech. Their goal is to create as many living mechs as possible. Not only will this keep valuable trees alive for years to come, but once the lunar rain ends, they hope to dismantle their mechs and replant the individual trees.

## MECH ORGANIZATION IN L'ARILE NATION

The L'arile Nation is organized by geography and race. Its boundaries are the northern forests because its members are the elves who lived in those forests. It has no central government beyond a shared history and culture. But these have proven powerful forces, not least when it comes to organizing mechs.

The two main supports of L'arile Nation are Tannanliel and the assorted village-mechs. In a sense Tannanliel is the capital of this mechmod, the place where powerful individuals gather to make important decisions, but it can only be in one place at a time. Each village-mech is in charge of its own operation and defense, rather than obeying the orders of a central authority.

Fortunately, the elves have strong magic and stronger tradition tying them together. Even



### BOWL OF CLEAR SIGHT

This wooden bowl was clearly made from the heartwood of a fruit-bearing tree by a master craftsman. When filled with pure water, it allows the user to use *scrying* with certain limitations. It can only target someone within 100 feet of a *bowl of clear sight*, and the target of this effect is aware of it. The target may ignore it or end it at will; either one is treated as if the target made a *Will* save against the spell. The effect also ends immediately if the water is spilled from the bowl. However, one advantage of the *bowl of clear sight* is that it allows the caster and recipient to use *message* to communicate with each other regardless of distance. A *bowl of clear sight* can be used 3/day, and each use has a duration of 10 minutes. Moderate divination; CL 7th; Craft Wondrous Item, *message*, *scrying*; Price 21,000 gp. Weight 2 lb.

though their villages have always been independent, they all rally when one is threatened. This is even more true since the lunar rain began to fall. L'arile elves usually do whatever is necessary to help each other survive. This task might seem difficult in an age when village-mechs prowl the land and avoid detection, but a variety of spells and devices help the elves stay in contact.

Many mechs carry a scrying device for this purpose. Larger mechs might have a *crystal ball*, but those orbs are uncommon and expensive. A common alternative is the *bowl of clear sight*, an arcane creation that is easier to make. Although its power has limits, most village-mechs would rather communicate with friends than spy on enemies anyway.

While they are not organized along legalistic lines, many elven mechs form partnerships. Village-mech alliances often pool their resources to build or hire combat-oriented mechs to defend them. Over time this has become the L'arile equivalent of a standing army. A unit of combat mechs, such as a squadron of rodwalk-

ers led by a warlock or two, patrols a certain area to keep it free from monsters and marauders. They assist all village-mechs in the region, and in return all of these village-mechs provide the combat unit with whatever assistance they can provide.

This makes calculating the number of elven mechs difficult, to say nothing of cataloging their types. As a rule of thumb, every village-mech provides a home for 50 elves. One combat mech exists for every five village-mechs. Assuming a mech-borne population of 10,000 elves (excluding Tannanliel), roughly 400 battle-worthy mechs are at large in the forests. Some observers dispute this, given the elven skill at hiding their mechs from detection.

## TACTICS OF L'ARILE NATION

The tactics of L'arile Nation mechs are intended first and foremost to keep elves alive. They avoid fights unless they can win with overwhelming force. Individual mechs are small and nimble, and they carry powerful long-range armament, usually in the form of wands or other spellcasting devices. When facing a threat, elven mechs converge on it from all directions and attempt to wipe it from the face of Highpoint.

Animated mechs are faster than their mechanical counterparts, so they make use of hit-and-run attacks. They are also quite agile. Rough terrain and crowded forests work to their advantage against many foes, especially other types of mechs. The quickest animated mechs move with a grace almost equal to a living creature. This helps them avoid melee combat, something that animated mechs do not excel at.

The greatest risk faced by L'arile Nation mechs is a foe armed with *dispel magic*. Mech crews learn to identify hostile spellcasters, and these enemies are targeted first. As the spell has a range of 100 feet plus 10 feet per caster level, long-range weapons are deployed when possible.

Given their attachment to village-mechs, L'arile Nation combat mechs often have support from elven archers, swordsmen, and wizards. The elves of L'arile Nation are as potent a weapon as the mechs themselves. Many foes have been cut down by hidden archers while distracted by a nearby rodwalker. What the elves lack in formal discipline, they make up for with cooperation.





## LIFE AMONG THE L'ARILE NATION

Of all Highpoint's denizens, the elves were both least and most affected by the lunar rain. To a race with their long lifespan, a century is only a fraction of one generation — most elves on Highpoint's surface were alive before the rain began. This point of view, combined with the fact that their mechs are created from their beloved trees and suffused with potent elven magic, has allowed the L'arile Nation's citizens to lead lives not unlike those of one hundred years ago.

A sense of history can cut both ways. So much has changed, and from their perspective so quickly, that many elves have not truly accepted the current state of affairs. These elders in particular are prone to fits of despair, either raging against events they cannot control or sinking into bleak silence. Elven culture grants great respect to its older members, whose centuries of life often confer unequalled wisdom. But among the L'arile Nation, it is often the young who can face Highpoint's new reality and fight for change.

Social structure has remained unchanged among the elves, at least at first glance. They dwell in forest villages usually numbering less than 100 individuals. The fact that these dwellings now walk from one place to the next through the moon-ruined remains of mighty trees is something elves are learning to accept.

Unlike most other races, the elves do not use families as the main method of grouping themselves. Even the closest family will generate tremendous friction within itself if the members are together for several centuries. As a rule, pledged couples will stay together. Their children remain with them for a few decades. Otherwise, villages of the L'arile Nation are like tradesman's guilds.

Elves often develop deep, passionate interests in complex subjects; this is why elves make such skilled wizards. But many things can consume an elf's long years — woodworking, herbiology, swordplay, conjuration magic, poetry, astronomy, and countless other subjects. Elves with similar interests draw near each other, the better to discuss and argue and share knowledge. Typically, an elven village would become home to practitioners of one or two such specialties and those who support them.

Before the lunar rain, this system worked smoothly. Status within villages was obtained



by showing one's expertise, and as elves moved on or changed interests, the makeup of each village slowly changed. Enough elves had practical concerns like healing and harvesting that villages were largely self-sufficient, but many villages' primary "product" was an area of knowledge or skill.

Many of these fields have become luxuries in the last hundred years. A mech crewed entirely by master poets might be a pleasant place to visit, but it will have trouble defending itself against raiders and lunar dragons. Over time each village-mech, as the larger creations are known, has found itself inclining toward the arts of survival and combat. Of course, magic is still common.

### LANGUAGES

The elves speak Elven among themselves, Sylvan with other forest creatures, and Common to the outside world. Most village-mechs have at least one inhabitant capable of speaking any given common language, and magic can be used for special cases. Even the languages of outsiders and dragons are not unusual to find here.

One otherwise obscure tongue has gained use in the last century. An old elven dialect called Herélian, spoken by a reclusive group that dwelled deep in the Heréal forest, has proven useful in the creation of animated wooden mechs. Herélian seems to be a fusion of Elven and the language spoken by treants.

### CALENDAR

Horology is one of the subjects certain elves have taken an interest in, and there was once a village in Lilat forest known for its painstaking study of the passage of time. Over the centuries these villagers produced dozens of menologies, each refining the one to more accurately reflect the passage of time. Various

natural cycles were studied at different times, and each was reflected in its own calendar. The sun and the moon were common choices, but there were others, as well, including the breeding cycles of certain insects, the flowering patterns of trees, and the migrations of the stars. Each new student within the village seemed to find a new cycle that could accurately track the passage of the hours.

These many systems of tracking time had little effect on elven culture, which really had little use for time to begin with. The elves were rarely rushed to make an appointment, and their long lifespans usually didn't require measurements smaller than days. The different villages were so widespread that there was never a chance for a common system to develop. Each village used whatever natural pattern was convenient for it, whether it was the seasonal water level in a nearby river or the annual migration of cicadas.

To this day, L'arile Nation lacks any consistent calendar. When coordination between mechs is needed, its members speak in terms of days or tendays hence. As for weeks, months, and years, they're still named individually by the person who's discussing them, as best suits his own profession, trade, or preference.

### RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

With some sadness, elvish sages have noted how the lunar deities are overrunning their terrestrial counterparts. By elven standards this has happened very quickly. The gods of Highpoint are not yet defeated, but their failures so far have weakened faith among the elves.

Most elves still respect the assorted spirits and powers that make up their extensive pantheon. However, few of them now bargain for favors with these beings. Religion was never an organized or formal thing in the forest, but now it has become rare and private. Many members of L'arile Nation have been disappointed by the beings they once prayed to.

Of those who still practice, most worship their culture's handful of major gods. Even these deities are weakened and distracted compared to a century ago, but they still have more power than the multitude of servitors and wilderness spirits who once commanded faith. In keeping with elvish thinking, these greater gods show favor to mortals who dedicate themselves to study. Therefore, each offers Knowledge as one of their available domains. They include the following:

**Cynavar Sworddaughter:** The mistress of combat, a clever tactician, and a relentless foe who laughs as she gives battle. Her domains are Death, Knowledge, Protection, and War. Her favored weapon is the rapier, and her symbol is a dancing sword.

**Taanic Landstrider:** The master of maps and a traveler who has followed all paths in the world over land and sea. His domains are Earth, Knowledge, Travel, and Water. His favored weapon is the quarterstaff, and his symbol is a path fading into the horizon.

**Oalina Bookbinder:** This god knows every word that has ever been written, and is also a master of languages. His domains are Knowledge, Magic, Luck, and Trickery. His favored weapon is the mace, and his symbol is an open book.

**Kishanio Childfriend:** Kishanio understands the lore of birth and growth like none other. She loves all living things, even those of evil mind, and particularly guards the young. Her domains are Good, Healing, Knowledge, and Strength. Her favored weapon is a longsword, and her symbol is an acorn.

The four gods above are known to still exist and show favor to their followers. Other major elven gods have not fared so well. Two others have been damaged in some way, whether by direct assault or simply from losing strength to the lunar deities. Some elves still pray to them for aid, but doing so is risky. These gods are:

**Thulim Firebringer:** He taught elves to use fire and guided all crafts connected to it. Always a short-tempered being, he has seemingly lost his last shreds of restraint and now lives to consume whatever he finds. His domains are Destruction, Fire, and Knowledge. In times past he also offered Sun, but he no longer does. His favored weapon is a short sword. His symbol is a blazing fire.

**Myalo Gardenguide:** She was the mistress of farmers and foresters, a beautiful creature who loved all living things. After a century of lunar assault, she has become as scarred as the surface of Highpoint, and she lashes out like a wounded animal at the slightest threat. Her domains are Animal, Plant, and Trickery. She once offered Protection instead of Trickery, and she has apparently lost the will (or ability) to grant Knowledge to her worshippers. Her favored weapon was once the quarterstaff, but now her remaining followers find themselves drawn to the scythe. Her symbol was once a thriving tree, but it is rarely seen anymore.

Other beings and powers still have their followers, mostly nature spirits and elemental forces. Elves have always dealt with such semi-deities as customers deal with a favored merchant. Now that these beings have less to offer, the elves of L'arile Nation ask less of them.

But some dark entities have ensnared their worshippers beyond escape. The zebatulaak are small devil-worshipping cults found throughout the northern forests. Many of these cults began with pragmatic intent — usually self-preservation — but they've never quite ended. Elf villages that hoped for temporary respite from the lunar disasters made bargains they later discovered they couldn't get out of.

The zebatulaak are now cancers of darkness, spreading a subtle blight among the elves, for they demonstrate an ability to survive the lunar rain but only by exchanging all that is noble. They are rumored to participate in all sorts of debauched acts, ranging from cannibalism to living sacrifices. In exchange, their overlords from the pits grant them the ability to survive the lunar rain or turn away lunar dragons. L'arile Nation hunts down these devil-worshippers as best it can, but it's not easy. More than once, an otherwise-innocent looking visitor to Tannanliel has turned out to be an agent of a sinister force. The zebatulaak literally made deals with the devils, and now everyone is paying the price.

## COMMERCE

The L'arile Nation issues its own currency, and the coins of other lands are generally accepted within its borders. They use the common decimal copper-silver-gold-platinum system encountered across Highpoint.

L'arile coins are decorated with images of the forest, particularly trees and flowers.

Not surprisingly, the individualistic elves have created a great many coins. Several groups of allied village-mechs mint their own currency as they see a need; Tannanliel does likewise. These coins have the same value and similar sizes, but occasionally feuds between mechs spill over, and one group of elves will stop taking money minted by another faction.

This interest in coinage, unusual among elves, has happened partly because the traders of the endless plains are no longer common. Once the elves of Lilat and Heréal forests could

count on travelers from the south and west to keep them supplied with whatever the wilderness didn't provide. These days, elves have less people to trade with and fewer goods to trade. Many trees have been smashed to worthless splinters, and the fight for survival requires more magic than in the old days, so elves have sacrificed some of their mundane treasures to keep their economy going. It's a strange way for elves to think, but the new world demands it.

## SOCIAL STRUCTURE

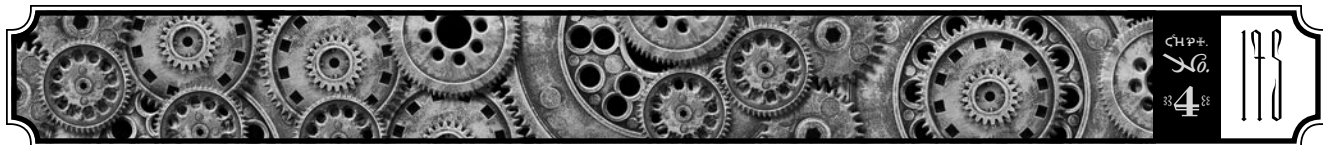
The culture of the elves has changed immensely because of the loss of their permanent settlements. Before the lunar rain, their society was based around the focused pursuit of certain complex skills. Now some of those skills serve them well at times, but everyone must help in almost every role — the specialist, once the premier position among the elves, has been replaced by the generalists and survivalists. Once elves could count on cloth being delivered by the traders or armor being purchased from a village of smiths. Now that travel is more dangerous, such shipments are rare, and the communities are not stationary enough to have consistent routes.

So, if you want cloth or armor, you must make it yourself. Rather than doing one thing very well, today's elves must be familiar with many tasks. This does not mean that the old skills don't survive, because they are still practiced, but their value in day-to-day life has lessened.

The largest elven social unit in today's world is a band that travels together. Generally the elves wander in groups of 30-40, either on a mech or on foot. Tannanliel is the exception to this rule, with its vast rooms for habitation, and some permanent settlements have survived here and there. Still, most elves will live nomadically in these bands.

The makeup of the mech crews is more stable than in pedestrian groups, but there is transition among all groups in L'arile. People come and go freely from these bands, as there is no formal structure for territory or heredity among them. Decisions are made in loose discussions where those with age or special knowledge are given the strongest voice. Amidst this diffuse political structure, the groups make their way and survive as best they can.

Elves have long lives and long memories, so their connections mean more to them than among human cultures. Newcomers to a band will often know someone in the group either



directly or through reputation. While there may have been competition between villages in the past, in the current struggle there is a stronger need to find common ground than to hold a grudge. When fights break out over resources, they are usually very short and one of the bands immediately moves away from the site.

Non-humans (with the exception of orcs) are often members of these bands. They seldom lead discussions, since with their short lives their conclusions are usually considered more immature, but they can participate and are treated as valued members of the group.

## VALUES

Whether operating from the security of a mech or scavenging for food, the elves of the northern forest love to be reminded of better days. Bards who know the stories and songs of the elven culture are highly valued, as are books and art that has survived the years. Because most elves remember the height of their society, nostalgia plays a more powerful role here than on the endless plains or in the flatlands. Survival and defense are most important, but maintaining their history is a motivation shared by many bands. There are times bands join to defend an important building or artifact from an attack, and often mechs can be persuaded to suspend their missions in order to help these groups.

Individuals who have spent great time studying have always been highly respected among the elves, but now these people are themselves considered a sort of artifact of the past. Demonstrations of a difficult craft, a specialized martial maneuver, or an explanation of a complex facet of the natural world are often attended with reverence. Mages are the best example of dedicated study and flashy effects, so they are often called upon to show some examples of their talents. The mechs are host to the more advanced students of magic, and so these crews hunger for reminders of the crafts unnecessary for running an animated mech.

The elves have always had a fascination with the natural world. Druidic magic and ranger talents are among the skills that are impressive to the bands, but these students of the forest are less likely to dwell among what is left of elven society. All elves retain a strong protective attitude toward their forests, even more so now that they live in the wilderness. Their campsites are cleaner when they leave than those of other races. Any threats to their home are dealt with as severely as a threat to

their band directly. Lilat and Heréal are good sources of wood for the building projects of the other mechs, but the L'arile Nation gently reminds anyone who comes exploring for resources that the northern forests are under their protection. If they could not pass the forests to their children, the elves feel survival would be meaningless.

## Family Life

Childrearing is not an activity to occupy most of an elf's adult years as it is for humans. In traditional society young elves would leave their parents to pursue their interest, usually in a different town or village. This prevents the clan or tribal structures of other races, where groups of people are also relatives. Family groups are small, usually consisting of a pledged pair and one or two children.

Pledging is what in other cultures would be called marriage, but there are significant differences. Marriage is a very social arrangement, which has impact on religion, property ownership, and relationships with the community outside the family. A pledge is considered a very private affair. An agreement is made in private between the two parties, and the nature of that contract is simply that the couple will support and care for each other and the children that might result. It is a ceremony of love, but that love is expressed between the couple and not generally celebrated with a large feast with the rest of the community. Instead, celebratory feasts are traditionally held at the birth of each child, thrown for the family by their neighbors.

A pledged couple will usually live together, though not always. Amongst humans and dwarves, the occupation of one spouse will often be supported by the other, so a dwarven soldier will have his armor cared for by his wife. Among the elves, the partners will often have

different pursuits, though it is common for couples to meet and fall in love through their studies or their craft.

Those who have been pledged in recent years do not find many differences in this facet of their lives. Still, on a crowded mech or camping in the forest, there is not enough privacy or resources to worry about the specifics of property ownerships. Their love is a private affair as before, and children are raised and then move off to pursue their own interests.

The biggest change has been an increase in the number of pledged partners. Elven society is accustomed to stability, and with their homes and security in constant flux they are seeking relationships that can remain consistent. Before the lunar rain, pledged couples sometimes separated for years, but now they remain together as often as possible. In these dangerous times, it is impossible to be certain of someone's safety when they leave the vicinity.

Children are raised with careful attention given to imparting the values of elven culture. Even so, it is inevitable that the new generation will have lost something important unless the problems of the modern day can be overcome and the bands resettle their villages.

Elves are profoundly concerned about the future of their people, especially because they have seen their short-lived neighbors lose their traditions over the generations. Every elf protected by the L'arile Nation considers it their responsibility to protect what resources they have left to ensure their people can enjoy a new golden age after these lunar problems have been eliminated.

## RULES INFORMATION

Characters from L'arile Nation are of two basic types: those born after the lunar rain, and those born before. The younger elves born since the lunar rain have seen their culture go through great changes, but they do not feel the same immense sense of loss that is felt by the older elves. On the other hand, those born before the lunar rain began have seen radical shifts in the lifestyle of their people over what, to elves, is a very short time. They are scarred deeply. Their greatest treasure — their cultural heritage — has practically vanished before their eyes.

This difference in perspective is the single greatest distinguishing trait of elven charac-





TABLE 4-5: L'ARILE NATION FEATS

FEATS	PREREQUISITE	BENEFIT
Charge Spell	Arcane spells, Craft Magical Mechs, either Craft Wand or Craft Staff	Add charges to wands or staves
Empower Mech (Metamagic)	–	+50% to variable, numeric effects of spells cast from mech
Enlarge Mech (Metamagic)	–	+100% to range of spells cast from mech
Forgotten Lore	–	+2 to Knowledge (arcana) and Knowledge (history)
Hated Enemy	Favored enemy	+2 to attack favored enemy but –2 AC and some skill checks
Heighten Mech (Metamagic)	–	Cast spells at higher level from mechs
Improved Mech Animation	Craft Magical Mech	+10 to dispel DC of mechs you craft
Lore Hoarder	Int 12+	Memorize knowledge
Mech Athlete	Mech Pilot 4 ranks	+4 to Climb, jump in mechs
Mech Whisper <sup>1</sup>	–	+4 to Move Silently checks in mechs
Metamagic Wand (Metamagic)	One certain metamagic feat	Apply metamagic effect to wand
Natural Caster	Druid level 1st	Reduced spell failure in certain armor

<sup>1</sup>THIS FEAT MAY BE SELECTED BY A L'ARILE NATION MECH JOCKEY AS A BONUS FEAT.

ters. Elves within the same adventuring party will rarely be divided by class, origin, or alignment. Instead, a much larger divide will be found between those who keenly feel the enormous hole in their culture, and those who see the world as rapidly changing yet interesting.

Heritage based on village of origin has never had a significant impact on an elf's native abilities; elves spend so little time in their birthplace, relative to their long lifespan, that it has relatively little impact on their game statistics. It is their choice of studies, expressed by class, that has the biggest impact on their stats.

## FEATS OF L'ARILE NATION

Centuries of study have a way of increasing aptitude. The elves are known for great prowess in all manner of things, from pottery to warfare. The feats in this section focus on those with the most application to typical game play.

### Charge Spell (General)

You can channel arcane energy into a mech-mounted magic item.

**Prerequisites:** Ability to cast arcane spells, Craft Magical Mech, either Craft Wand or Craft Staff

**Benefit:** L'arile elves have developed special techniques for recharging the magic items they build into their mechs. With this feat, you can recharge any mech-mounted wand (if you have Craft Wand) or staff (if you have Craft Staff).

To charge a wand or staff, you must physically touch the magic item, then concentrate. For each minute spent concentrating, you can transfer one spell charge. You must have the appropriate spell prepared for use. When the spell charge is transferred, you lose the spell as if you had cast it for the day. The wand or staff

gains one charge.

For example, a rodwalker's *wand of fireball* has been reduced to zero charges. A wizard memorizes four castings of *fireball* for the day. The wizard touches the wand, then spends four minutes concentrating. He loses his four castings of *fireball*, and the wand gains four charges.

Your caster level must be at least the level necessary to create the staff or wand in order to recharge it. If your caster level is sufficient but still lower than the level of existing charges in the item, charges are added at your current, lower caster level. These charges are used up first. For example, if you are a 5th-level caster attempting to add charges to a *wand of fireball* currently holding 10th-level charges, you simply add 5th-level *fireball* charges.

Each charge added in this way drains you of XP. The amount per charge is equal to the wand or staff's base cost divided by 2,500. For example, adding one charge to a *wand of fireball* (CL 5th) (base cost 11,250) drains 5 XP. Adding one charge to a mech-mounted *staff of illusion* (base cost 65,000 gp) would drain 26 XP. Adding 40 charges to the *staff of illusion* would drain 1,040 XP.

### Empower Mech (Metamagic, Mech)

You have a knack for channeling the arcane energy of a mech into powerful blasts.

**Benefit:** When you use a spell or spell-like effect linked to a mech, its variable, numeric effects are increased by 50%, per the Empower Spell feat. This only applies to spell effects directly linked to the mech, such as wands, staves, or inherent abilities of the mech. If you pilot the mech, it only applies to the spell effects you personally launch.

Using a spell effect in this manner drains additional magical energy. Magic items used in this manner count as two charges rather than

one. If the magic item has a number of uses per day, using it in this manner counts as two daily uses. If the magic item has unlimited uses per day, using it in this manner momentarily saps its strength, so it cannot be used again on the following round, but is restored to normal functioning thereafter.

### Enlarge Mech (Metamagic, Mech)

You are able to cast spells from mechs at an unusually long range.

**Benefit:** When you use a spell or spell-like effect linked to a mech, its range is increased by 100%, per the Enlarge Spell feat. This only applies to spell effects directly linked to the mech, such as wands, staves, or inherent abilities of the mech. If you pilot the mech, it only applies to the spell effects you personally launch.

Using a spell effect in this manner drains additional magical energy. Magic items used in this manner count as two charges rather than one. If the magic item has a number of uses per day, using it in this manner counts as two daily uses. If the magic item has unlimited uses per day, using it in this manner momentarily saps its strength, so it cannot be used again on the following round, but is restored to normal functioning thereafter.

### Forgotten Lore (General)

You remember ancient secrets.

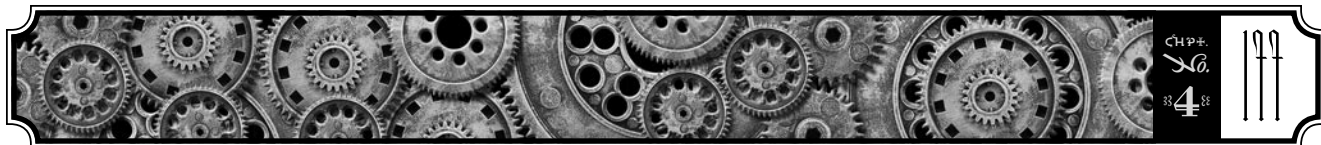
**Benefit:** You gain a +2 bonus to Knowledge (arcana) and Knowledge (history) checks.

### Hated Enemy (General)

You are filled with awe-inspiring rage when faced with a particular kind of enemy.

**Prerequisite:** Favored enemy (either via class ability or the feat on page 44)

**Benefit:** Choose one favored enemy. Your



bonuses against this enemy are increased by an additional +2. This stacks with class abilities and the Favored Enemy feat. However, this bonus is drawn from a reckless, uncontrollable rage. While in the presence of the chosen favored enemy, you suffer a -2 penalty to armor class and all Charisma-based skill checks.

### Heighten Mech (Metamagic, Mech)

You are able to cast higher-level spells from mechs.

**Benefit:** When you use a spell or spell-like effect linked to a mech, its caster level is increased, per the Heighten Spell feat. This only applies to spell effects directly linked to the mech, such as wands, staves, or inherent abilities of the mech. If you pilot the mech, it only applies to the spell effects you personally launch.

Using a spell effect in this manner drains additional magical energy. Magic items used in this manner count as an additional charge for every extra point of spell level. If the magic item has a number of uses per day, using it in this manner counts as an additional daily use for every extra point of spell level. If the magic item has unlimited uses per day, using it in this manner momentarily saps its strength, so it cannot be used again for a number of rounds equal to the extra points of spell level, but is restored to normal functioning thereafter.

### Improved Mech Animation (Item Creation)

Mechs you create are even more difficult to dispel.

**Prerequisites:** Craft Magical Mech

**Benefit:** Any animated mech that you create has a +10 bonus to its dispel DC. You must

design and build the mech, and personally complete the creation rituals, in order for this ability to take hold.

### Lore Hoarder (General)

You hoard knowledge for future generations.

**Prerequisite:** Int 12+

**Benefit:** For each point of Int bonus, you can memorize up to 10 pages of nonmagical writing per day. For example, if your Int were 14, you could memorize up to 20 pages of text per day. The memorization takes 15 minutes per page. There is no limit to how much material can be memorized in this manner, though a long-lived creature may eventually forget knowledge memorized in its younger years.

The elves rely on characters with this ability to hoard cultural knowledge for subsequent scribing by future generations of librarians. Some lore hoarders are "walking libraries," guarded by powerful mages and treated as living repositories of elven history.

**Special:** A bard with this feat gains an extra +1 bonus to bardic knowledge checks.

**Normal:** A normal person without this feat can memorize one page of nonmagical text per day for each point of Int bonus. The memorization takes 2 hours.

### Mech Athlete (Mech)

You have an aptitude for taking mechs to places others can't follow.

**Prerequisite:** Mech Pilot 4 ranks

**Benefit:** When piloting a mech of good or perfect maneuverability, you receive a +4 bonus to Climb and Jump checks.

### Mech Whisper (Mech)

You are able to pilot mechs with complete silence.

**Benefit:** Any mech you pilot receives a +4 bonus to Move Silently checks. This includes the loud steam-powered mechs — they still make a lot of noise, but it's a little less when you're in charge.

### Metamagic Wand (Metamagic)

You can apply a metamagic effect that you know to the spell produced by a wand.

**Prerequisite:** One of these metamagic feats: Empower Spell, Enlarge Spell, Extend Spell, Heighten Spell, Maximize Spell, Silent Spell, Widen Spell

**Benefit:** Choose one metamagic feat you possess from the list above. When you cast a spell from a wand, you can apply this metamagic effect to the spell result. You cannot cause the effective spell level of the resulting spell to exceed 4th. When used in this way, the spell cast uses a number of additional charges equal to the extra spell level cost of the metamagic spell.

For example, you have the Empower Spell metamagic feat. When you use a *wand of magic missile*, you can cause it to cast an empowered *magic missile* that deals (1d4+1)x1.5 points of damage per missile. Doing so consumes three charges from the wand.

**Special:** This feat can be taken more than once. Each time, you choose a new metamagic feat that it applies to.

### Natural Caster (General)

You can cast spells without hindrance from certain armors.

**Prerequisite:** Druid level 1st

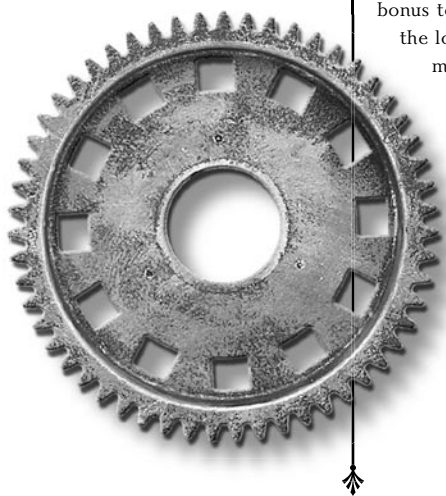
**Benefit:** When wearing leather, padded, or hide armor, your arcane spell failure chance is reduced by 10%. This technique was pioneered by the Converts.

**Special:** You cannot take this feat more than once.

## HERÉAL RANGER, A.K.A. MAGE JOCKEY (NEW PRESTIGE CLASS)

Animated mechs have their disadvantages. Their lithe frames make them weaker than their steam-powered counterparts, and they generally cannot take as much damage before collapsing. Sophisticated mech jockeys have discovered another drawback — you can't red-line an animated mech. The magic that powers it can't be manipulated the way a boiler can.

Not easily, anyway. But a band of the L'arile Nation's most dedicated mech pilots have proven that such a feat is possible. Inspired by tales of the Irontooth Clans and their fearsome mech devils, they studied and experimented and finally found a way to unleash extra power from animated mechs. A dedicated spellcaster could feed her spells into such a mech, much like stoking a spell furnace, only she would be





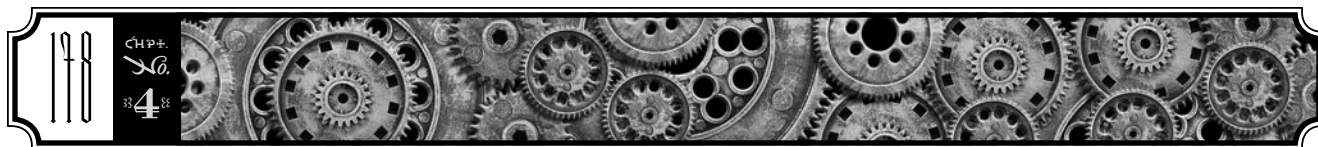


TABLE 4-6: HERÉAL RANGER

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	MECH ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+0	+1	+0	+2	+2	Extraordinary pilot, special skill uses
2	+1	+2	+0	+3	+3	Mech casting, mech combat mastery
3	+2	+3	+1	+3	+3	Sacrifice spell I, spells
4	+3	+4	+1	+4	+4	Mech combat mastery
5	+3	+5	+1	+4	+4	Sacrifice spell II, spells
6	+4	+6	+2	+5	+5	Mech combat mastery
7	+5	+7	+2	+5	+5	Spells
8	+6	+8	+2	+6	+6	Sacrifice spell III
9	+6	+9	+3	+6	+6	Mech combat mastery
10	+7	+10	+3	+7	+7	Sacrifice spell IV

able to create specific effects.

The core group who developed this method lived in the southern edge of the Heréal forest. They turned their knowledge against hostile outsiders such as orcish warbands, Legion spies, and roving lunar dragons. With their success came recognition. Many different elders of L'arile Nation wanted to share their knowledge, and Tannan himself hosted them aboard his city-mech for an extended time while they discussed the group's techniques.

Followers of this path are called Heréal Rangers, although they are found across L'arile



Nation territory (and beyond, if rumors are true; outsiders have taken to calling them mage jockeys). They usually operate like their ranger namesakes, patrolling the wilderness and hunting those who would harm its inhabitants. Heréal Rangers often work alone or as part of small like-minded bands. Their abilities let them turn relatively small mechs into powerful weapons. Becoming a Heréal Ranger requires dedication to both magic and mech piloting.

Another rumor says that a cabal of wizards has divined the secrets of the Heréal Ranger and adapted them to necromantic mechs. Nobody has proof of such a thing, but it is theoretically possible. It would require different techniques, and therefore would be a different class.

**Hit Die:** d6.

#### REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Heréal Ranger, a character must meet all of the following criteria.

**Skills:** Mech Pilot 8 ranks, Spellcraft 8 ranks.

**Feats:** Combine Spell; either Speed Freak or Natural Pilot.

**Spells:** Ability to cast 3rd-level spells.

#### CLASS SKILLS

The Heréal Ranger's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Craft (mechcraft) (Int), Jump (Str), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (geography) (Int), Knowledge (mechs) (Int), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Listen (Wis), Mech Pilot (Dex), Spellcraft (Int), and Spot (Wis).

**Skill Points at Each Additional Level:** 6 + Int modifier.

#### CLASS FEATURES

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** Heréal Rangers gain no additional weapon or armor proficiencies.

**Extraordinary Pilot (Ex):** Heréal Rangers have a gift for handling mechs. Like mech

jockeys, they add their class level as a bonus to Mech Pilot checks.

**Special Skill Uses:** Heréal Rangers may use the following skill synergies when piloting mechs:

**Balance:** For every full 6 ranks in balance, a Heréal Ranger receives a +2 bonus to checks to resist trip attempts.

**Climb:** When climbing in a mech, the Heréal Ranger receives a +2 bonus if he has at least 6 ranks in Climb.

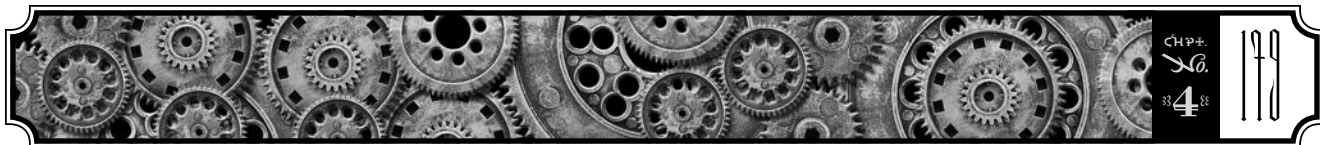
**Jump:** When jumping in a mech, the Heréal Ranger receives a +2 bonus if he has at least 6 ranks in Jump.

**Mech Casting (Su):** Starting at 2<sup>nd</sup> level, a Heréal Ranger may add half his class level (rounding down) as a bonus to all attack rolls made with mech-mounted spell completion items such as wands and staves, provided that the items are part of an animated mech. If the item does not require an attack roll, this bonus is not used. This is a result of the uncanny bond that Heréal Rangers have with animated mechs.

**Mech Combat Mastery (Ex):** Many Heréal Rangers begin their careers as wizards, but with practice they become progressively better at fighting with mechs. At each indicated level, the Heréal Ranger may select one of the following special abilities. He does not need to meet the requirements of any of the listed to feats to take them, provided they are granted via this class ability.

**Combat Prowess:** The Ranger gets a +2 competence bonus to all attack rolls made with mech weapons on animated mechs, and a +1 bonus to attack rolls made with weapons on other kinds of mechs. This stacks with his normal mech attack bonus.

**Mechwalker:** The Ranger gains the benefits of the Mechwalker feat, but only while aboard animated mechs. If he already possesses this feat, he gains an additional +1 competence bonus to attack rolls made with mech weapons on animated mechs.



**Mechidextrous:** The Ranger gains the benefits of the Mechidextrous feat, but only while aboard animated mechs. If he already possesses this feat, he gains an additional +1 competence bonus to attack rolls made with mech weapons on animated mechs.

**Empower Mech:** The Ranger gains the benefits of the Empower Mech feat. If he already possesses this feat, then the spell effects are increased by 75%, not 50%.

**Sacrifice Spell (Su):** Starting at 3rd level, a Heréal Ranger can sacrifice a prepared spell or available spell slot to boost an animated mech's performance. The four Sacrifice Spell abilities only work on animated mechs of Gargantuan or smaller size. Other mechs are too big, and their enchantments too densely woven, to alter in this fashion.

**Sacrifice Spell I:** At 3rd level, as a full-round action, the Ranger may lay hands on the chosen mech and sacrifice a spell of at least 1<sup>st</sup> level. The mech receives a +4 bonus to one of the following abilities chosen by the Ranger: Strength, Dexterity, Fortitude save, or Reflex save. This bonus lasts for a number of rounds equal to the level of the sacrificed spell. Cantrips and orisons are not powerful enough to be used this way. This bonus does not stack with other uses of this power; a mech may receive bonuses to all four stats above at once, but each one only gets a +4.

**Sacrifice Spell II:** At 5th level, by sacrificing a prepared spell or open spell slot, the Heréal Ranger gains one extra use of the Combine Spell feat, if casting a spell on an animated mech. The sacrificed spell must be the same level or higher than the spell being cast. For example, in order to use this ability while casting *endure elements* on a mech, a spell of at least 1<sup>st</sup> level must be sacrificed.

**Sacrifice Spell III:** The Heréal Ranger is attuned to the energy powering animated mechs. He can sacrifice one spell to cast another spell with the range personal on an ani-

mated mech he is piloting of size Gargantuan or smaller. The spell to be cast on the mech must be 4th level or lower, and the sacrificed spell must be at least two levels higher than it. A spell cast in this fashion lasts for its normal duration or a number of rounds equal to the caster's class level, whichever is less. Combine Spell may be used with this ability to have it affect larger mechs.

**Sacrifice Spell IV:** The Heréal Ranger is now able to tap into the energy powering animated mechs. He can sacrifice a spell to alter the flow of that energy, shunting aside damage to the mech. When this ability is used, the mech gains either DR or SR as the Ranger wishes, for a number of rounds equal to the level of spell sacrificed. The DR gained is 5/–, adding to any DR the mech possesses from non-Ranger sources. The SR is equal to 10 + the Ranger's class level, and it replaces any SR the mech currently has. Note that unlike other Heréal Ranger abilities, this one cannot be used on a mech with *magic immunity*.

## NEW SPELLS OF THE ELVES

The elves have developed several spells that take advantage of their mechs' unique properties. Many of them only affect mechs with wooden armor (a mech must have at least 50% wooden armor to be affected by such spells). Others interact with the arcane power animating their mechs. Many of these spells are designed to affect mechs of size Gargantuan or smaller, allowing them to be cast quickly in battle without needing to make use of Combine Spell. Most of these spells were developed by wizards, but some have come from the Convents and other druids.

### Busy Hands

Enchantment [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** Con 3, Sor/Wiz 5

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 10 minutes

**Range:** 100 ft. diameter sphere centered on caster

**Target:** Up to 10 humanoid creatures/level

**Duration:** Concentration; maximum 8 hours/day

**Saving Throw:** Will negates (and see below)

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

Creatures within the range of *busy hands* are filled with enthusiasm and perform menial labor at twice the normal speed, effectively allowing them to do two hours' work in one hour. This benefit only applies to unskilled

tasks; anything requiring a skill check is performed at the usual speed. *Busy hands* is often used to complete mechs in a hurry. However, the caster and all those affected by the spell must make a Will save when this spell expires. Anyone who does not succeed suffers 1 point of temporary Constitution damage. *Busy hands* counters *idle hands*.

**Material Component:** A pair of tiny gold hands worth 100 gp.

### Greenwood

Abjuration

**Level:** Drd 4, Sor/Wiz 3

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** One wood-armored mech size Gargantuan or smaller

**Duration:** 1 min/level

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates (harmless)

**Spell Resistance:** Yes (harmless)

This variant of *resist energy* was designed specifically to affect mechs with wooden armor. It grants energy resistance (fire) 10; the resistance increases to 15 at caster level 9th and 20 at caster level 14th. This effect is cancelled if either *resist energy* or *protection from energy* are successfully cast on the target mech, due to the fragile nature of the spell.

### Healing Sun

Conjuration (Healing)

**Level:** Drd 7, Sor/Wiz 6

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** One animated mech size Gargantuan or smaller

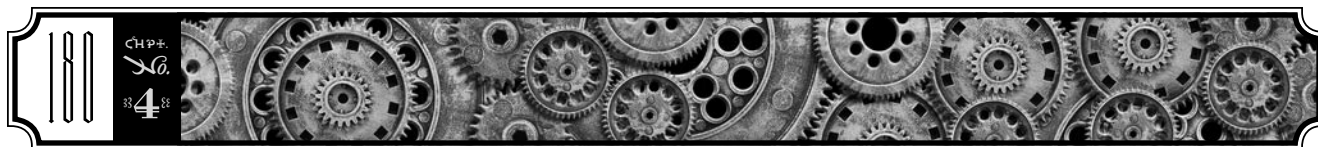
**Duration:** 10 minutes/level (D)

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude (harmless)

**Spell Resistance:** Yes (harmless)

This unusual spell allows animated mechs to heal themselves by absorbing sunlight. So far it has only worked for wooden L'arile Nation





mechs; scholars question whether mechs made of other materials would benefit from it. While under the effect of *healing sun*, a mech recovers 1 hp/minute when exposed to direct sunlight. Under partly cloudy skies, this is reduced to 1 hp/10 minutes, and if the sun is not visible, it has no effect.

**Material Component:** A freshly plucked leaf or petal.

### Idle Hands

Enchantment [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** Con 3, Sor/Wiz 5

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 10 minutes

**Range:** 100 ft. diameter sphere centered on caster

**Target:** Up to 10 humanoid creatures/level

**Duration:** Concentration; maximum 8 hours/day

**Saving Throw:** Will negates

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

The opposite of *busy hands*, this spell halves the number of useful man-hours produced by its victims. It does not cause Constitution damage in its victims, as it fills its targets with laziness and torpor. The caster must still make a successful Will save when the spell expires or suffer 1 point of temporary Constitution damage. *Idle hands* counters *busy hands*; the two spells are visually identical.

**Material Component:** A pair of tiny gilded tin hands worth 5 sp.

### Mech Jump

Transmutation

**Level:** Drd 3, Rgr 3, Sor/Wiz 3

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** One animated mech size Gargantuan or smaller

**Duration:** 1 min./level (D)

**Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

The target mech is infused with magic. Any attempt to jump with this mech receives a +5 enhancement bonus. At caster level 9th, this bonus increases to +10.

**Material Component:** A grasshopper's hind leg, which you break when the spell is cast.

### Mech Raft

Transmutation

**Level:** Sor/Wiz 4

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** See below

**Range:** 50 feet

**Target:** One animated or necromantic mech

size Gargantuan or smaller

**Duration:** 10 mins/level

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

Given Highpoint's regular flooding, it was just a matter of time until the elves found a way to turn their mech fleet into a literal fleet.

The target mech's speed is halved, but it gains the ability to walk across water at that same speed. Only mechs with good or perfect maneuverability can maintain their balance on water, so this spell has no effect on others.

Casting *mech raft* requires 1 minute

for a Large mech, with the time

doubling for every size increase (so

a Colossal mech requires 8 minutes).

This magic only works on animated

mechs and their necromantic counterparts, as

even the lightest steam-driven mech has too

many heavy structural elements.

**Material Component:** A toy wooden boat.

### Mech Stride

Conjuration (Teleportation)

**Level:** Drd 5, Rgr 4

**Components:** V, S, DF

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

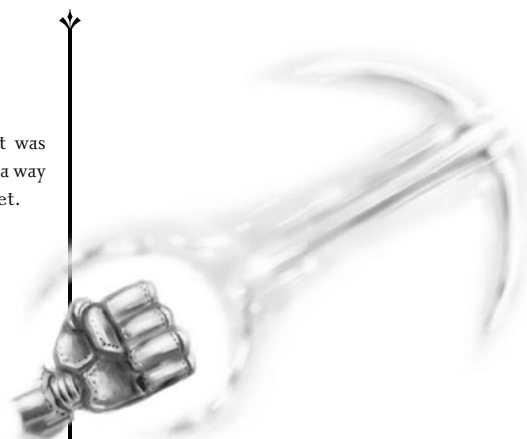
**Duration:** 1 hour/level or until expended; see text

This spell functions as *tree stride*, except that the caster can move from one wood-armored mech to another. It does not allow access to the interior of the mech; the caster is magically merged with the mech's armor. Instead of sensing targets and moving based on wood type, this spell uses the power source of the wood-armored mech that is the starting point to determine the maximum distance possible.

POWER SOURCE	TRANSPORT RANGE
Animated	3,000 feet
Man-powered	2,000 feet
Clockwork	1,500 feet
Steam	1,000 feet
All other mechs	500 feet

You may move into a mech up to one time per caster level (passing from one mech to another counts only as moving into one mech). The spell lasts until the duration expires or you exit a mech. Each transport is a full-round action.

You can, at your option, remain within a mech without transporting yourself, but you are forced out when the spell ends. If the mech with which you are merged is destroyed or suffers a red critical, you are slain.



### Mechtangle

Transmutation

**Level:** Drd 2, Sor/Wiz 4

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** One wood-armored mech size Gargantuan or smaller

**Duration:** 1 round/level (D)

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

If the affected mech hits an opponent with its fists, the armor on the mech's hands reaches out and grapples the target as if affected by an *entangle* spell. The target suffers no damage, but is held as if by a barbed sword or hooked axe. Escaping a *mechtangle* requires a DC 25 Strength check or a DC 20 Escape Artist check. Targets more than two sizes larger or smaller cannot be held by a mech using *mechtangle*; they suffer normal damage instead. A mech can use *mechtangle* once for every free arm it has. Arms holding weapons, or those with built-in weaponry, cannot make use of this spell.

**Material Component:** A net woven of willow leaves.

### Resist Warping

Transmutation

**Level:** Sor/Wiz 3

**Components:** V

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Touch

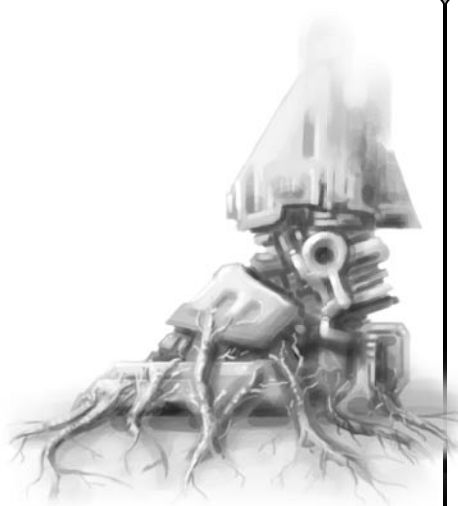
**Target:** One wood-armored mech size Gargantuan or smaller

**Duration:** 1 min/level

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates (harmless)

**Spell Resistance:** Yes (harmless)

The target mech is immune to the spells *warp wood* and *wood shape*.



## Rooted Strength

Transmutation

**Level:** Sor/Wiz 3

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** One wood-armored animated mech size Gargantuan or smaller

**Duration:** 1 min/level (D)

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

This spell causes the mech to root itself where it stands, drawing strength from the earth but losing the ability to move. The mech gains a +8 enhancement bonus to its Strength for the spell's duration. However, it cannot move its legs. Its base AC drops to 2, and it suffers a -4 penalty on all Reflex saves. *Rooted strength* has no effect on a mech that is not in physical contact with the ground, such as a mech affected by the *mech raft* spell.

**Material Component:** A clump of dirt with a fragment of plant root inside.

## Rusting Ray

Transmutation

**Level:** Drd 6

**Components:** V, S, DF

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Close (25 ft. plus 5 ft./2 lvls)

**Target:** One nonmagical ferrous object or one ferrous creature

**Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates

**Spell Resistance:** None

This spell's effects mimic those of *rusting grasp* except as noted above. For the purpose of this spell, mechs with iron or steel armor are considered to be ferrous creatures. The

Converts developed this spell for use against orcish mechs.

## Speak with Mech

Divination

**Level:** Brd 4, Drd 3, Rgr 2

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 1 min/level

You can speak with the wooden armor on a mech as with the spell *speak with plants*. For the purpose of this spell, the armor is treated as a living creature, regardless of the armor's power source. Wooden mech armor is aware of its surroundings, of the area it has traveled through in the last 24 hours, and of the activities of all creatures within 50 feet of the mech's exterior. It does not know about activity within the mech. The armor's attitude toward the caster of this spell is normally indifferent, but if the mech has seen battle in the last 24 hours, it is unfriendly until given reason to be otherwise.

## Steam Ward

Abjuration

**Level:** Sor/Wiz 4

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Touch

**Area:** 10 ft. radius emanating from creature or object touched

**Duration:** 1 min/level (D)

**Saving Throw:** Will negates

**Spell Resistance:** No

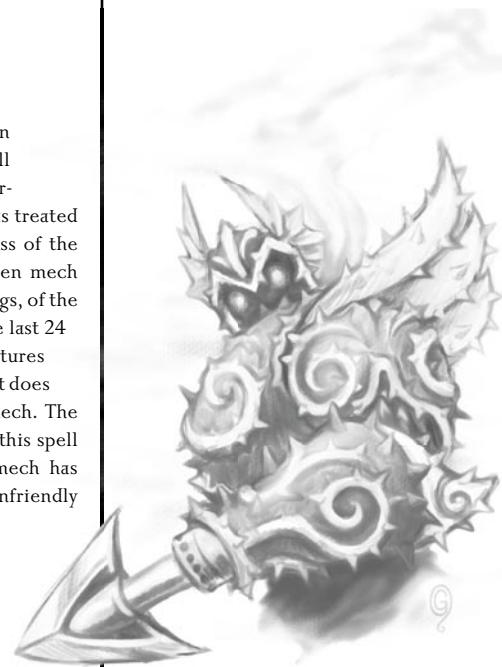
All creatures and objects within the area are protected from steam technology. They receive a +2 deflection bonus to AC and saving throws bonus against any attack made by a steam-powered weapon or creature. In addition, steam-powered creatures (such as steamborgs or smoking dead) cannot enter the warded area unless the caster speaks words of permission. If such words are spoken, the chosen creatures may pass into and out of the ward at will.

Steam technology cannot be activated within the warded area, although it does not stop items in the radius that were already active at the time of casting. Active steam-powered items cannot be brought within the bounds of this spell; those who attempt to do so are halted at the ward's edge. However, this ward cannot be used to push against steam items or creatures. Any attempt to do so causes the spell to end instead.

This spell was developed as a counter to the

science of steam. L'arile Nation spellcasters are working on other such measures to tip the balance of power on Highpoint back in favor of magic.

**Material Component:** A lump of charcoal.



## Thorns

Evocation

**Level:** Sor/Wiz 3

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** One wood-armored mech of Huge or smaller size

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** See text

**Spell Resistance:** See text

The target mech shoots wicked wooden spikes from its armor in all directions. Everyone and everything within the radius of effect must make a Reflex save or take damage equal to 1d6 per 2 caster levels (half damage if successful), with the size of the mech affecting the maximum damage done. The range of the spikes depends on the size of the mech:

MECH SIZE	RANGE	MAXIMUM DAMAGE
Huge or smaller	20 ft.	2d6
Gargantuan-Colossal	40 ft.	4d6
Colossal II-V	80 ft.	6d6
City-mech A-C	200 ft.	8d6
City-mech D-F	500 ft.	10d6

Combine Spell is often used with this spell. The mech at the center of thorns is immune to the spikes it generates, but it may suffer damage of another sort. The mech must succeed at a Fortitude save against this spell or lose 1 point of hardness from its wooden armor as gaps and cracks open up. If a mech loses a number of hardness points equal to the value of its wooden armor, it cannot be the subject of thorns. Lost hardness recovers at the rate of 1 point per hour.

**Material Component:** A handful of thorns from a locust tree, bound with silver wire.

## SECRETS

### TANNAN, ARCHITECT OF TANNANLIEL

He altered life in the forests forever when he constructed the city-mech that bears his name, and he is a tireless evangelist for mechs in general. His knowledge has come at a price, however, and unless an answer is found the L'arile Nation will be deprived of its greatest defender all too soon.

**Tannan, male elf Wiz20:** CR 20; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 20d4+20; hp 79; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 27 (+5 Dex, +6 armor, +2 natural armor, +2 deflection, +2 luck), touch 19, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +10; Grp +10; Mech Atk +5; Atk +12 melee (1d6+2, *staff of power*) or +18 ranged (1d8/x3, +3 *longbow*) or +11 mech (any mech weapon); Full Atk +12/+7 melee (1d6+2, *staff of power*) or +18/+13 ranged (1d8/x3, +3 *longbow*) or +11 mech (any mech weapon); SA Spells; SQ Elf racial traits, low-light vision; AL NG; SV Fort +9, Ref +12, Will +16; Str 10, Dex 20, Con 12, Int 32, Cha 12.

**Skills and Feats:** Appraise +14 (with his familiar Keyrark; +16 for mechs with Keyrark), Concentration +21, Craft (mechcraft) +35, Craft (sculpture) +13, Decipher Script +21, Knowledge (arcana) +25, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +17, Knowledge (mechs) +27, Knowledge (nature) +23, Listen +6, Mech Pilot +17, Profession (forester) +6, Search +13 (+15 for secret doors and hidden

compartments), Sleight of Hand +8, Spellcraft +27, Spot +11, Survival +4 (when finding/following tracks or aboveground) or +6 (when finding or following tracks while aboveground); Combine Spell, Craft Magical Arms and Armor, Craft Magical Mech, Craft Staff, Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Eschew Materials, Maximize Spell, Natural Pilot, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (transmutation), Spell Penetration.

**Possessions:** *Staff of power*, +3 *longbow*, *gloves of dexterity* +2, *amulet of natural armor* +2, *ring of protection* +2, *bracers of armor* +6, *headband of intellect* +6, 20 arrows.

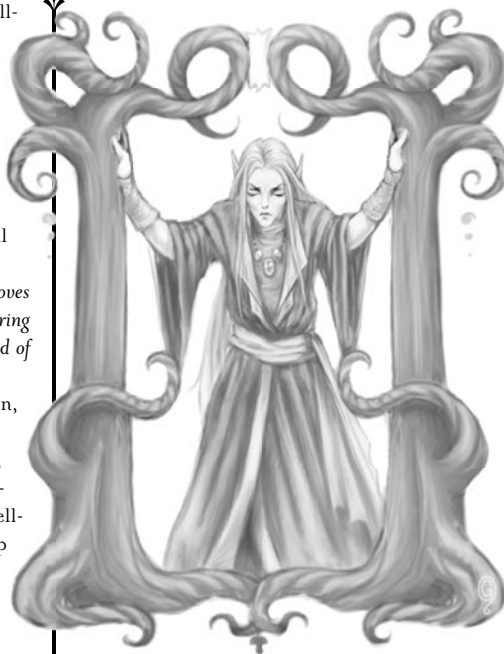
**Languages:** Celestial, Draconic, Elven, Gnome, Orc, Sylvan.

**Spells Prepared** (4/7/7/6/6/6/6/5/5/5, save DC 21 + spell level +1 for transmutation): Tannan is a powerful and versatile spellcaster. Most of his spell slots are taken up with unique spells of his own creation that help keep Tannanliel operating, but he can have whatever magic the GM thinks necessary. He is an extraordinarily powerful wizard, easily capable of entering epic level if the GM desires, and he has access to nearly any spell available. He prefers transmutations and enchantments in combat.

From his youth, Tannan was a brilliant student of wizardry. Several elven societies and arcane colleges competed to have him as a student. He ultimately began his tutelage under a transmuter named Alithio, himself a part-time adventurer. He brought the young Tannan with him on his exploits across the forests.

More reserved scholars were shocked that he would risk such a valuable apprentice by diving headfirst into a den of dangerous beasts. Alithio saw it as a vital part of training. "You can learn things," he told Tannan, "but that doesn't matter unless you do things." He encouraged his apprentice to follow his interests, arcane and otherwise. The young Tannan learned the craft of a sculptor, the tricks of ledgerdemain and pickpocketing, and the mysteries of architecture. All three would help him later in life.

Ultimately master and student parted ways — Tannan wished to pursue studies in all eight schools of magic, despite his natural affinity for transmutation. In addition to the parting gift of a *minor cloak of displacement* (later lost in battle), Alithio gave the young Tannan one final piece of advice. "Life is always changing, even if elves refuse to. Never be afraid to break with the past. Following a new path might not lead to a new destination, but following an old one certainly won't."



This inventiveness, coupled with his natural skill, made him an obvious candidate for the White Congress. He happily accepted membership in this esteemed order and studied in its library. His time with Alithio had awakened a slight wanderlust in him, and he occasionally slipped away to follow a promising lead into danger. A skilled young wizard named Iparo accompanied him on many of these adventures, and that partnership formed the groundwork for what would become Tannanliel's quintet of archmages.

This inquisitive spirit served him well once the lunar rain began to fall, for he was quick to learn about mechs. Most elves assumed that mechs were a defensive tool and nothing more. Elves lacked the sort of community spirit that brought dwarves and eventually humans together to build city-mechs. Tannan, however, saw that route as the path to salvation.



By the time mechs became a powerful force on Highpoint, Tannan was a respected wizard with many powerful allies. He gathered Iparo and three other adventurous mages together and Tannan laid out the plans for a massive living city-mech, a mobile forest with the arcane firepower of a dozen elven villages. He had expected that one or two of them would offer token support, for even Iparo said she doubted that such a creation was possible when he first told her of his idea.

Instead his explanation and his plans astonished the other four. None of them had conceived of anything on that scale, and without Tannan's mastery of magic they likely never would have achieved it. But they all set to the project with incomparable energy, and the result speaks for itself.

Tannan is the closest thing the L'arile Nation has to a king, a role that he finds distasteful. He prefers to think of himself as an advisor to less experienced mech designers. The L'arile emphasis on speed and stealth annoys him, and as time goes on he has become outspoken about the advantages of a powerful offense. Although he has little interest in using steam technology, Tannan thinks the Stenians and Legion both have a better grasp of mech potential than his own people do. This is not a popular view, and he attempts to keep it to himself.

Despite his great achievements, Tannan has regrets. One is his success in battling the Shadow Congress. It was a necessary fight, but Tannan will never forgive himself for turning his knowledge against his fellow elves in such a violent fashion. Battling monsters and raiders is justifiable, but Tannan counted many of the Shadow Congress as friends before their schism, and their deaths hit him hard. This causes him to take a softer approach to the Old Scholars than his fellow archmages would like.

Another regret is the name of the city-mech Tannanliel. It embarrasses him that the elves refer to it as "Tannan's City," for many elves helped with the construction of it and many more help operate it now. If he had his way, it would be called Tariwin, or "New Home." But the rest of the archmages insisted on honoring him by naming the city-mech after him and he didn't have the heart to refuse.

But the largest regret in his life is the bargain he made to keep Tannanliel functioning. It is a staggering task, even for a wizard with his skill and the support he has available. Quite simply it is an impossible feat for a mortal being. So, following the lead of the White Congress, he sought out powerful extraplanar beings to aid him. He used his power to contact the deities of Highpoint.

Fading but still potent, they granted Tannan the power he needs to keep Tannanliel alive. It comes at a price. A wizard of his power would be a valuable ally in the war against the lunar gods, and so their side of the bargain is that Tannan will spend his afterlife in their service, fighting against the encroachment. Tannan accepted this arrangement as he still expected several centuries of life before his time to die.

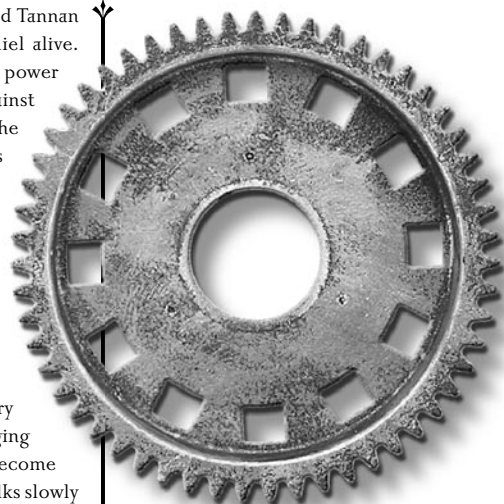
One must be careful when bargaining with gods. Channeling the power needed to maintain Tannanliel is draining Tannan's life force. For every week he spends on the mech, he is aging by a year. The change has started to become obvious to those around him, as he walks slowly and tires easily; his long blond hair is even starting to turn silver. He isn't old yet, but he will be soon unless he can find a way to escape his bargain.

Tannan hasn't shared this secret with any of his peers. Even Iparo, whom he has pledged himself to, is unaware of the bargain. He keeps it to himself because he fears what the others would do if they knew. It's bad enough that he is dooming himself, and Tannan doesn't want to see his friends cross the gods. The only individual who knows the truth is his longtime familiar, a raven named Keyrark. The raven is greedy and irreverent, and having been Tannan's companion for decades, it is loyal to him over all else.

## IPARO, TANNANLIEL ARCHMAGE

Iparo is from the northern edge of Lilat forest, where winter is a frequent and violent guest. Her village was protected by a thick wall of evergreen trees, but young Iparo would often push through this barrier and stand in the snow, watching it fall through the branches. In time she moved farther south to pursue her interest in wizardry. She carried a love of winter with her.

Once the lunar rain brought its monsters to Highpoint, her interest proved to be good fortune for the elves. Iparo, having proven herself an excellent wizard, was a member of the White Congress and a close ally of Tannan. She learned a great deal about mech design, and often took the field in the days of the Shadow Congress. Upon hearing that a company of rodwalkers had been routed by a lunar dragon, thanks to the monster's resistance to fire, she



immediately designed an *ice storm*-wielding mech that became the dragonhunting-mech called the icicle (described on page 43 of the **Mech Manual**).

Paradoxically, the deadly lunar rain also prompted Iparo to explore the southern forest. She had devoted her life to arcane study. Eventually, the devastation caused by lunar meteors prompted her to see what was left of the forests. This coincided with an early snowfall, and after a few days of hiking around the desolate white beauty of Heréal, Iparo returned with a desire to somehow save her home. She mentioned this to Tannan, who replied that he had an idea for her.

Her relationship with Tannan led to her becoming the first of Tannanliel's archmages. Iparo was careful in deciding yet bold in action, and her thoughtfulness often balanced Tannan's





zeal. Together the two became something even greater than the sum of its formidable parts. He asked her for help before he even began designing, and Iparo repaid that trust tenfold. Well before the city-mech was done, Tannan had also asked her to become his bond partner, the elven equivalent of a spouse.

She put him off for some time. Iparo felt the attraction as well, but getting the city-mech underway was more than the two of them could handle, and adding a lifelong commitment didn't seem wise. After Tannan said that three other powerful wizards would be found to share the burden, she gave in, and the two became a couple. As is often the case with elves, they treated it as a private affair.

The day after they bonded, Agravael Hammerfang arrived to help his old friend Tannan. He and Iparo struck a chord with each other. Both enjoyed exploring the world around them, and every now and then they ranged far afield in search of rare components for the city-mech's operation. The two of them were Tannan's closest companions, and while all three respected Shadidith and Halloma, this trio formed the core of Tannanliel's command structure. Iparo had a good sense for other people's desires and fears, so she became a sort of ambassador between the archmages and the rest of the mech's crew.

Iparo and Tannan explored life as a bonded pair. Often elves bond in part to share children with each other, but the two wizards agreed that it was not yet safe enough. Also, more and more of Tannan's energy was needed to maintain the city-mech. As days of effort became weeks of strain for Tannan, Iparo found her thoughts drifting to Agravael. The conjurer had expressed interest in her before he learned that she was bonded with Tannan, and while Iparo loved her partner, he seemed to be keeping something from her.

At the moment, Iparo is balanced in a dangerous place. She knows that Tannan is under immense pressure that even the other archmages cannot bear, but he refuses to tell her about it. This is a painful rebuke, especially since Tannan's health is clearly deteriorating. By contrast, Agravael is vital and exciting, and although he has been a gentleman, it doesn't take a diviner to see that he still finds Iparo attractive. While Tannan deals with his private burdens, Iparo and the conjurer have spent a great deal of time together, both on the mech and out exploring. Iparo's head wants to do the noble thing, but her heart is wondering if perhaps she bonded with the wrong person.

Her only confidant in this matter is her familiar, a snow-white cat named Avalanche.

Avalanche is playful and regal in turns, and she definitely prefers Tannan — Agravael's grig familiar enjoys playing tricks on the cat and is too nimble for Avalanche to catch. The longer Tannan keeps his bargain private, the more chance that Iparo will not remain with him. Whether she turns to Agravael or returns to the forest of her youth, such an event might well shatter what remains of Tannan's power.

Iparo is tall for a female elf, with ash-blond hair that hangs past her shoulders. She keeps it tied back with a blue cord. Her eyes are a light shade of brown that looks yellow in natural light, making her face seem just a touch feline.

**Iparo, female elf Wiz20:** CR 20; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 20d4; hp 68; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 21 (+2 Dex, +6 armor, +3 deflection), touch 15, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +10; Grp +11; Mech Atk +5; Atk +13 melee (1d8+1d6+3/19-20, +2 *frost longsword*) or +14 ranged (1d8+1d6+2/x3+1d10, +2 *icy burst longbow*) or +7 mech (any mech weapon); Full Atk +13/+8 melee (1d8+1d6+3/19-20, +2 *frost longsword*) or +14/+9 ranged (1d8+1d6+2/x3+1d10, +2 *icy burst longbow*); SA spells; SQ Elf traits, low-light vision, *permanent resistance*; AL NG; Fort +7, Ref +9, Will +17; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 11, Int 22, Wis 14, Cha 17.

**Skills and Feats:** Appraise +8 (for mechs), Concentration +16, Craft (mechcraft) +22, Diplomacy +11, Hide +4, Knowledge (arcana) +18, Listen +6, Move Silently +19 (with familiar), Search +8, Spellcraft +20, Spot +6, Survival +4; Alertness (with familiar), Combine Spell, Craft Magical Mech, Craft Wondrous Item, Empower Spell, Improved Counterspell, Iron Will, Moonwatcher, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Skill Focus (Sense Motive), Stealthy, Still Spell.

**Possessions:** +2 *frost longsword*, +2 *icy burst longbow*, *staff of frost*, *ring of invisibility*, *boots of elvenkind*, *medallion of thoughts*, *bracers of armor* +6, *ring of protection* +3, 20 arrows.

**Languages:** Common, Dwarf, Elven, Orc, Syl-

van, Draconic, Heréal.

**Wizard spells** (4/6/6/5/5/5/4/4/4, save DC 16 + spell level): Iparo is a flexible caster, and when she hasn't had to prepare a large number of spells for Tannanliel's operation, almost anything can be found in her memory. The biggest quirk of her casting style is that she uses cold spells and avoids fire magic, except under dire circumstances. Many of her spells have this touch of winter; for example, her *magic missiles* take the form of jagged icicles flying from her hand.

Iparo is a skilled wizard and she makes her spells match the occasion. She has learned to cast without speaking or moving, and when possible uses this to surprise opponents. It also aids her when furthering the archmages' needs, as she can cast spells in public without drawing attention to herself. Before the distraction of Agravael, she was starting to investigate Larwyn Beechfire's activities, a matter for which stealth is useful.

Although magic is her strongest suit, Iparo is prepared for more conventional combat. She carries a +2 *frost longsword* and a +2 *icy burst longbow*, as well as a *staff of frost*. Her quieter pursuits are helped by a *ring of invisibility* and *boots of elvenkind*, and she wears a *medallion of thoughts*. The medallion doesn't get much use, as she considers it wrong to read others' minds without permission, but lately the thoughts of both Tannan and Agravael are of great interest to her.

## LARWYN BEECHFIRE, OLD SCHOLAR

Larwyn Beechfire is angry that journeymen mages in the Order of Tannanliel can order him around. But he doesn't care whether the Old Scholars win their petty power plays. As the most charismatic member of a pack of fussy wizards, Larwyn had an easy time reaching his current position — an influential voice of opposition to Tannanliel's archmages, but simultaneously a respected authority on arcane matters. Very soon he intends to use this stepping stone to take control of the city-mech for himself.

Since childhood, Larwyn has believed that his desires were more important than the needs of others. He was (and is) wise enough to know that others don't see it that way. Unless you persuade them to, that is. Larwyn was the eldest child in a respected family of arcane scholars, and as he honed his spells he also practiced





manipulating other people. When his parents died in an unusual magical accident, Larwyn was ready to step in and lead.

His family was part of a large village focused on wizardry, particularly battle magic. Larwyn was one of their leading voices. The entire village was recruited to join Tannanliel early on, and many of its members now serve in the Suns. Although Larwyn wasn't the sole voice of authority there, he had a great deal of influence. Life aboard a city-mech has reduced that influence, and the Order of Tannanliel diluted it further.

Larwyn is not patient enough to work his way through the ranks of the Order, nor does he wish to bother organizing its opponents. He fell in with the Old Scholars because several members of his village sympathized with their aims, and his natural charm propelled him to prominence among them. While he gives voice to their complaints, he continues to work at his tasks for the good of Tannanliel even as he plans to overthrow its master.

Sabotage isn't quite his style, and rebellion is too much effort. He makes sure the Old Scholars stay riled up and he nudges the Twelve Elders toward seeking independence, but these are small games. He knows that Tannan is the heart of the city-mech. A series of powerful divinations, coupled with knowledge bought from a trio of demons, has revealed to him that Tannan's life force is linked to his mech's activity. Although he doesn't know the details, Larwyn has correctly deduced that pushing Tannanliel harder will cause its creator to die.

The evoker is in the early stages of his plan. As he presents a front of reasonable opposition, he is working to create threats that the city-mech must fight. Evil creatures are sum-

moned and sent to threaten helpless elves in Tannanliel's path. Lunar dragons are lured into the forest. Larwyn would like to encourage the Legion or the orcish warbands to actively oppose L'arile Nation, although he hasn't figured out how to incite them.

As the plan unfolds, Tannanliel will spend more time in combat and Tannan himself will grow closer to death. Larwyn will pretend to have a change of heart, abandoning the Old Scholars and working to uphold the Order, perhaps even staging a near-death event to show sincerity. Tannan will die (perhaps with a little assistance) and a new archmage will be needed. Who better than the helpful Larwyn?

Once he joins the ranks of the archmages, Larwyn plans to remove his rivals. Agravael and Iparo could easily meet their deaths while adventuring outside the city-mech's walls. Shadidith is a skilled wizard, but Larwyn believes himself the better in combat. Hal-loma is a problem, true, but her blunt nature can undoubtedly be used against her. All four will be replaced with more pliable mages, individuals who understand that Tannanliel is under Larwyn's command alone. With the world's most powerful mech for a base, Larwyn can have anything he desires.

It's an ambitious plan, and Larwyn knows he has a lot of work to do if he wants to make it come true. He needs to cause trouble across the forests, he needs to attract powerful foes for Tannanliel, and he needs a cadre of loyal followers to help with the details. The fact that it's a madman's plan doesn't bother him. It puts innocents in harm's way and it requires killing several of the most noble elven wizards, but it will also give Larwyn what he wants, and that's what really matters.

Larwyn is small and slender, with dark blue eyes and black hair. He dresses in fine fabrics, as befits an elf of his station. His familiar, a bat called Sreessa, is usually perched on his shoulder.

**Larwyn Beechfire, male human Evo17:** CR 17; Medium humanoid (human); HD 17d4-17; hp 48; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 25 (+2 Dex, +6 armor, +5 deflection, +2 luck), touch 19, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +8; Grp +6; Mech Atk +4; Atk +8 melee (1d6, *staff of power*) or +12 ranged (1d6+2/x3, +2 *shortbow*) or +2 mech (any mech weapon); Full Atk +8/+3 melee (1d6, *staff of power*) or +12/+7 ranged (1d6+2/x3, +2 *shortbow*) or +2 mech (any mech weapon); SA spells; AL CE; Fort +6, Ref +9, Will +14; Str 7, Dex 14, Con 8, Int 20, Wis 15, Cha 20.

**Skills and Feats:** Bluff +13, Concentration +19, Diplomacy +18, Disguise +7 (to act in character), Gather Information +17, Intimi-

date +7, Knowledge (history) +15, Knowledge (local) +25, Listen +8 (with familiar), Search +7, Sense Motive +15, Spellcraft +25, Spot +6; Alertness (with familiar), Combat Casting, Craft Staff, Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Greater Spell Focus (evocation), Negotiator, Scribe Scroll, Skill Focus (Sense Motive), Spell Focus (evocation), Spell Penetration.

**Possessions:** +2 *shortbow*, *staff of power*, *bracers of armor* +6, *ring of protection* +5, *cloak of charisma* +4, *ring of mind shielding*, *boots of teleportation*, 20 arrows.

**Languages:** Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnome, Sylvan.

**Wizard spells** (4/6/5/5/5/4/4/4/4, save DC 15 + spell level +2 for evocations): Around half of Larwyn's spells are powerful evocations. The remainder is a mixture of dangerous spells (*disintegrate* and *flesh to stone* are favorites) and divinations. Larwyn is very well informed about his enemies, and since he plans to take over Tannanliel, almost everyone he encounters is a potential enemy.

Larwyn is a powerful foe in combat, but he knows that it isn't his forté. If he can't obliterate a target with one or two spells, he retreats. Fighting fair doesn't concern him. Most of his great victories have been won with words as his only weapon. When fighting with spells, he prefers high-level magic that does massive damage or otherwise has a good chance of instantly killing his target.

Aside from his prepared spells, Larwyn's main weapon is a *staff of power*. He inherited one when his parents died, and while it was long since drained, this one is an exact duplicate. As Larwyn avoids combat, it still has almost all of its charges. He is also an adequate archer, and if trouble is expected he carries a +2 *shortbow*. His other regular equipment includes: *bracers of armor* +6, *ring of protection* +5, *cloak of charisma* +4, *ring of mind shielding*, and *boots of teleportation*. He keeps several scrolls handy as well.

Larwyn's prohibited schools are enchantment and necromancy. He is still angry with his parents for not teaching him enchantment, as it would be supremely useful to him now.

## THE SHADOW CONGRESS

The elves have long been willing to negotiate with extraplanar powers, gods and demons alike. The introduction of the lunar gods to the terrestrial realm was a catastrophe to most, but some saw the disaster not as an inevitable accident, but as a failure of diplomacy. As the

White Congress defended their library, this group searched for ways to contact and negotiate with these new gods.

At the start, they saw themselves as complementary to the defensive efforts of the mages who defended the people of Heréal and Lilat, but it quickly became clear that most people saw efforts at dealing with the new gods as treacherous. The White Congress was especially vocal in their disagreement with this approach, as they felt the concentrated attacks showed that the lunar gods had a specific interest in the elves. Some deferred to this judgment, but most in the movement continued their work in secret. Lebran critics called them the Shadow Congress in mockery, but the group decided to keep the name for themselves.

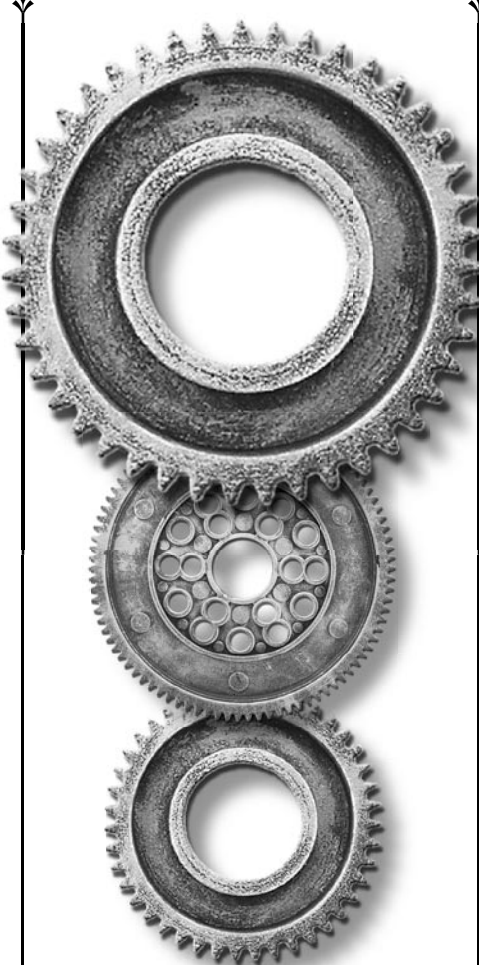
The Shadow Congress survived the climatic battles against the early elven mechs, but it broke much of their strength. With their leaders dead or in hiding, the group has been slow to rebuild. Only in the last five years have they resumed activity on a wide scale, and they are very careful to avoid leaving hints of their continued existence.

Over time, the relationship between the Shadow Congress and the lunar gods has improved, but it would be a mistake to picture these elven mages worshipping in lunar temples or riding lunar dragons across the landscape. Their communication with the new gods is sporadic, and while their enclaves are rarely attacked by the lunar dragons, they have no greater protection from the lunar rain than other itinerant refugees. They carry out missions based on their analysis of the cryptic statements they have received or intercepted.

The goal is to prove to the lunar forces that the elves are not a threat to their plans, but without knowing what those plans are this is complicated and subject to much debate amongst the membership. So far, the Shadow Congress has identified two goals they believe coincide with the interests of the lunar gods.

Their first priority is the elimination of mechs from elven society. The Shadow Congress believes that the elves, by presenting such a strong defense, have also made themselves appear as a threat to the moon. Eliminating the mechs is simply a way to show that the elves are interested in peace.

The Shadow Congress uses some of its resources to hire anklebiters and saboteurs to remove the mechs from the northern forests. Sometimes they use their magic against their own people. While this may seem harsh, they feel their insights are too important to wait for consensus among their peers. The sooner their people show the lunar gods that they wish to



live in peace, the sooner these gods will cease their attacks and focus on the larger threats of the Steinians and the Legion.

Due to the attacks on Lebra and other areas of mystical research, the Shadow Congress also believes that the lunar gods are interested in understanding the magic of Highpoint. Therefore, their second goal is to gather a sort of universal tutorial in the basics of magic, including artifacts from each school of wizardry and illustrated spellbooks.

So far they have been unsuccessful in finding students for their lessons, but they continue to perfect their collections, looking forward to the day they will trade their insights for what they expect to be amazing lunar discoveries in the field. The results of these efforts are large collections that must be guarded and added to, which means the group tends to hire a number of mercenaries. The Shadow Congress is rumored to have hired the North Star Irontooth Clan to assist in its collection of lunar artifacts, as evidenced by the elven

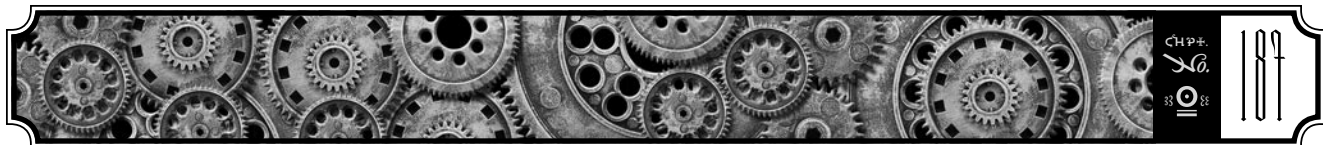
coinage brought back to the flatlands in North Star mechs. But that alliance broke down soon after it started. The North Star Clan speaks of it only by saying there can't possibly be any good to come of capturing one of the derros' razid mechs intact.

While maintaining these pursuits, the Shadow Congress is constantly attempting to contact these new gods. Any information about how to communicate with them is highly prized by the group, as are any authentic scriptures or artifacts. Their limited success has led them to believe that so far they are on the correct path, and if the forests have survived better than the plains, the Shadow Congress believes it is due to their efforts.

Many elves publicly believe the group to be a myth produced by the paranoia from the troubles, but others know the truth. Some members of the White Congress knew these mages personally and have some idea of what they had been working on. If exposed, anyone working to pacify the lunar gods or destroy mechs is considered a traitor and dealt with accordingly.

The Shadow Congress' reclusive membership is organized into cells of 3-8 elves. Each cell has a leader, called a counselor, and only the counselors know how to contact other cells. If a cell needs a new counselor, a two-thirds majority of existing counselors selects one.

Although the group has no official hierarchy beyond the counselors, certain members are more influential within their ranks. One is Peval (Wiz16), a quiet elf who lives in the northmost woods. She and her cell appear to be a small band of arcane students hiding in a natural cave complex. Peval lost her pledged spouse Hanno and their two children to a lunar dragon's assault, prompting her interest in the Congress' goal. Another is Jelebri Cyn (Wiz7/Drd4), as strident a figure as Peval is reserved. He comes from the ranks of the Converts and still has many connections among their number, giving him influence out of proportion to his wizardly knowledge.



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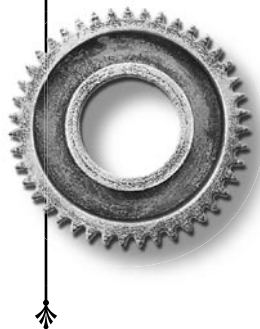
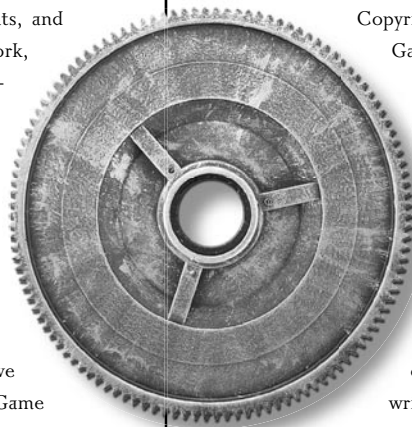
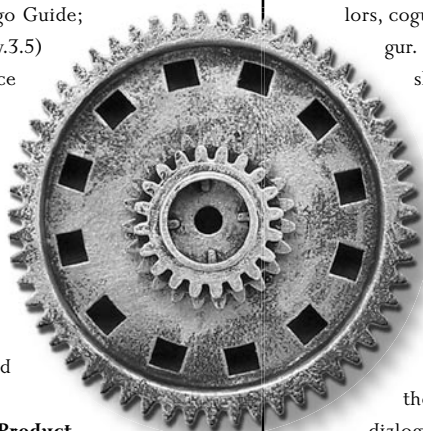
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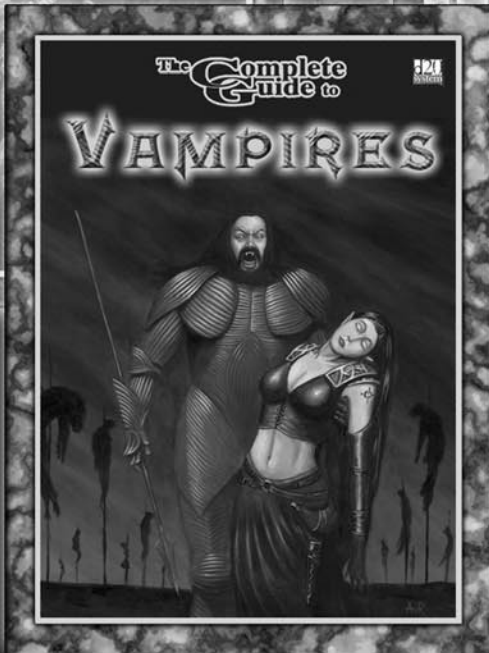
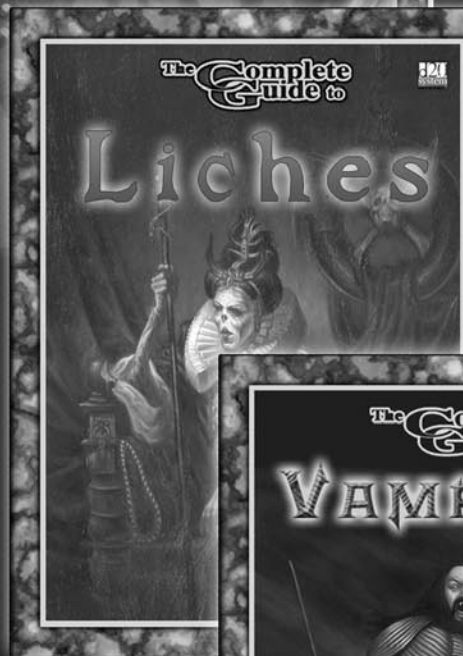
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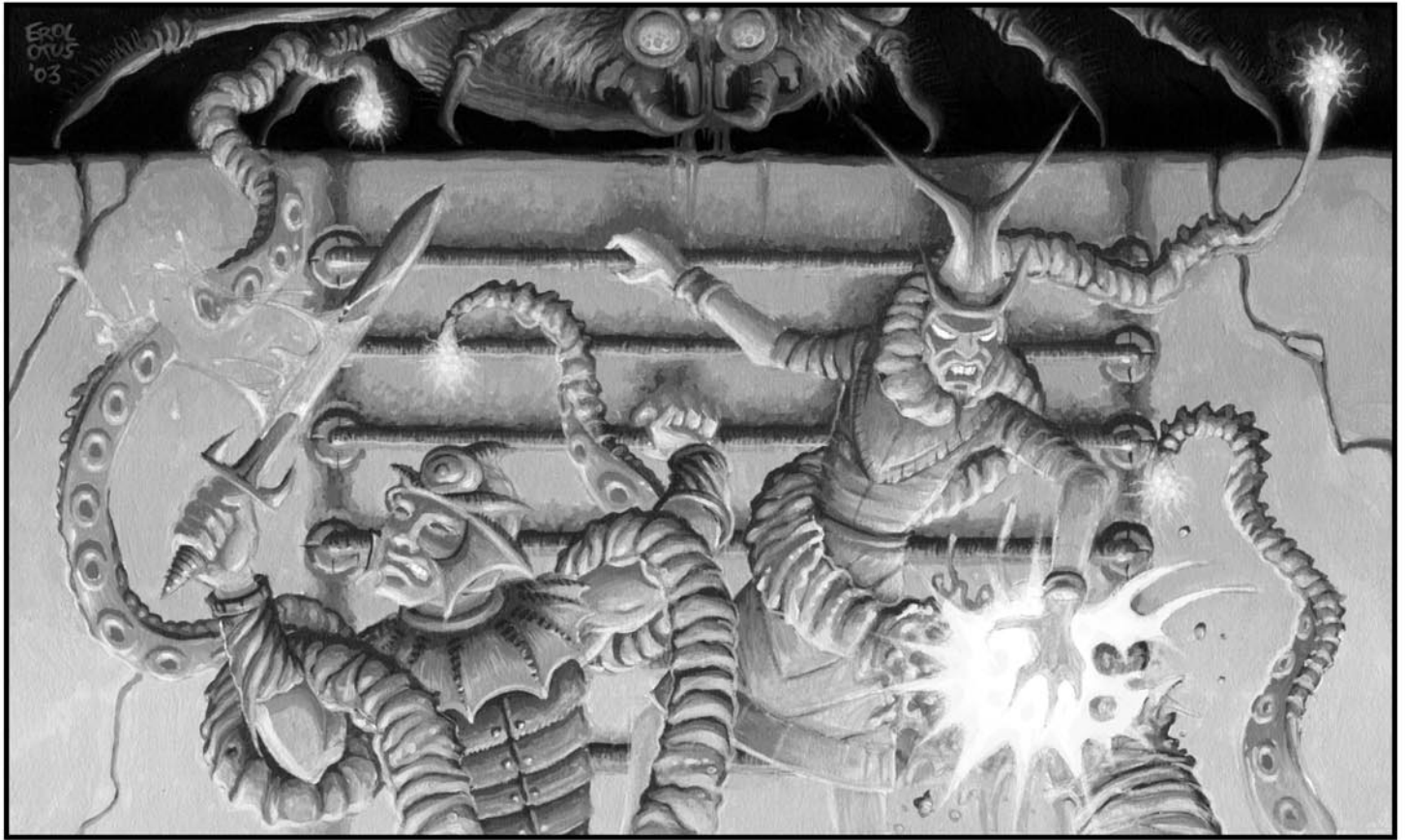
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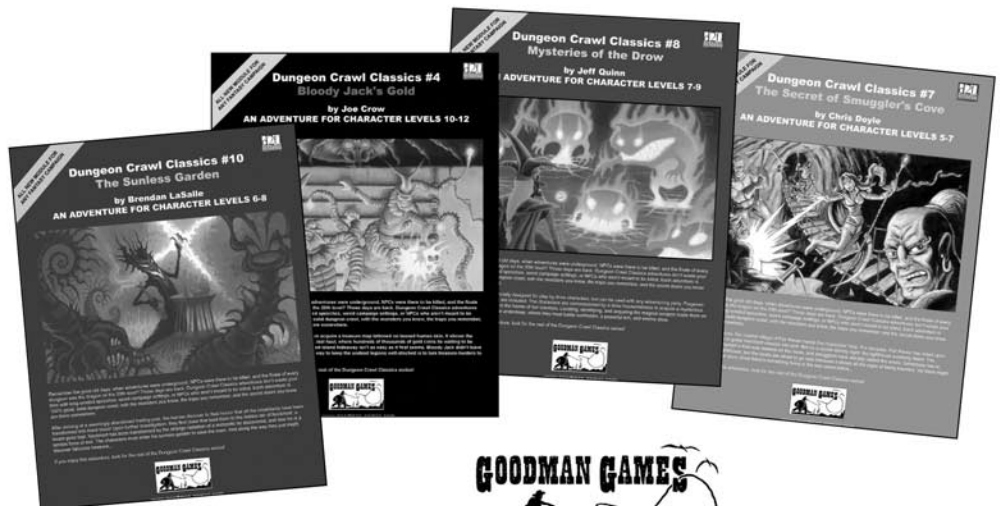
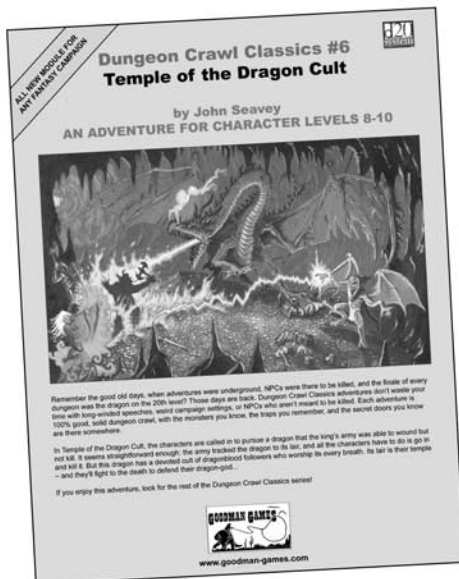
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