

EARTHDAWN

JOURNAL

Vol. 2

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THE EARTHDAWN JOURNAL

**An Official
Publication
Devoted to FASA's
Earthdawn Fantasy
Roleplaying Game**

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Submissions: We are looking for good articles and illustrations for the Earthdawn Journal. When submitting manuscripts and artwork, enclose a stamped and self-addressed envelope with appropriate postage for return. We also would appreciate that submissions be presented on IBM compatible diskettes along with hardcopy. Electronic submissions are received at our internet address.

The Editor Speaks...

Greetings! Well Met! And Welcome to the second volume of the Earthdawn Journal! We trust that you all enjoyed the first issue and that's why you are back. If you missed the first issue, we still have a few left...

As you can tell, we took great steps to improve the artwork on the cover. Richard has done a couple of covers for our other magazine, the Traveller Chronicle, and I gave him a go at the Earthdawn Journal. I feel he did a rather good job, don't you? Send in your responses and let us know if we should keep him around or kick him out on his butt! Submissions have been coming in, but we are still in need of more. In an upcoming issue we will have an adventure by Greg Gorden entitled The Kiss. Dying could never have been more interesting...

Earthdawn's popularity has been growing and FASA's been churning out one great product after another. Jedko in Australia and Hobbygames in the UK picked up the Earthdawn Journal so our foreign friends have a way to get the Earthdawn Journal. Keep buying and we'll make more! Well, I guess that's all for now...

Later daze...

Kevin Knight

Egyptian Campaign

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How Are We Doing???

Please take the time to fill out this questionnaire. Each respondent will have their name placed in a drawing for free copies of the next issue. A lucky three will receive free copies of the Earthdawn Journal Volume #3.

Rate each article and artist on a scale of 0 to 5 with zero being not worth the ink it took to print it to five being fit for deification.

Rescue!	0	1	2	3	4	5
Inquisitor	0	1	2	3	4	5
Mystic Warrior	0	1	2	3	4	5
Children of Jaspree	0	1	2	3	4	5
Earthdawn Q&A	0	1	2	3	4	5
The Search for Wisdom	0	1	2	3	4	5
Servalen	0	1	2	3	4	5
Character Creation	0	1	2	3	4	5
Artwork (Richard Biever)	0	1	2	3	4	5
Artwork (Bill Hincks)	0	1	2	3	4	5
Artwork (Steve Bryant)	0	1	2	3	4	5
Artwork (Greg Rothausen)	0	1	2	3	4	5
Artwork (Andrew Ragland)	0	1	2	3	4	5
Overall Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5

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Responses from the Earthdawn Journal Volume #1:

Dying Words	3.87
Trouble in Red Dirt	4.00
The City of Ardatha	3.75
Hitting the Books	3.75
Children of Jaspree	3.62
The Complete Works	2.75
Those That Stalk the Night	4.37
Artwork (Mike Sorensen)	3.75
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Artwork (Nathan Mezel)	3.00
Artwork (Steve Bryant)	4.00
This issues cover	2.50
Overall Satisfaction	4.00

Free copies of Volume #2 were sent to Jeri McGraw, Ben McKee, and Ian Reid for sending in their responses from Volume #1. We would also like to thank everyone else who sent in their responses and encourage everyone else to do likewise!

RESCUE!

GAME MASTER INFORMATION

This adventure is written and designed for 4-6 characters of circles 2-3. It would be helpful for there to be a scout or a thief in the party but it is not necessary to complete this adventure. It is not designed as a hack-and-slash adventure. It will run better with a party that prefers to approach problems with thought rather than steel. However, it will also run well as a combat session. The hope is that the players will learn to see that the Chinta people, while they may be barbaric, are not evil.

And while they are certainly not Name-Givers, they are intelligent and have reacted the only way they knew how to a terrible situation. They too are victims of the Theran Empire, and it is desired that the party will learn to see this and that it will serve to remind the players of the true evils in the world.

The dates used in this adventure are entirely arbitrary and should be replaced by the appropriate dates in your game world. I have merely filled them in to give a temporal reference. The section of the adventure that deals with exploring the cave complex is meant to be run loosely. I have not given a figure on the number of Chinta remaining in the tribe for this reason.

You should stock the cave with Chinta according to your style of game mastering and your players desires. If your players like infiltrating a heavily guarded camp then fill it up. If they want a rolling battle put twenty or twenty-five Chinta in the whole camp, that should be more than enough to keep even the roughest swordmaster busy. If they wish to role-play more and communicate to help the Chinta put less in the camp so that things get less muddled and the party feels less threatened and more like communicating. And if things get out of hand and the party gets involved in a roaring fight and begins to loose remember -- the Chinta would rather have more slaves. Corpses don't make anyone happy! Perhaps mounting an escape from within the prison would make for a challenging adventure.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Before the Scourge, a group of people known at the Chinta roamed the lands near the Death's Sea. They were a peaceful people but, though intelligent, they were not Name-Givers. Not being Name-Givers they were shunned from many of the smaller kaers in their area. Not knowing what else to do, they dug their own kaers out of the mountains near the Death's Sea. Lacking magical protection many of the Chinta died and the rest became a race of survivors. After the Scourge, toughened and hardened by the magic within their blood they began roaming the shores of the Sea as nomads, raiding and taking what they needed to survive. When the Therans learned of the massive size and strength of the Chinta, they began hunting them; desiring to use their awesome strength and endurance to power their massive kilas. The Chinta, having no

recollection of Name-Givers ever being kind, assumed all Name-Givers to be like the Therans, and so they hate. They hate because it is all that they have been taught to do and all that they have been shown.

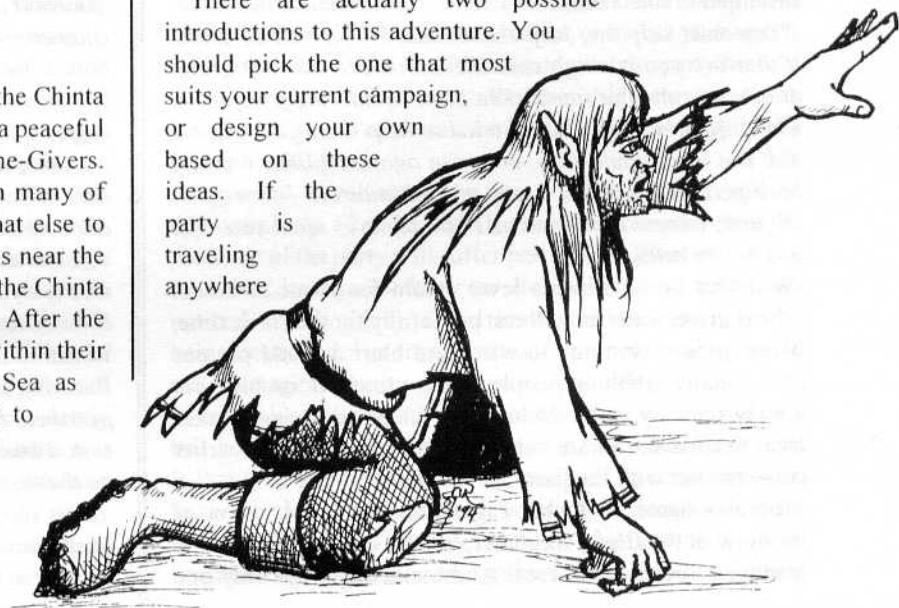
What does that have to do with this adventure? Well, a struggling scholar from the Great Library of Throal found an obscure reference in an ancient pre-scourge text that implied that the Chinta people might indeed be Name-Givers and that all the tales that told otherwise of them were incorrect. Pulling some strings, he received permission to take a sky ship and crew to the Death's Sea to search for these possible Name-Givers for a period of one month.

His reputation on the line Ternyth, the librarian, was a little hasty in his command of the vessel, and, when on the last day of the expedition there was sighting, he ordered the ship to land. As it turns out his decision was poor and when the Chinta came forth from their cave to see what looked like to them a Theran slaving ship, they attacked. The *Cloud Skimmer*, badly damaged and the crew weakened, soon crashed. Those in good physical condition left to find help, the rest remained behind and were captured by the Chinta. Not being able to communicate with the Chinta they were not able to convey their intentions and were soon locked up and placed in a cave so that they could mine and make the cave system larger.

One of the survivors has managed to find help (either through an evening encounter or the messenger reaching the library) the party must free the slaves and hopefully learn of the plight of the Chinta people and possible even teach them that not all Name-Givers are like the Therans. Obviously the Chinta will not be all that easy to convince. And unless something miraculous happens Ternyth's reputation is indeed shot (Which is actually ok because he a little tired of book work anyway).

INTRODUCTION

There are actually two possible introductions to this adventure. You should pick the one that most suits your current campaign, or design your own based on these ideas. If the party is traveling anywhere



near the Death's Sea it is probably best to have them encounter the wandering survivor (Intro 1). If they are further away perhaps it is best to give them a reason to be at the library when the survivor stumbles in (Intro 2), or wait until they travel to Throal for this to happen.

Intro 1

(The wandering survivor) -- (2 months after the crash)
Read the following during watch as the party is camping one night:

The cool night air surrounds you as you look about the sky in wonder. No longer can you make out the brilliant stars usually seen so clearly whilst on the trail. Instead the sky above you seems to pulse with a deep red color. It looks almost evil, an involuntary shudder crawls up your spine until you remind yourself once again that all you are seeing is the light of the Death's sea reflecting off of the clouds above. You feel a sense of awe that the light from a single source can be seen even this far away. Still many miles from the sea there is enough light so that a fire or torch is not necessary for watch.

Suddenly a shout breaks the stillness of the night. Looking about you see a figure walking towards you out of the night, it is a man. He holds his arms up over his head in an obvious gesture of surrender. Looking closer you are able to see that the man is a middle-aged elf. He wears tattered brown robes and carries no visible equipment. He staggers forward again but after a few paces he faints and falls to the ground.

If the party looks at him closer before he is awake read the following:

The elf appears to be well into his middle ages, though it is hard to judge how many years that might be. His beard is ragged and unkempt. You see no markings on his body of any sort other than some small wounds that appear to be merely from a good bit of travel over rough land.

If awakened he will begin to speak at once (Note: He's a little unstable due to his experiences and a head injury sustained in the crash).

"You must help me, help them! They might still be alive! If they are you must go save them. You are the first group of adventurers I've found. I've been wandering for quite a while, quite a long while. I tried to help them you know, I did. But what could I do, one man against giants. I would have perished, but you.....you are adventurers -- worthy of the task, I knew it as soon as I laid my eyes upon you. You will be the ones."

With that he falls into a fever dream for about 24 hours. If he is given water he will rest peacefully for the entire time, if not he will continue to write and blurt out odd phrases occasionally grabbing people who go to check on him, but not consciously. After 24 hours he snaps out it and awakes clear headed and aware -- he does not remember his earlier conversation with the party.

The elf's name is Oueber Lighthand. He is a survivor of the crew of the Cloud Skimmer, he was one of the few who managed to escape on foot (And incidentally the only one

left alive). He has been looking for aid and wandering towards Throal for the past two months. However, he has not made it very far due to the fact that he is completely lost and has less skill in the outdoors than your average signpost.

When he comes to, he will attempt to begin a conversation with the party in earnest. He is very weak and must rest often but he will not sleep or give up until the party either leaves him in the dirt, or agrees to help him. He knows he will not find another party for quite a while out here in the middle of nowhere, and he is quite aware that time is growing short. He will offer payment, glory, reward from the Library of Throal, anything so long as he feels that it will get the party to go look for the rest of the crew. After Oueber left the crash site he remained in the area long enough to see the Chintas capture the remaining crew and carry them away. He is not aware of the fate of the crew and he is far too weak to make another passage into the Death's Sea. With food water and a few pointers about the outdoors he feels that he will be able to make it back to Throal. He can give the party a general directions to the area where the ship crashed, but beyond that it is up to the party to find the lost crew.

Intro 2

(The entrance) -- (3 months after the crash)
Read the following if any members of the party visit the Great Library of Throal just before they plan on leaving (you may need to adjust this is the character is a windling):

Just as you are preparing to leave the door to the Library slams open with a crash. Wondering who could possibly be so rude you look up to see two guards supporting a semi-conscious middle aged elf. The guards dump the man on the floor inside the main doors of the library. Looking to the librarian on duty one of the guards speaks.

"This beggar says that someone here can vouch for him is this true?" The librarian's face pales as he slowly nods. "Very well then, he's your business. But keep him out of the city gutters." With that the guards close the door and leave the elf lolling on the floor.

As soon as the doors slam, the librarian snaps out of his stunned condition. Rushing over to the man he calls for your help as he tries to help the elf to a standing position. Quickly you move to help support the other arm while the librarian begins calling for his page boy to ready a room for the elf. Bringing the elf to the room you gently set him down on the bed, as you do so he grabs you by the collar pulls his head close opens his eyes and begins to speak.

"You must help me, help them! They might still be alive, if they are you must go save them. I'm here, how did I get back here? I've been wandering for quite a while, quite a long while, no one will help. I tried to help them you know, I did. But what could I do, one man against giants. I would have perished, but you.....you are an adventurer --worthy of the task, I knew it as soon as I laid my eyes upon you. You will be the ones."

With that the elf falls back into a troubled sleep. The librarian looking concerned asks you if you would not mind waiting in the library for a short while. He will have a scribe

send for your friends if desired and he will have food brought in.

The elf's name is Oueber Lighthand. He is a survivor of the crew of the *Cloud Skimmer*, he was one of the few who managed to escape on foot (And incidentally the only one left alive). He has been looking for aid and wandering towards Throal for the past three months. Oueber unfortunately has lost quite a bit of his memory from a head injury sustained in the crash.

In a few hours the librarian returns to the party with a grim look on his face. He has questioned Oueber and found out all he can from the elf. The dwarf explains the situation to the party and asks them for their aid. He explains that he would try to find a more experienced party if he had more time, but enough time has passed already that haste is of the essence. He also explains that he does not wish to search about town attempting to hire other adventurers because it would draw too much attention to the library and he does not want talk until he is fully brought up to date on the current situation. The ship is long overdue as far as the rest of the library is concerned and there is a lot of anxiety, but he doesn't want word of the crash getting back to the investors who sponsored this expedition until they are sure of the fate of the vessel and crew. He promises the sum of 500 silver per person as well as free research at the Library of Throal for a year and a day following their return to Throal.

He also offers to arrange passage on a sky ship to the area of the Death's sea. Though the ship will not be able to sail them to their destination, it will place them within a weeks travel of it.

If the party wishes to speak with Oueber, he will tell them all he knows of the Chinta and their cave including the location as well as he remembers it.

GETTING THERE IS HALF THE FUN

Travel near the Death's Sea is near impossible. Anywhere within three miles of the sea, the heat is unbearable. It never gets dark at night, instead the landscape is bathed in the red of the sea as it is reflected by the nighttime sky. Visibility is never less than 200 yards even at night (except in storm). No natural water is found aside from small sulfur rich springs that flow from boiling springs within the blasted rock. And when it rains the water is heated as it falls through the air, mixing with the gasses of the sea and becoming an acid rain. All those not in shelter when it rains suffer step 6 damage/10 minutes (no armor protects). When the rain falls there are often brief but powerful flash floods through some of the larger gullies and canyons (don't get caught in these...just don't) after which the water will evaporate within the hour. There is no vegetation except for the hardiest of lichen's and the occasional small scrub hidden in the cool shelter of only the largest rocks. Scalding winds constantly blow over the landscape creating turbulent conditions that only the best of ship captains would attempt to navigate through. Jagged spires of black rock jut into the sky many as much as two hundred feet high. The ground consists of irregularly scattered shards of broken stone. The edges,

sharp as glass, make the footing quite treacherous.

Within a mile of the sea, water dropped on the rock sputters and evaporates in moments. Any bare skin touching the rock is burned on contact (step 2 damage/round). A decent night's rest becomes impossible (no wound recovery or recovery tests regained) without some type of comforting (evercool cloak, heat protection, etc.).

Within one half mile of the sea the heat in the air is enough to cause step 4 damage/ hour (no armor protects) and -1 step to all tests. Those wearing light armor (3-15 pounds base weight) take step 5 damage/hour and suffer -2 steps to all tests. Moderate armor (16-50 pounds base weight) take step 6/hour and have a penalty of -3 steps to all tests. Heavy armor (51+ pounds base weight) take step 7/hour and have a penalty of -4 steps to all tests. Any bare skin touching the rock will be burned for step 4/round. Flight becomes impossible unless a strength(10) test is made every ten minutes failure results in a knockdown. Anyone wearing skin protection must make a dexterity(7) if knocked down to avoid skin contact with the rock. Anyone without skin protection dexterity(14). Additionally care must be taken where you step for some of the black rock is deceiving and is merely a thin crust formed over a river of live magma (don't step in these) there is a 20% chance per hour spent this close to the sea of a party member stepping on thin crust. If this occurs have the player make a dexterity test (5+1 per every 50 pounds of weight) to avoid their foot slipping into the magma. If this occurs all footwear is destroyed instantly. And the limb takes step 30 damage (footwear will help protect versus this source of damage, but the footwear will be almost certainly destroyed) if the foot takes more than 5 wounds it is damaged beyond repair other than magical means and the wounds will not heal until the foot is seen to (1 healing potion applied to the foot for every wound on it). Other wounds will continue to heal as normal, but the foot wounds will render the foot useless, reduce movement by 1/2 and requiring a crutch to walk giving a penalty of -4 steps to all tests requiring use of the damaged foot or leg. This damage cannot kill a character, however, if the amount of damage taken is beyond the characters death rating, then the character will fall into a coma until the damage is recovered (don't fall...the GM should give the party hints to the thin crust seen in places so that they might think to check the ground ahead of them...thin crust can be detected on a perception(6) test).

In general travel along the Death's Sea on foot will be approximately 12 miles/day. If more is attempted then the footwear of the party will suffer perception(10) at end of day to avoid damage to footwear (to many sharp rocks not noticed and avoided). Good boots can fail twice before being destroyed. For travel without foot protection the GM may damage the party and he or she sees fit.

Travel along the Death's sea should wear on the party, if this is too rough on the party lessen it a bit. What is desired is that they get the image of the perils of travel in the area, but remember they should still be in good enough condition to function by the time they reach the giants cave. It would be rather inglorious to show up there in such poor condition

that a sneeze would knock them all out!

If you would like to challenge the party a little more, or give them a even rougher view of the Death's Sea feel free to throw in some creature encounters, possibly with Fire Eagles, Fire Wraiths, or Viraas (ED Gamemaster pack pg. 59-61).

Crouching down on the trail you look ahead to see if you can locate the source of movement. After a few moments you see it again. A brief little flicker of white. Squinting through the waves of heat rising from the rock below you are able to make out what looks like a large pile of jagged rock with some type of fabric hung up on it and flapping in the breeze.

No! Not rock...wood! And sail. This can only be the wreck of the Cloud Skimmer.

Read the following only when the party approaches the wreck:

Jagged boards and tattered sails are all that remain of the once proud Cloud Skimmer.

Great holes show in the sides of the vessel where rocks have pierced it's

sides, and the entire vessel sits rotting into ruin. Scattered about the crash site bits of gnawed bone and shredded scraps of cloth tell all these is to know of the fate of those crewmen who perished in the crash or were to injured to be moved. You only hope that the survivors of the crash did not met the same fate as these brave souls here.

If the party searches the vessel for any hints or clues to the location of the survivors they find only two things. The nameplate of the vessel wedged into a rock about 50 feet from the site of the crash, and beneath it Ternyth's journal. Ternyth hid the journal beneath the nameplate of the vessel before the Chintas arrived and took them prisoner.

Read the following if the characters read the journnnnnnal, this is the last and most important entry.

Borrur 14, 1506 Th.

I am Ternyth, scholar and researcher from the Great Library of Throal. I fear that I have been lax in the keeping of my journal so I will attempt to now recap the events of the past few days. We had been on a researching mission following up on some pre-scourge references I found in one of the library's record rooms while I was researching the Death's Sea. This document made references to a mysterious race of Name-givers that lived on the shores of



FINDING THE CLOUD SKIMMER

Finding the wreck of the *Cloud Skimmer* should be fairly difficult. Let the party wander in the area of the Sea for a few days giving them a feeling for how terrible of a place it is. Be sure, however, that you do not let this go on too long, they are hero's and want to be adventuring, not wasting away on a blasted plain of rock.

In order to find the wreck of the *Cloud Skimmer* they will have to travel down towards the edge of the Sea where the vessel crashed. The ship lies only a few hundred yards from the edge of the Sea and the party should be hasty about exploring it.

Read the following to the party upon nearing the wreck of the *Cloud Skimmer*:

Sweat dripping from your brow you finally pull yourselves up over the lip of a rocky crag. Looking at your surroundings you sigh in frustration. For days you have pulled yourself across miles and miles of this unforgiving terrain with no end in sight. Pulling yourself together you look down the rocky slope trying to pick out a route that might offer an easy descent from this treacherous rise. Seeing none you shrug and begin your descent.

Suddenly a flicker of movement catches your eye.

the Death's Sea known only as the Chinta people.

Obviously, the possibility of the existence of an unknown race of Name-givers had to be explored and thus I found myself leading a researching expedition into the Death's Sea via airship.

For twenty days we sailed the skies over the shores of the Death's Sea, never finding a hint as to the existence of this fabled race of Name-Givers. Finally our time was up, the ship was needed back in Throal and my expedition set sails for home. We had just passed over an inlet on the north-western edge of the sea when one of the crew let out a hail. He had spotted movement on one of the black-rock sheets on the edge of the sea. With the aid of a spyglass I was able to discern a figure walking along the shore of the sea, seemingly ignorant of the scalding surface over which he strode. As we drew closer for a second pass, I was able to estimate the size of the being as nearly that of an obsidian, though the figures build was more slender than that of our rocky friends. Finally, I managed to get a glimpse of it's face. I do not know what I expected, but none-the-less I was startled to see a human face. I suppose it is misleading to describe the face as human, for the creatures are certainly not human in nature, but the smooth pink skin and the deeply chiseled face lacking any sort of facial hair or tusks was more human in appearance than any other Name-giver race I know of. It could only be a member of the Chinta people.

Following the figure from our vantage point we eventually located a cave complex in which it appeared that a community of these beings made their homes. Curiosity and excitement, I fear, got the best of me and despite warnings from the crew I ordered the ship to be set down. I could not wait another moment to make contact with these beings I had sought for so long. We landed the ship on a flat rock a few hundred yards from the mouth of their cave.

After the ship had been stabilized, I prepared to take a greeting party with me to go and speak to these Name-givers. We were surprised when a score or more of these massive creatures emerged from their cave wearing only loin cloths and wielding great clubs of stout wood tipped with shards of jagged obsidian. Fearing that our intentions might be misunderstood I held forth my hands, palm up in the universal gesture of peace.

Either these beings did not recognize the sign I was giving them or they did not care, for their next action was to break into a dead run toward our party and vessel. Scrambling over the side of the ship we had barely made it onboard before the ship was off the ground and headed for the skies. Still charging they scooped up rocks the size of my head as they ran, and bracing themselves on the jagged ground they hurled their projectiles toward our vessel. Our captain attempted to lift our vessel out of range of their bombardment, but the strange winds sweeping off of the Death's Sea hampered our lift-off and the winds buffeted us about. By the time the ship was raised clear of their range, a good 75 yards I might add, nearly one-third of the crew was injured or dead. The hail of boulders had damaged the ships hull and sails badly and slowly our ship began to fall back to the earth.

As we slowly fell, I could see the Chinta tracking our descent over the uneven ground, apparently they were not content with driving us off, they wished to finish the job. The captain attempted to put as much distance between us as possible, but the crippled ship responded poorly and best he could do was little more than drift with the wind as the ship drew closer to the ground.

Thank the Passions for our skilled captain who managed to land our crippled vessel with only a minimum of damage to it's crew. Nearly all of us sustained some sort of injury in the attack and the crash, but thankfully we did not land in the boiling magma of the sea. Unfortunately as I sit here writing this last entry in my journal my legs are being lashed together and bound to a plank from the ship, for when we crashed I was thrown to the bow and one of the masts fell across my knees as it toppled to the ground. I fear I will not walk again, though I don't know how long I will have to worry about it.

The Chinta still hunt us and though most of us are too damaged to flee, some have fled into the wasteland with the promise of fetching help. I have no choice but to await the arrival of our hunters. My only hope is that I will be able to make contact with them and establish some type of communication. Though from the howls and grunts I hear coming our way I doubt if communication will ever be possible with these beings. I now close this journal and I shall hide it with the remains of our vessel in the hopes that it will someday be read and this tale will be told. I am prepared to die, but I do not wish to die in vain.

Ternyth,

Scholar and Researcher at the Great Library of Throal

Searching the area around the vessel a successful perception(6) test will reveal the tracks of the Chinta war party. Once found their trail is easy to follow. It weaves about quite a bit and crosses a large variety of terrain, but the route is easy and in about two hours the party should be approaching the cave dwellings of the Chinta people. The party gets their first view of the Chinta encampment camp from the crest of a ridge that the trail passes over.

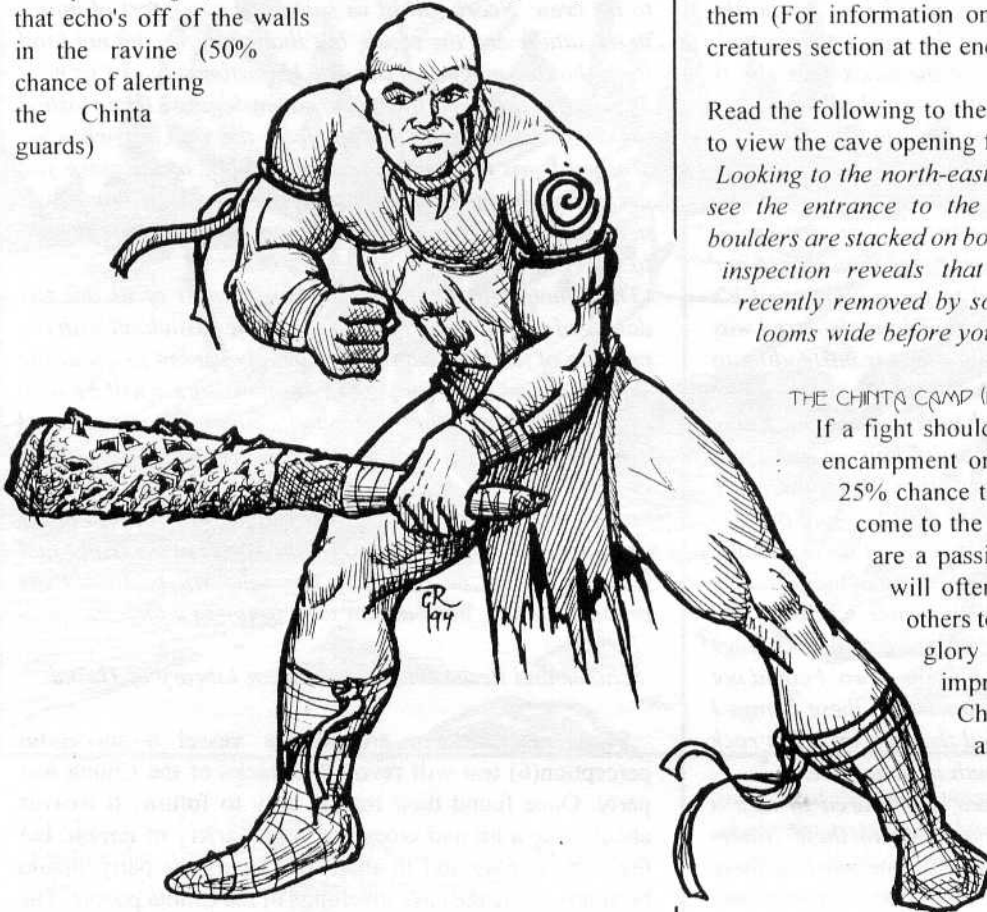
Read the following when the party reaches the top of the ridge:

Looking out to the west the trail drops sharply into a large ravine. The dark jagged cliffs of the ravine drop steeply in a "V" to the narrow bottom of the ravine. The trail you are following passes through the very bottom of the "V" and then passes under what looks to be a large cut taken out of the cliff a few hundred yards ahead to your right. From here it looks as though there are only two routes of travel available to you -- through the ravine or it looks as though it may be possible to scramble up the slope to the cliff top.

The crest of the ridge is located on the trail at the far eastern side of the Chinta Encampment map. From this location it is possible to either descend into the ravine or to climb up and travel along the top of the ravine. The party will get a better view of the Chinta camp from the top of the cliff, but they will have a difficult time at best getting

down the 200 yard cliff that separates them from the floor of the camp. The camp itself is about 100 yards above the trail passing through the ravine.

The steep slope along the side of the ravine is very difficult to traverse as it is comprised entirely of skree fallen from the cliff face to the ravine floor. To cross it a dexterity(6) test is needed for every 50 yards traveled. Failure results in a rock shifting beneath the feet of those crossing it resulting in step 3 damage (no armor) as well as a loud grating noise that echo's off of the walls in the ravine (50% chance of alerting the Chinta guards)



THE CHINTA ENCAMPMENT (OUTER)

The Chinta encampment is guarded at all times. Two guards maintain watch from the base of the boulder piles on the south side of camp. They are alert at all times though sometimes they seem to get distracted by activity in the mouth of the cave and frequently they will abandon their posts for a few moments to get some water or food to refresh themselves. There does not, however, appear to be a regular watch pattern. Many of the Chinta guards seem to come and go as they please so long as the post is covered. The boulder piles serve three functions to the guards. They provide cover from the ravine below, they serve as ammunition (as most of the rocks are fist sized to them), and the stones also happen to make wonderful seats.

If the encampment is watched for a period of time greater than a few hours observers will note that very rarely do any of the Chinta come out of the cave for other than watch purposes. Although, sometimes one or two will come out with a rough crafted wagon full of stone chippings and dump them down the slope.

The guards, thinking that all Name-Givers are slavers, will attack any who approach the camp. If their assailants come within melee range the Chinta will attack to stun (See Ed pg. 200) as long as none of their number have fallen. Should a Chinta die in battle all the Chinta who are aware of this will immediately aggressively attack the next round, then continue attacking to kill. To attempt to convince the Chinta to do other than attack could be very difficult as the Chinta only speak in a guttural language of grunts known only to them (For information on the Chinta people refer to the creatures section at the end of this adventure.)

Read the following to the players when they get a chance to view the cave opening from the Encampment:

Looking to the north-eastern wall of the encampment you see the entrance to the Chinta camp. Jagged piles of boulders are stacked on both sides of the cave mouth. Closer inspection reveals that the boulders are fresh stone recently removed by some type of work tool. The cave looms wide before you, almost beckoning you to enter.

THE CHINTA CAMP (INNER)

If a fight should break out anywhere within the encampment or the inner camp there is a base 25% chance that another Chinta will hear and come to the aid of his tribesmen. The Chinta are a passionate people even in battle and will often forget to call for help or alert others to fight if they get caught up in the glory of battle and their desire to impress and please Thystonius. The Chinta will attempt to not kill anyone they fight, rather they will fight as the guards previously described. It is important to remember that the Chinta will not aggressively attack unless they see or know a member of

their tribe has died (For information on the Chinta people see the creatures section at the end of this adventure.)

Read the following upon entering the mouth of the cave:

Peering down the wide mouth of the cave you notice that the walls appear to be softly glowing as if there is a light source of some type within the walls. Looking close you see that thin bands of crystal run back and forth within the walls, and that they are glowing softly as a light quartz would. Looking back to the tunnel you note that it is about twelve feet high and eight feet wide. The sides of the tunnel are roughly hewn, obviously of a hastily crafted nature.

The passage runs to the north-west for approximately fifty yards where it passes out of sight behind a wide "S" curve. About 20 yards ahead along the south-east wall a passage is cut into the stone and white mist rolls out across the floor.

I. Natural Spring.

A hot spring fills a pool in this room through a crack in the far wall. Read the following to the players upon entering this

room:

The smell of sulfur nearly overcomes you when you step into the room. Mist hangs heavy in the air and the humidity makes your skin feel as though it is dragging at your bones. Peering through the haze you can just make out a pool of some type on the far side of the room. Dimly you hear the sound of trickling water from across the room.

If anyone approaches the pool read the following:

Looking closer at the pool you see that it is indeed a natural spring. Water trickles out from a crack on the far wall filling the pool. The pool appears to be about four feet deep, though currently it is only about half full. From the mineral rings on the sides of the pool you would judge that it has seen better days. Examining the pool yet again you see what looks like glittering crystal scattered across the entire bottom of the pool.

The water in the spring is mineral heavy, but other than that it is safe to drink. A willpower test (5) is needed in order to overcome the natural aversion to drinking anything that reeks of sulfur and other impurities. A failed test will result in vomiting.

The water is very hot. In fact it is just a few degrees shy of boiling. Anyone sticking any part of their body in the pool will take step 10 damage per round exposed to the water. When they are free of the water they will continue to take damage as the scalding water slowly cools. Each subsequent round the victim will take two less steps of damage until the damage reaches zero. If cool water is poured over the scalded appendage the damage will be three less steps per round.

The crystal on the bottom of the pool is quartz grown from the minerals in the water. The crystals are indeed perfect, however they are also grown onto the bottom of the pool and very difficult to remove while the water is still in the pool. There are 500 silvers worth of crystal in the pool, however removing it may cause damage to some of the crystals if it is not approached in a delicate manner.

2. Common and play area:

This is a communal gathering area that doubles as a play area for the tribes four children. Read the following when the party first views this area:

Gaping in awe you marvel at the vast cavernous area before you. Running north-west to south-east this chamber must be at least eighty yards in length and twenty yards wide. Large benches line the walls and a few mats of some strange animal pelt lie haphazardly about the room. Piles of small stones are scattered about the floor many cut into strange rectangular and cubic shapes. There are exits from this room leading in all directions.

The stone blocks are just that, blocks for the children to play with. At this time there are no children in the room, though if the party spends more than ten minutes exploring this room and there has been no known combat yet there is a 20% chance that a young Chinta will come along and see the party in the room. If this occurs the child will run to the nearest group of elders (area 4.) and they will go to

investigate.

The pelts are all of poor quality and though they are from rare animals they are so well used that they will be of no particular value to anyone.

3. Storage area:

This area is dedicated to the storage of all the tribes goods. There are many barrels here made mostly of carved stone slats, though there are also some baskets woven from some of the rough vines that can grow in certain areas of the Death's Sea. Read the following when the party enters this area:

The passageway widens here to a width of nearly fifteen yards. Many stone barrels and baskets fill up the space along the northern wall some stacked two or three deep. In a pile to the left of the barrels is a collection of well used mining tools including picks, shovels, and pry bars.

There is not much of value in storage here. Mostly dried foods, fruits and nuts collected by different groups of Chinta when they have gone out exploring. The tools are all in decent condition and may be used by the party if they choose to take them.

4. Gathering hall.

This room is designed for the Chinta elders to rest and enjoy each others company. Curtains divide part of the room while the Great Hall adjoins to the north-east. Read the following when the party enters this room:

This large room measures roughly twenty by thirty yards. A bench rests in an alcove on the north-western wall, while to the north-east a wide opening leads to a vast chamber. To the north and south passages lead from this room while heavy fur curtains block your view to the south-east and south-west. Fur rugs adorn the floor, while padded leather pillows are propped against the walls.

Two Chinta were or may still be resting on the bench along the north-western wall. If there has been an alarm anywhere in the complex they will likely have heard of it and traveled to investigate. If not, they are engaged in some type of conversation apparently bordering on an argument of some type. If a fight breaks out in this room the Chinta in areas 4a. and 5. will certainly hear it and rush to engage. If this occurs there are the normal chances for other Chinta to hear the fight and also come to join the battle. Obviously it is in the party's best interest to use stealth while in this complex, good scouting can mean the difference between life and death.

4a, 6, 7, 8, 10. Sleeping Chambers

These rooms are all pretty much the same, all contain one, two or three Chinta (depending on how desperate or powerful the party is, and whether any have responded to earlier alarms). Rugs cover the floors and curtains conceal small alcoves along the walls. There are few other items in these rooms except for stone basins for drinking water, and unrecognizable scraps of food.

5. Great Hall.

This vast chamber acts as the central gathering area for the Chinta people. More time is spent in this area than any other location in the community. Thus, at least four Chinta are present in this room at all times. (Unless they have been called away by an attack). Read the following when the party enters this area:

With amazement you gaze upon this cavernous chamber, easily thirty yards wide and nearly twice as long. This massive room dwarfs even the four great stone tables that stand in the room. Carved from the very stone of the cliff itself, these tables stand at least five feet high, though some are taller than others. Scattered across the tops of the tables are the bones of various animals, all picked clean. Beside the bones great stone basins hold sulfur rich drinking water. The rugs around the base of the tables are in shambles. Bits of meat and blood have been ground into the hairs of the rug and flies swarm about these dark oily blotches feeding and laying eggs. A few benches sit haphazardly placed about the room. On the north-western wall a mural carved into the wall depicts a line of Chintas bound in chains being led off toward a massive stone sky ship, much larger than any Barsaivian vessel you've ever seen. The next mural shows the sky ship sailing away while a lone child watches with tears in his eyes. The next and final mural shows a small tribe of Chinta people, mostly women and children trekking off into the wastes of the sea while watching the skies with obvious anxiety.

The tables are where the Chinta gather for their meals. It is obvious that they are quite sloppy eaters. The murals serve to remind the Chinta of why it is that they hate all Name-Givers. They are afraid that their people will one day forget the crimes that have been and are still being done to them, and they have carved these murals so that their people will never forget their anger.

9. Waste Pits.

Pushing aside the heavy curtain you are overcome with the stench of waste. A few yards away in the back of the room you see a hole in the floor leading down. Next to it lies a pile of shredded animal fur of some type. Gasping for air you push the curtain back into place and take a deep breath wiping the tears from your eyes.

The Chinta have taken advantage of an old lava pipe that leads down somewhere into the depths of the cliff. The smell doesn't really seem to bother the Chinta, but then again, not much does.

11. Storage area

This area is used by the Chinta as extra storage for furs and other items. Read the following when the party enters this room:

The thick smell of not quite cured hide assaults your senses as you draw back the curtain enclosing this area. Piles of furs lie scattered across the room. On the far side of the room bundles of reed are tied together in small clumps, probably gathered from an inland journey by a member of the tribe, for you have seen no such plants growing in this

area. Aside from these few items, the rest of the room is barren.

If the party searches through the furs there are four espagra hides mixed in with the pile. They are not well cured and worth only half of their base value. (roughly 25 silvers each)

12. Mine Storage

This area is used for the storage of metals and crystals brought out from the mines. Read the following when the party looks into this area:

This "U" shaped cavern is apparently used for the collecting and sorting of minerals. Large buckets of crushed rock sit on the floor next to a large table apparently used for sorting. On the other side of the table are large stone bins that look as though they might be used for collecting and holding the sorted items. Small piles of rubble are scattered about the rest of this area. A second curtain leads out of the room on the other side of the "U".

Should anyone look into the collecting bins read the following:

Looking into the bins you are amazed by the sparkling collection of colors and lights gleaming back up at you. Bins of gemstones glitter brightly in the light given off by ribbons of phosphorescent crystal scattered throughout the piles of crystal.

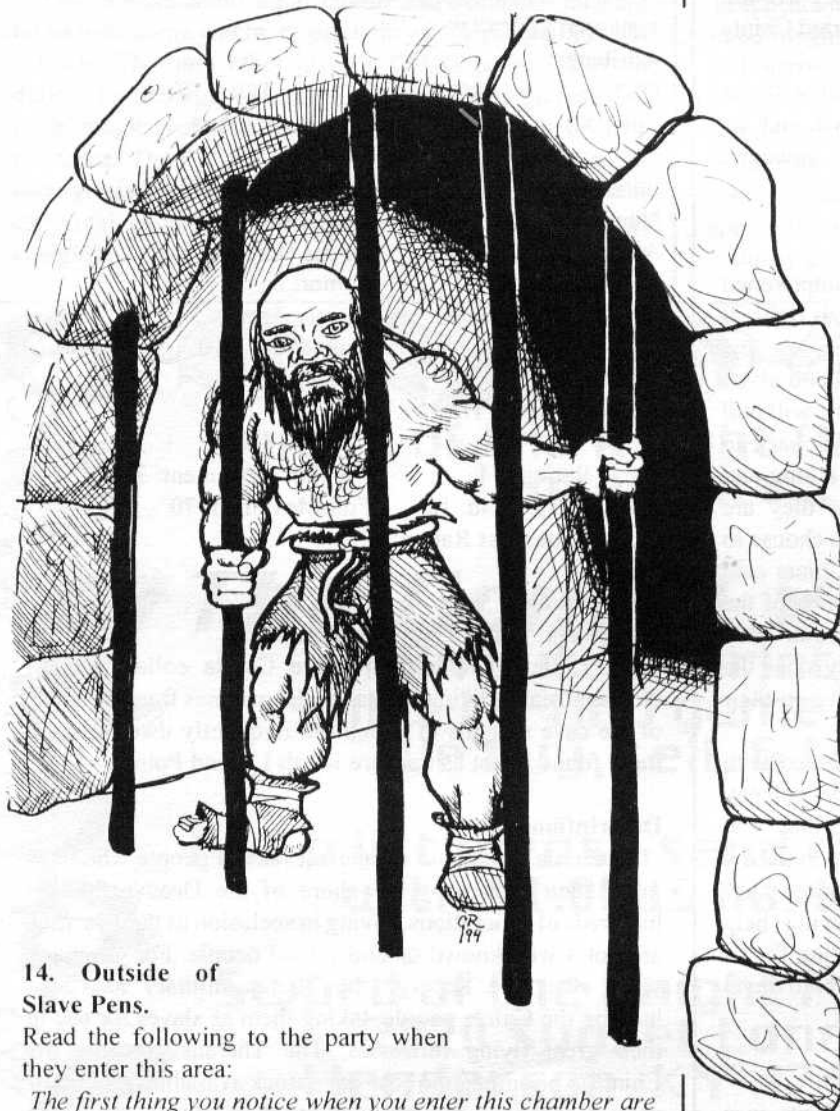
The light crystals will give off a soft glow as long as they are in the vicinity of elemental earth. Once brought outside of the cave they will begin to fade and soon they will resemble dull weathered quartz. If brought back to civilization however they can be sold for quite a sum of money (as long as the party can prove what they do) since they work quite effectively as detectors for elemental earth. There are twenty crystal ribbons mixed into the bins and they would sell in Bartertown for about 150 silvers each. Getting them there however will be tough as they are very fragile and any fall or knockdown has a 20% chance of breaking any crystals being carried, this is assuming that the crystals are wrapped and padded, if not don't even bother rolling...they break.

Scattered throughout the bins are many types of crystals, emeralds, rubies, diamonds, topaz, and sapphires are among the most common. However, not all crystals are of gem quality. Due to the constantly shifting rock of the region many of the crystals are heavily fractured and of poor color. There are 200 pounds of crystal between all the bins. Sorting through them will take a vast amount of time (on the order of days). If a quick check is made to try to grab only those of value make a perception(8) test (+2 steps for thieves or anyone who has more than a passing interest in gems). The current value of the gems is 15 silvers per pound. On a successful test the sorter is able to throw out the gems of little or no value reducing the weight of the good gems by 10 pounds per point of success beyond 8 and increasing the value per pound of the remaining gems considerably (total gem value should equal 3000 silvers). Every point of success below 8 not only removes 10 pounds of weight per point below, but it also reduces the value of the stones by

1 silver per pound (throwing out the good ones by mistake). In the very bottom of one of the bins are three nuggets of elemental earth and two shards of living crystal. These can be found on a successful perception test of (6). The nuggets of elemental earth have the same value and properties as coins of elemental earth, and while the shards of living crystal are far too small to be of use in a weapon, any jeweler would be happy to pay up to 100 silver for each of the beautiful shards.

13. Guard Room.

This room houses three Chinta who have appointed themselves to guard the captured slaves. They seldom check on the slaves. However, they will respond to any noise coming from rooms 12, 14, and 15. The rest of this room appears as the other sleeping chambers.



14. Outside of Slave Pens.

Read the following to the party when they enter this area:

The first thing you notice when you enter this chamber are the bars. A passage to the south-west has been barred off with stout iron bars. Clinging to the bars, a worn and beaten looking dwarf looks out into the room. A hopeless look on his face he leans his head against the bars and closes his eyes. In the chamber beyond him, you think you see more figures slumped against the far wall of the prison.

To the north, a table is set against the wall. On it are hammers, picks, and other mining tools. Still on the north wall but farther to the east a heavy curtain closes off another section of the complex. To the east, two more curtains hang from the ceiling.

If the party makes themselves known to the ragged old dwarf read the following:

Slowly the dwarf pulls his head up from the bars and looks up. Just as he breaks into a hopeful smile his face darkens and his eyes flash to the curtain behind you. Slowly he places his fingers to his lips indicating that you should be quiet and points again at the curtain.

"Guards.", he whispers.

The slave speaking to the party is Nathan Bellowsmith. A weaponsmith, who took passage on the *Cloud Skimmer* with hopes of finding a decent source of living crystal, which he hoped to mine. This was not quite what he had in mind, however, and his aspirations have changed quite a bit in the few months he has been here. As far as he is concerned the cursed crystal can stay in the mountain. Steel's better anyway.

Nathan will try to make sure that the guards are taken care of before he spends any length of time talking with the party. He fears that if an escape is attempted they will be caught and killed.

15. Slave Pens and Mine

This area is where the slaves have been kept since they were brought here a few months ago. They have been confined to the pens and have not been outside of their work area since. The bars that enclose the area are close together and cemented into place. A quick examination will reveal that the bars are strong and very well cemented. Food and water is passed into the slaves as well as tools which are collected and counted at the end of every day. The slaves have been put to work expanding the cave system for the Chinta. A few of the slaves have died at work, but many are in quite descent condition. The Chinta treat them well and see to it that the slaves are not worked too hard.

FREING THE SLAVES

Freeing the slaves may prove to be rather difficult. The bars are cast iron -- strong but brittle. A solid hit with a hammer or other weapon may be enough to shatter a bar, however, it will create a lot of noise. Prying the bars will be very difficult as cast iron is extremely resistant to pressure being applied slowly. Nathan will volunteer this information if the party attempts to pry the bars. Nathan has a secret though. When they were first captured it was

learned that he was a smith. The Chinta forced him to cast the bars for the cave. Always thinking about escape Nathan cast the strongest most convincing bars he could with the resources available. The Chinta were so pleased with the solid bars that they did not test them all before cementing them into place. Thus it was that they missed the bar that Nathan crafted just for this moment. The third bar in from the right he deliberately crafted with a flaw. The bar is much more brittle than any of the others. A solid strike on the weak bar (physical defense 5, Armor 10) which defeats the armor rating of the bar will shatter the bar completely (Note: there are no armor defeating hits against objects). The rest of the bars are much stronger (physical defense 5, armor 16), but may still be shattered as above.

The noise of the shattering bar will be enough to alert any Chinta in rooms 4, 4a, 5 6, and 7. The first alerted Chinta (if there are any) will arrive in 5 rounds with 1 more arriving at the end of every subsequent round until all alerted Chinta have arrived.

The slaves are in poor physical condition and will not attempt to fight unless they are attacked. They will pick up all the weapons they can find or are given however, including their picks and shovels.

WRAPPING IT UP

Of the fifteen men who were brought here and imprisoned twelve are still alive Ternyth is among them. He is quite ill however, and has been in a feverish state for the past few weeks. He will need to be carried back to Throal and given close medical attention and plenty of rest before he will pull out of it. The party will need to escort the slaves back to Throal after they have been freed. It should be a long and difficult trip, and there is the possibility that they are followed by some of the surviving Chinta. If you choose to use this as an addition to the adventure the Chinta will follow the group for as long as they are in the area of the Death's Sea taking advantage of the familiar terrain. They likely will plan an ambush and strike at the party since the slaves are in poor condition and cannot get away on their own.

When the party reaches Throal they will be greeted with respect and admiration. The library, in it's gratitude, will pay each party member the sum of 500 silvers and they will grant the party free access to the library for the period of a year and a day. The slaves who were rescued thank the party graciously and offer their services freely, giving help whenever the party enters Throal. If you're looking for an NPC opportunity one of the rescued may even offer to travel with the party.

LOOSE ENDS

The party may have made contact with the Chinta in a peaceful manner. If so the Chinta will slowly come to the realization (if helped) that all Name-Givers are not like the Therans. The Chinta will want to integrate into society somewhat and will need help from somewhere, possibly the party. They will attempt to enter the trading community using their vast mineral and crystal resources for their

assets. They will likely encounter some prejudice and the party may become involved in aiding relations, working as go-betweens or escorts.

Legend Point Awards (for each party member)

Bringing the nameplate of the ship to the library of Throal = 50

Burning the remains of the ship and crew = 50

Finding the journal = 50

Freeing the slaves = 100

Freeing the slaves without combat = 200

Communicating with the Chinta = 50

Convincing the Chinta to let the slaves go = 300

Successfully returning the scholars to Throal = 500

Legend points for gems and jewels use whatever fits your game

THE CHINTA PEOPLE

Attributes:

DEX: 6	STR: 14	TOU: 10
PER: 5	WIL: 7	CHA: 4

Initiative: 6 Physical Defense: 10

Number of Attacks: 1 Spell Defense: 8

Attack: 12 Social Defense: 5

Damage: 22 Armor: 8

Number of Spells: 1 Mystic Armor: 5

Spell casting: 6 Knockdown: 10

Effect: 10 Recovery Tests: 4

Abilities: Resist Heat

Death Rating: 54 Combat Movement: 35

Wound Threshold: 18 Full Movement 70

Unconsciousness Rating: 47

Legend Points: 500

Equipment: Tunic, Chinta war club

Loot: Little -- though often the Chinta collect bits of elemental earth, living crystal and gemstones from the walls of the cave systems in which the frequently dwell (any of these found count as treasure worth Legend Points)

Description:

The Chinta people are an ancient race of people who have made their homes by the shore of the Death's Sea for hundreds of generations. Living in seclusion as they do, they are not a well known or understood people. For the many years since the Scourge the Theran military has been hunting the Chinta people, taking them as slaves for use in their great flying fortresses. The Therans consider the Chinta to be among the best slave stock available, since their great strength and endurance allows them to outlast even the heartiest of trolls. Constant existence as a hunted people has dropped the population of the Chinta people down into the low hundreds, and only twenty or so tribes remain today. They have taken to living in cave systems for cover and attacking all those who approach the tribe, particularly those who approach by air. Those who the Chinta fight are then

captured and taken as slaves, feeling that it is just and that all people are like the Therans.

In combat the Chinta can throw rocks weighing up to twenty pounds with ease. They use their same attack step and the rocks have a range of 25/50/75 yards doing step 20 damage. In melee combat the Chinta are fierce opponents. Their weapons alone are enough to strike fear into the hearts of most. They wield four foot long clubs, the last six inches of which have been dipped in tar and rolled in crushed obsidian giving the head of the club a thousand glass sharp edges. Often the glass will fall off in a wound as well causing extreme pain and requiring much time to clean properly. The Chinta know of passion Thystonius and they believe that he was once the king of the Chinta people. When they battle they seek only to please him.

With their seclusion during the Scourge the Chinta people lost much -- communication, culture and freedom -- all were taken from them, and in it's place they have gained little but solitude. The only other gift the Chinta people received during the Scourge was one of magic. While they do not wield magic freely it has become an innate part of their existence. During the scourge the Chinta lived in an underground cave surrounded by living crystal and elemental earth. This constant exposure to the magical energies of these elements enhanced the Chinta people and

gave them the great strength and endurance that they possess today. Since the Scourge, they have lived in a type of harmony with the Death's Sea. That, and their inherent magical nature has also made the Chinta people resistant to the great temperatures of the Death's Sea. Indeed, the bravest of the Chinta have been known to walk the very edge of the coast of the sea, where even the transition between solid and liquid stone is unclear. The Resist Heat magic of the Chinta is similar to the Endure Cold talent. A successful spell casting test (2) allows the Chinta to make an effect test to resist that amount of heat or flame based damage. The Chinta often engage in tests of endurance to see who can stand on the shores of the sea the longest. Often these tests will go on for hours. Any Name-Giver who can stand with a Chinta on the shores of the Death's Sea earns the entire tribes respect and admiration instantly.

In appearance the Chinta are quite shocking to look at. They stand roughly eight and a half feet tall, broad of shoulder and narrow of features. The Chinta people resemble humans, though their facial features are much more chiseled giving them a fierce look. Hair and eyes are usually black, though on the younger children brownish-blond hair is common, darkening as the child ages. The Chinta live approximately one hundred years, reaching physical maturity at age fifteen.

-- Bill Hincks --



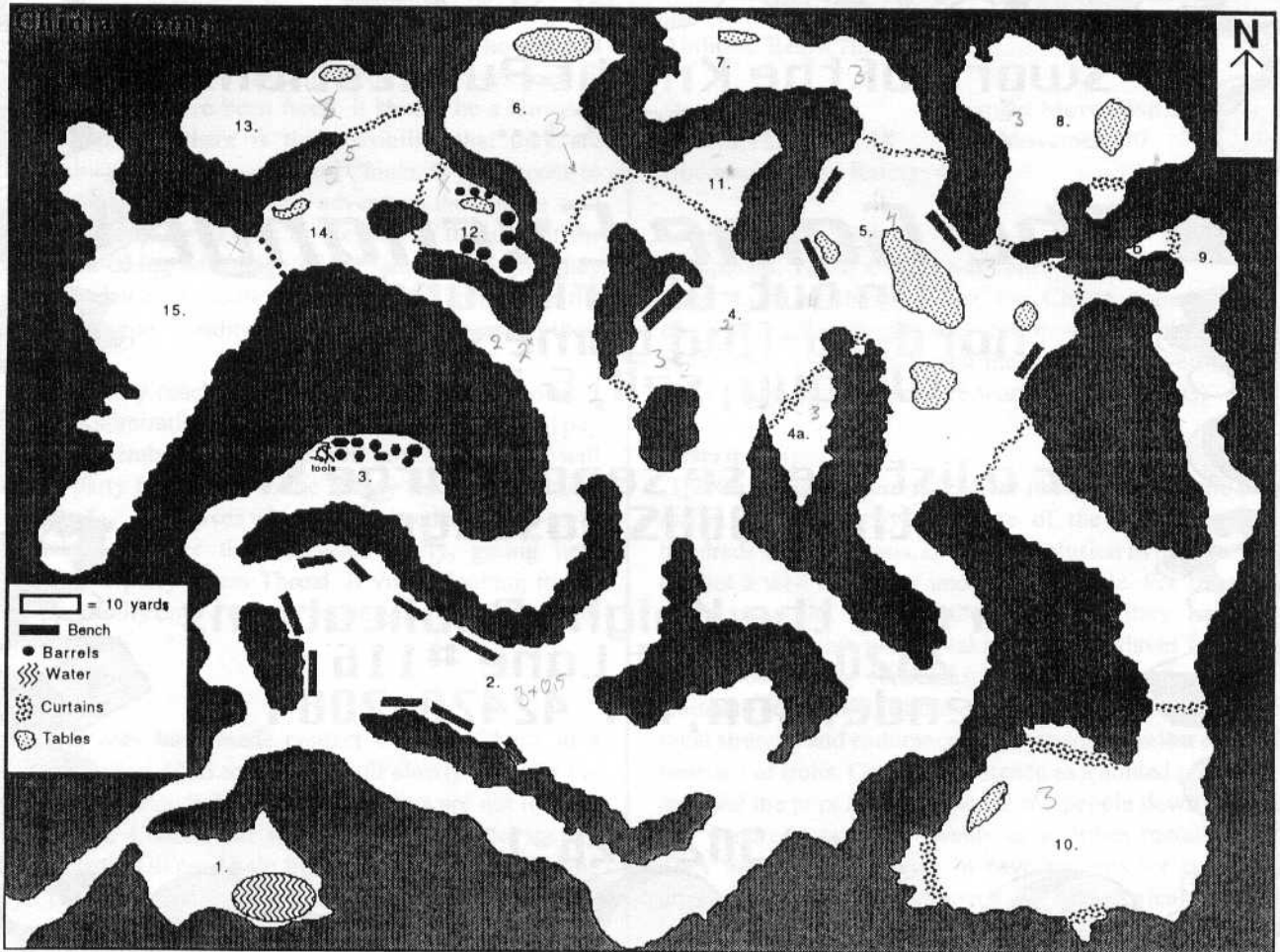
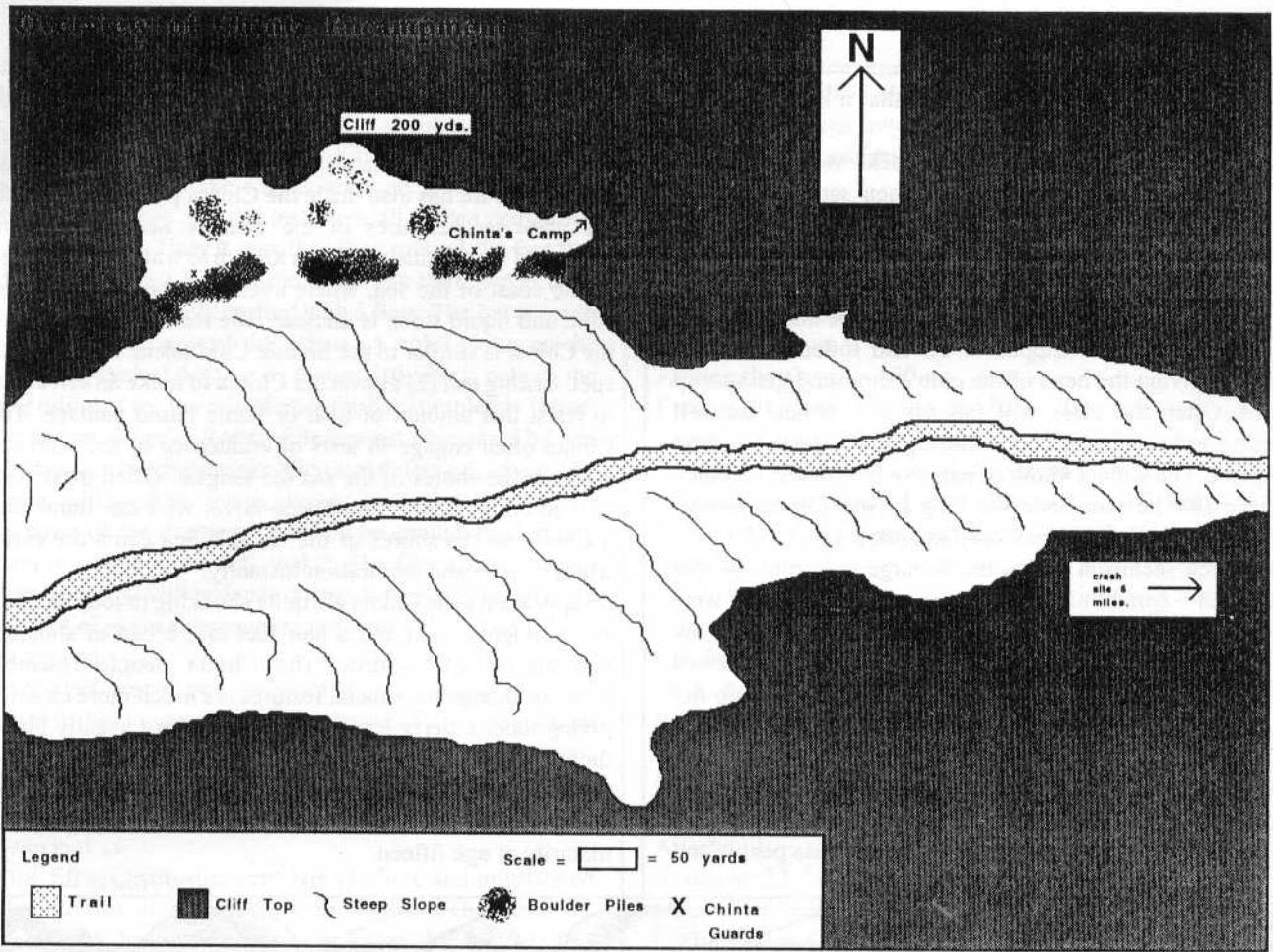
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Twas the dawn to dusk curfew when all through the house, Not a creature was living, not even Chuck, the louse. The plasma was hung by the coffins with care, In hopes that Vlad Tempes soon would be there. The Super villains were nestled all snug in their beds. While visions of thermo nuclear ray guns danced in their heads, And mamma in her casket and I in my lamp. Had just settled down for a afternoon nap. When out on the lawn there arouse such a clatter, I spewed from my lamp to see what was the matter. Out of the window I flew with a crash, Tore open the wall, and broke the sash. When, what to my heightened eyesight should appear, But a awesome sleigh, pulled by one tired hybrid deer. With a vicious driver so alive and quick, I new in a moment, I was in deep \$\$\$\$. So up to the house top these curses they flew, With a sleigh full of crosses and Razor, too. He was dressed in all crosses from chest to his shoe, and his clothes were all tarnished with blood and the que. A bundle of implements flung on his back, But this was no peddler opening this pack. He was slender and strong, not a jolly old elf. And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself. A wink of his eye, and a twist of my head. Soon gave me to know that I would be dead. He spoke not a word and went straight to his work. And killed all the creatures, then turned with a jerk. And slicing his hands through the air, And giving a nod, up the chimney without a care. He sprang to his sleigh, to the deer gave a whistle, And away they flew like down on a thistle. But I heard him exclaim as he drove out of sight. Beware you mere mortals for now it is night.

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The Inquisitor Discipline was once a respected and renowned one throughout Barsaive and the Theran Empire. Their abilities focus on the investigation of misdeeds, of finding the responsible parties and bringing them to justice. While they have much in common with questors of Mynbruje, their role is not necessarily to punish criminals, merely reveal them to the rightful authorities (or, in some cases, the vengeful relatives of a murder victim). If no other punishment is possible, however, inquisitors will take this role upon themselves.

There were never many of inquisitors, and most of those who spent the Scourge in Barsaive's kaers failed to pass their Discipline on to others. In the fearful confines of the kaers, crime dropped in the interest of self-preservation; furthermore, the paranoid mob mentality of destroying

INQUISITOR

anyone "different" made the inquisitors' rulings largely irrelevant. Now that the kaers have opened once more, these seekers for truth are slowly coming back, but still remain largely unknown in Barsaive. They are, however, avidly sought by organizations such as the Lightbearers and the Grim Legion.

In Thera, the inquisitors' history was rather different. They became the investigative arm of the Empire, ruthlessly seeking out any hint of discontent or rebellion, and using their growing political clout to discredit any who sought to limit their power. As a secretive but influential factor in Theran politics, the inquisitors have become both powerful and feared. Many inquisitors are now among Thera's agents in Barsaive.

Important Attributes: Perception and Willpower.

Racial Restrictions: Troll, Windling

Karma Ritual: The inquisitor cuts himself slightly with a small knife, then spins around with his eyes shut and throws the weapon away from himself in a random direction. With his eyes still closed, he meditates on the cut and the weapon that inflicted it, and begins finding his way to the knife. When he finds it, he passes the flat of the blade over the cut, then opens his eyes to reveal that the cut is healed. As he does so, the ritual is complete.

Artisan Skills: Body painting, rune carving.(metal)

FIRST CIRCLE

Talents

- Astral Sight
- Avoid Blow
- Karma Ritual
- Silent Walk
- Throwing Weapons*
- Tracking*

SECOND CIRCLE

Talents

- Blood Share
- Durability
- Evidence Analysis*

THIRD CIRCLE

Talents

- Detect Weapon*
- Empathic Sense

FOURTH CIRCLE

Experience Death: Once per day, the inquisitor may use this ability, identical to the first circle nethermancer spell of the same name. Use the inquisitor's Perception and Willpower step in place of both his Spellcasting and Willforce talents.

Talents

- Disguise Self
- Thread Weaving (Truth Weaving)

FIFTH CIRCLE

Karma: The inquisitor may spend a Karma Point on any action using Perception only.

Talents

Detect Trap
Lip Reading

SIXTH CIRCLE

Halt Flight: The inquisitor can command any fleeing suspect to stop by naming his crime, i.e., "Stop, thief!" or "Halt, murderer!" Treat this as the fourth circle illusionist spell Stop Right There, using the inquisitor's Perception or Willpower step in place of the Spellcasting or Willforce step. If the target is not guilty of the crime he is accused of, he gains +5 to his Willpower step to resist this ability.

Talents

Disarm
Disguise

SEVENTH CIRCLE

Spell Defense: Increase the inquisitor's Spell Defense by 1.

Talents

Lifesight
Sense Poison*

EIGHTH CIRCLE

Social Defense: Increase the inquisitor's Social Defense by 1.

Talents

Incite Mob
True Sight*

NINTH CIRCLE

Initiative: Increase the inquisitor's Initiative Dice by 1 step.

Physical Defense: Increase the inquisitor's Physical Defense by 1.

Talents

Detect Falsehood*
Lion Heart
Steely Stare

TENTH CIRCLE

Karma: The inquisitor may spend a Karma Point on any action using Perception or Willpower only.

Recovery Tests: The inquisitor gains an additional Recovery Test per day.

Talents

Multi-Tongue
Safe Thought

ELEVENTH CIRCLE

Eye of Truth: At the cost of 1 Strain point, the inquisitor may activate this power for a number of rounds equal to his Circle number. During this time, anyone who attempts to tell a lie to the inquisitor's face must make a Willpower roll against the inquisitor's Spell Defense in order to do so. If this roll is failed, the subject may not lie, though he is not compelled to tell the truth (he may, for instance keep silent or evade a question). If the subject cannot see the inquisitor's

face, this ability has no effect.

Talents

Thoughtful Expression
Weapon Breaker

TWELFTH CIRCLE

Social Defense: Increase the inquisitor's Social Defense by 1.

Spell Defense: Increase the inquisitor's Spell Defense by 1.

Talents

Truth Skit*
Wound Transfer

THIRTEENTH CIRCLE

Initiative: Increase the inquisitor's Initiative Dice by 1 step.

Physical Defense: Increase the inquisitor's Physical Defense by 1.

Vengeful Blade: At the cost of 2 permanent damage points, the inquisitor may enchant a murder weapon to slay the murderer. If this is done, the weapon gains +5 steps in all Attack and Damage tests against the murderer who wielded it, but loses 5 steps against any other targets. If several people were directly involved in the murder (i.e. struck blows at the victim), any of their murder weapons will be effective against any of them. This ability is not effective if the victim was slain other than with a weapon (poison, spell, bare hands, etc.). If the murderer is slain by anyone using the vengeful weapon, the enchantment ends and the inquisitor regains the 2 damage points spent.

Talents

Blood Guilt Weapon*
Detect Influence*

Inquisitors' talents for the Fourteenth and higher Circles are no longer known; some of these Adepts may still know these lost abilities, but if so, they have not shared them with anyone yet.

(*) indicates discipline talent

Rituals of Advancement

Inquisitors have no fixed advancement rituals for two reasons. Firstly, a ritual of this kind requires the inquisitor to rely on others' judgment rather than his own, which is against every teaching of the Discipline. Secondly, since the Scourge, inquisitors are generally widely separated, and have little opportunity to organize any kind of formal advancement ritual. The inquisitors' Ghost Master Ritual, however, is known:

The inquisitor commits a minor, harmless "crime" -- stealing a rock, "assaulting" a willing and cooperative "victim", or the like. He then flees into the wilderness or to some other hiding place, and meditates on the way that a criminal's mind works. After an hour of such contemplation, the ghost master appears and confronts the inquisitor about his crime. The inquisitor must make amends for his crime and beg forgiveness from the ghost master. If the Ghost Master Test is successful, the master accepts the apology and the ritual continues as normal.

-- Brian C. Schoner --



The Mystic Warrior is a fighter who has learned to rely upon himself and his innate abilities, instead of material items, to

MYSTIC WARRIOR

combat his enemies. Disdaining the use of most weapons and armor, the Mystic Warrior prefers to engage his opponents up close. However, the Mystic Warrior is not all combat. He also has honed his body and spirit to resist intrusions and pain.

To reflect the Mystic Warrior's disdain of weapons and armor, reduce all talents that rely on Dexterity by the initiative penalty of the armor. Additionally, if the Mystic Warrior chooses to use a melee weapon, reduce all attack tests by the BASE damage step bonus of the weapon.

Important Attributes: Willpower & Dexterity

Racial Restrictions: Windlings & Obsidimen

Karma Ritual: The Mystic Warrior sits alone in a quiet place and begins meditating upon his darkest fears. After 15 minutes these fears begin taking form into shadowy beings which harass and taunt the Mystic Warrior. At this point the Mystic Warrior engages the shadowy beings in an attempt to drive them off. Once the last being leaves the ritual is complete.

Artisan Skills: tattooing, body painting

FIRST CIRCLE

Talents

- Karma Ritual
- Acrobatic Strike *
- Avoid Blow
- Air Dance *
- Steel Thought *
- Unarmed Combat*

SECOND CIRCLE

Talents

- Durability (6/5)
- Iron Fist *
- Great Leap

THIRD CIRCLE

Talents

- Swift Kick
- Tiger Spring

FOURTH CIRCLE

Karma: The mystic warrior may spend karma on any action using Willpower only.

Talents

- Resist Taunt *
- Thread Weaving (War Weaving)

FIFTH CIRCLE

Spell Defense: Increase the mystic warrior's Spell Defense by 1.

Talents

- Fire Heal
- Throwing Weapons

SIXTH CIRCLE

Physical Defense: Increase the mystic warrior's Physical Defense by 1.

Talents

Disarm
Endure Cold

SEVENTH CIRCLE

Recovery Tests: The mystic warrior gains an additional recovery test per day.

Talents

Wood Skin
Life Check

EIGHTH CIRCLE

Initiative: Increase the mystic warrior's Initiative Dice by one step.

Talents

Astral Sight
Anticipate Blow

NINTH CIRCLE

Spell Defense: Increase the mystic warrior's Spell Defense by 1.

Physical Defense: Increase the mystic warrior's Physical Defense by 1.

Talents

Critical Hit
Bestial Toughness
Fist Frenzy

TENTH CIRCLE

Spell Defense: Increase the mystic warrior's Spell Defense by 1.

Physical Defense: Increase the mystic warrior's Physical Defense by 1.

Talents

Champion Challenge *
Lion Spirit

ELEVENTH CIRCLE

Initiative: Increase the mystic warrior's Initiative Dice by two steps.

Talents

Defense
Matrix Strike *

TWELFTH CIRCLE

Recovery Tests: The mystic warrior gains an additional recovery test per day.

Talents

Poison Resistance
Earth Skin

Note: The talents Iron Fist and Fist Frenzy correspond to the talents of Claw Shape and Claw Frenzy respectively. The game mechanics function exactly the same, just the name and effects change. Instead of the Mystic Warrior's hand

forming into a claw, it hardens to the consistency of iron.

IRON FIST

Step Number: Rank + Strength + 3

Action: No **Skill Use:** No

Requires Karma: Yes **Strain:** none

Discipline Talent Use: Mystic Warrior

The Iron Fist talent hardens a character's hands to the consistency of iron. The character uses his Unarmed Combat or Acrobatic Strike talent to make an Attack Test with Iron Fist. Make the Damage Test using the Iron Fist step, plus the required Karma dice. If using Iron Fist with Fist Frenzy, the character may use a Karma Point for each Damage Test, but is not required to after the first. Iron Fist lasts until it does damage, then immediately fades away.

FIST FRENZY

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity Step

Action: Yes **Skill Use:** No

Requires Karma: Yes **Strain:** none

Discipline Talent Use: Mystic Warrior

Using the Fist Frenzy talent, a character can make more effective, and possibly, multiple attacks using the Iron Fist talent. When using Fist Frenzy to attack with Iron Fist, the character uses the Fist Frenzy talent instead of Unarmed Combat or Acrobatic Strike.

In one round, a character may attack using Fist Frenzy a number of times equal to his rank in Fist Frenzy. For example, Rank 3 Fist Frenzy would give the character 3 Fist Frenzy Attack Tests. The character must spend the Karma Point required to use Fist Frenzy on the first Attack Test. He may spend an additional Karma Point on each subsequent Fist Frenzy test, and may also spend Karma on the Iron Fist Damage Tests. For each Iron Fist attack made during Fist Frenzy, use the Iron Fist damage step to make the Damage Tests.

-- Ash Black --

CHILDREN OF JASPREE



DIVA BIRD

Evanten Farseeker has interrupted his cataloging of trees to send a report of an animal that I truly do not know how to classify. Should I file this under Threats to Life and Limb; Hazards, Minor; Curiosities or what?

-- Kylara B'Tenn, Senior Clerk, Fauna Room, Hall of Records

File it under Pests, Amazing and be done with it.
-- Merrox, Master, Hall of Records

It is true that often big things arrive in small packages. For example, the lineage song of a Windling is an immense ballad that rivals the heroic sagas of my own people. A terrible Horror, the crystal entity, capable of wreaking immense havoc, is in physical dimension no larger than a packing case. I have only this morning heard something truly immense emerge from something quite small. The natives are still communicating with me in signs, as my ears have not stopped ringing.

The bird, I am told, is known as leavy'g'deeva, "Large Song of the Morning". I have taken to calling it the diva bird, after

the term applied to large, loud singers in the music halls. Perhaps the name is not fitting physically, but what the diva bird lacks in physical size, it more than makes up for with enthusiasm.

Growing to only two-thirds of an elven handspan in length, the diva bird is plumed in a medium brown, with brilliant red feathers on its head, leaf green on its wings and a deep brown tail. When motionless, it can easily blend into the vegetation about it, appearing to be a flower and a cluster of leaves on a short branch. Its bright red bill is long and sharply hooked at the end, telling the true story: this is a meat eater. The diva bird hunts for its meals, but will eat carrion while fresh. It has a unique method of providing itself with fresh kills made by other animals on which to feed.

In the early morning, the diva bird looks for grazing animals that have wandered off by themselves on awakening. The bird notes the presence and location of any nearby predators, and perches on the far side of the herbivore from the predator. It then makes a noise that I can only compare to a troop of sky raiders pounding their shields and screaming in preparation for battle while the stone galley they are in tumbles down a mountain, breaking all the glass aboard and enraging the brithan in the cargo hold. The sheer volume of the sound normally stuns the intended victim, and every predator in the Servos seems to recognize the call of the diva bird as an announcement of easy prey. Even if the herbivore is not stunned, and flees the sound, it runs straight into the waiting claws of the predator. Thus, for a few minutes' work spying out the terrain, and a single cry, the diva bird may eat its fill from the kill of another animal.

Fortunately, these birds lay only three eggs in a clutch at the most, and frequently only one or two. As well, many of the larger birds in the jungle find the diva to be a tasty snack. Otherwise, every living thing in the Servos would soon go deaf. I am told that the effect is transitory, under normal conditions, and that I should have my hearing back come this evening. I sincerely hope so, and am thankful that I was not directly in front of the bird when it opened its beak.

Evanten Farseeker

Attributes

DEX: 12	STR: 2	TOU: 3
PER: 6	WIL: 4	CHA: 5

Initiative: 16	Physical Defense: 9
Number of Attacks: 1	Spell Defense: 8
Attack Step: 8 (beak)	Social Defense: 6
Damage Step: 4	Physical Armor: 0
Number of Spells: 1	Mystic Armor: 2
Spellcasting: 15	Knockdown: 5
Effect: 14 (stun)	Recovery Tests: 2

Death Rating: 15
Wound Threshold: 4
Unconscious: 9

Combat Move: 40 (flying)
Full Move: 80 (flying)

Legend Points: 160
Equipment: None
Loot: None

Notes: Name-Givers being attacked by the diva bird's call at close (combat) range must roll their Toughness against the bird's Spellcasting result. An Extraordinary success leaves the character unaffected. An Excellent success leaves the character deafened for half the bird's Effect roll in rounds, but not stunned. A Good success extends the deafness to the full Effect roll in rounds, and again the Name-Giver takes no stun. An Average success extends the deafness to minutes, as well as the Name-Giver in question taking the stun damage, a Poor to hours, and a total failure results in permanent deafness. Increases in distance from the bird reduce the difficulty of the save by 2 for Short (5-15 yards), 5 for Medium (16-40) and 10 for Long (41-80).



TIGATHNA

Another report from Evanten Farseeker on the fauna of the Servos. There must be a far greater diversity of life there

than we had previously suspected, to hold his attention for so long and to generate so many pages.

-- Merrox

I have noticed a marked propensity for Name-Givers to equate size with dangerousness. A Windling, for example, is often considered less of an opponent in combat than a Troll, yet the Windling may be substantially more skilled with his weapons. While not doing as grievous a wound with each attack, the Windling will nevertheless score more often than the Troll, and the cumulative effect is that the Windling will dispatch his opponent with much greater efficiency than the Troll.

Thus it is with a beast the natives of the Servos refer to as lektas'tigathna, literally the "surprising ankle biter". The tigathna reaches a maximum size of three elven handspans in diameter, and appears for all the Passions to be a harmless ball of fur. However, hidden underneath the fur are six quite powerful, if short, legs, and a mouth nearly half the length of the creature, filled with teeth sharper than a well-forged blade.

Preferring to dig a burrow alongside a game run, the tigathna will lie at the top of its burrow and hold itself motionless, its green-tinged brown fur giving it the appearance of a moss-covered stone. When a game animal passes by, the tigathna pops up out of its burrow and clamps its teeth on its victim's leg, usually severing the tendons on the first bite. Thus crippled, the victim has little defense against further slashing attacks, which usually go for the throat next. Frequently, tigathna will work together in packs of three or four to bring down a large animal, and divide the spoils among themselves.

Even animals which are normally predators are vulnerable to the pop-up attack. Tigathna rarely check to see what is passing, only noting whether or not it is within striking distance. I have seen a large hunting cat brought down within heartbeats by a group of five tigathna, one determined individual of which kept its grip on the cat's throat with both teeth and legs despite being rent by multiple strokes of the cat's foreclaws.

Tigathna are mammalian, and have litters of two to five kits once per year. They mate only for the season. Males are highly conscious of status within a pack, and frequently quarrel to establish their place. Females do not normally take part in pack status, but there are rare exceptions. Packs tend to be loose in structure, coming together as needed and separating again after a successful hunt. Thus, before a group hunt can be undertaken, the status order of the newly brought-together pack must be established. Listening for the snarling of a tigathna pack can give warning of a group hunt.

The natives distrust the game trails, preferring to travel through the upper branches of the trees. When walking on the ground, they poke at anything suspicious with the butts of their spears, constantly looking for unpleasant surprises. I, too, have taken to prodding anything that I am uncertain of with my staff. Alas, I fear I shall have to replace my staff in the near future, as it has collected far too many bite marks, and the bottom is beginning to splinter.

Evanten Farseeker

Attributes

DEX: 9 STR: 4 TOU: 5
PER 3 WIL: 6 CHA: 3

Initiative: 9 Physical Defense: 11
Number of Attacks: 1 Spell Defense: 8
Attack Step: 13 Social Defense: 6
Damage Step: 9 Physical Armor: 2
Number of Spells: None Mystic Armor: 1
Spellcasting: None Knockdown: 12
Effect: None Recovery Tests: 3

Death Rating: 35 Combat Move: 35
Wound Threshold: 9 Full Move: 70
Unconscious: 27

Legend Points: 130
Equipment: None
Loot: None

Notes: Once a tigathna has latched onto an opponent, it must make a WIL save against its remaining Death Rating to let go before the opponent falls. If the victim falls down, or the tigathna is attacked by someone else, the tigathna may change its attack strategy however it sees fit. Thus, if a tigathna bites into your ankle, if you fall down intentionally, it will probably let go. However, its next move is normally to go for the throat.

THUNDER TREE

Evanten Farseeker is nothing if not prolific. Herewith I present the first in a series of reports he has sent in to the Hall of Records regarding the plants of the Servos.

-- Merrox

With so many varieties of tree in the Servos Jungle, one wonders where to start cataloging and describing. I have decided to note those which pose a hazard to Name-Givers first, as if one does not avoid those varieties, the remainder will not be seen.

Scattered throughout the jungle, but thankfully rare, is a variety the natives call shi'raksen, the thunder tree. It is easily recognized by bark and foliage. The bark of the trunk is a dark grey in hue, smooth and ringed horizontally with ridges approximately the width of an elf's finger, spaced a bit less than two elven handspans apart. The leaves are pinnate and serrate, growing in clusters of six and groupings of five clusters, and reaching a maximum length about half again that of an elf's middle finger. Blooming occurs year-round, as is customary, with the flowers sprouting from the center of the leaf groupings. The blooms themselves have five outer petals and four inner, of deep rose and pale blue respectively, with a deep calyx of a golden hue. The stamens have golden stems and are tipped with bright blue. Once



fertilized, the flower closes and begins to harden into a seed pod.

It is the fruit of this tree that makes it worth noting, as a travel hazard and a biological curiosity. The pod grows to about the size of an elf's fist, and has a shiny, very dense skin of a deep blue color. Inside, the seeds are embedded in pulp of surpassing sweetness. Some of the natives use the unripe fruits to brew wine of amazing potency. When the seeds ripen, however, the pod's connection to the branch shrivels. The pulp inside quickly decays and ferments, producing a large quantity of gas. The skin being so dense, most of the gas is trapped inside the pod. Eventually, the process of decay begins to attack the skin itself from the inside, making it thinner and thinner. Some of the pods will burst simply from the pressure contained inside, as it passes the ability of the skin to contain it. This normally happens with the pods near the top of the tree. Warmed by sunlight, the pressure builds rapidly during the day, and in the late afternoon, the pods begin to explode with reports like small firecannon.

The pods in the lower branches, however, do not receive enough sunlight to warm them to bursting. The usual circumstance is that they fall from the tree, as the stem withers, and upon striking the ground explode, scattering their seeds. These falling pods pose some hazard to Name-Givers, for the escaping gas flings the seeds with such force that they can do injury to those nearby. If close enough, an exploding pod can drive its seeds through leather armor,

possibly even through metal if a seed were to find a seam or other weak point.

The natives have been known to use these pods as weapons, harvesting them before fully ripe and carrying them with extreme caution. Hurling or dropping a pod near an enemy is sufficient to cause great injury, considering that the natives have little concept of armor.

Travellers in the Servos are warned to avoid passing near to these trees, especially if they are riding large animals, as the vibrations in the ground from their passing can shake down a pod or two, certainly sufficient to spook the riding beasts and possibly cause grievous injury. As well, one should be cautious about engaging the natives in combat. If it becomes unavoidable, watch for a native attempting to throw an object at the party. The hurled object could be merely a stone, a throwing axe, or one of the thunder tree's explosive pods.

Evanten Farseeker

Game Mechanics:

An exploding pod does 5+d8 steps damage, and attacks with either the skill/talent of the wielder or with a step 8 if falling from a tree. Harvesting a ripe pod requires a DEX test against a 15 to avoid a premature explosion. Harvesting unripe pods is a simple action requiring no DEX test, but an INT test or Botany Skill test must be made (against a 12 or 8 respectively) to distinguish ripe pods from unripe. Carrying ripe pods into combat requires a DEX save against a 12 each action to avoid jostling the pod and setting it off by accident. A similar test must be made against an 8 when throwing a pod, to avoid squeezing it too hard while throwing. Natives of the jungle do not make DEX tests to throw the pods, and make all other tests at half the stated difficulties due to familiarity with the pods.

THE QURAL

I really wish Evanten would move on. His descriptions of the -- things -- that live in the Servos are beginning to give me nightmares. I dreamed last night of meeting this nasty in one of the lower galleries. Got up, had a pot of tea, and spent the rest of the night in my study. Going back to sleep was simply out of the question.

-- Kylenda, Master Clerk, Fauna Room

I had thought of myself as having seen the worst that the post-Scourge world could offer, and having developed some measure of equanimity in dealing with Horror constructs and mutated creatures. Yet, I find myself still shaken and uncertain, unwilling to go back to my hut, fearful of what may lie in wait, of what may come creeping out of the darkness while I am asleep. This day, I have lost one of my best acquaintances in this village, a young man Named Tiji'keiypa. He had attached himself to me soon after my arrival in this village, appointing himself my guide and assistant, bringing me my meals and carrying my less fragile

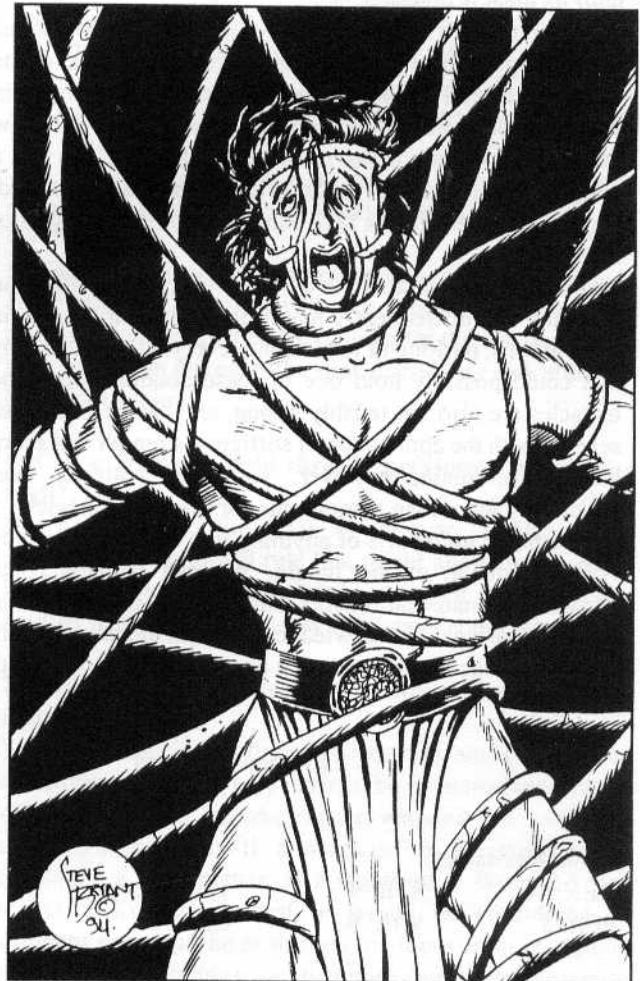
gear when I allowed it. I admit that I had grown somewhat fond of the boy. His industriousness and earnest curiosity about my studies had a sort of endearing charm. And now he is gone.

Tiji and I had set out in the early morning, intending to tavel about a half day's walk to the north to study the differences in the foothills that lie in that region. A small change in elevation can make remarkable changes in plant and animal life, and I expected to find a quite diverse environment from what I had previously seen.

We had nearly reached the area where I intended to make camp, and spend the rest of the day and the next morning making observations and sketching. The ground had taken a sharp angle, and we were climbing with some difficulty, myself more than Tiji -- to be expected given our difference in age. He had gone well ahead to scout the trail, and I had lost sight of him among the trees when I heard him cry out.

I rushed to the spot to find him apparently trapped in the midst of a web spun between two large trees, its edges nearly invisible but its center a deep crimson. His jaw hung slack and his eyes were wide and staring. I looked quickly about for the spider that had spun such a web, and realized with shock that the web was the creature, that what I had taken for strands of webbing were tentacles, many of which had pierced Tiji's skin. The deep crimson color was the young man's blood being drawn from his body.

I circled around swiftly and discovered a small, bulbous



body at the convergence of the tentacles. Drawing my blowgun, I made use of a toxin given me by a Windling friend and put a dart into the creature. It convulsed and died within seconds, crumpling into a wad no larger than my arms could encircle, and freeing Tiji, but he had lost too much blood already. I have had few times in my life when I regretted the Passion that I follow, but I would have traded all my years of research then and there to have been chosen by Garlen instead of Jaspree.

I fashioned a litter and took Tiji and the creature both back to the village, the one for a proper funeral by his own people and the other for dissection. A full examination of the creature will have to wait until morning, but I made some basic observations while the body of Tiji was prepared for the rites. I have time, now, as we sit vigil for his soul, to record what I have learned thus far.

The creature is known as qural'lotectica, the self-spinning web. The elders tell me that they have not seen one in many years, but that during the Scourge, they were quite prevalent. From what they tell me, the qural was made by a Horror to roam the tunnels of the underground shelters the tribespeople fashioned, to strike out of the darkness and then vanish, bringing uncertainty and fear into their lives. The creature is nearly transparent, making it exceedingly hard to see - unless it has fed recently. It dines on the blood of anything warm, but prefers the blood of Name-Givers. The blood that it consumes dyes it crimson for several hours, until its meal is digested.

The tentacles are hollow, and serve to carry blood from the creature's prey to its stomach, which comprises most of the body. At the end of each tentacle is a sharp claw, round in cross section, and hollow. Glands at the base of the claw secrete a paralyzing toxin, so that once the qural has laid a tentacle into its prey, more tentacles can be easily attached, and the creature will not take damage from the struggles of its meal.

The natives tell me that the qural is vulnerable to fire, and that they would frequently march through their tunnels in large groups, pushing lit torches into every nook and cranny that could possibly hold one of these abominations. The tentacles are also not terribly strong, and can be broken or severed with the application of sufficient strength or a sharp blade. The toxin, however, and the creature's near invisibility more than compensate for these weaknesses.

I have heard no reports of anything like this being used by Horrors outside of the jungle. We can perhaps count ourselves fortunate that Horrors, unlike Name-Givers, are not given to sharing their knowledge each with the other. I share this knowledge in the hopes that no one else will meet with Tiji's fate.

Evanten Farseeker

Game Mechanics:

DEX: 14 STR: 9 TOU: 12
PER: 8 WIL: 9 CHA: 3

Initiative: 14 Physical Defense: 13
Number of Attacks: 4 Spell Defense 16
Attack Step: 12 Social Defense: 8
Damage Step: 15 Physical Armor: 2
Number of Spells: 1 Mystic Armor: 4
Spellcasting: 18 Knockdown: 14
Effect: 20 (paralysis) Recovery Tests: 3

Death Rating: 60 Combat Move: 40
Wound Threshold: 12 Full Move: 80
Unconscious: 48

Legend Points:

Equipment: none

Loot: none

Notes: The qural has normal vulnerability to toxins delivered either by ingestion or injection. It takes double damage from fire and fire-based attacks, such as flame flash. Noticing a stalking qural requires a PER test against a 15 in normal forest lighting conditions, a 20 in subterranean areas. No roll is required to notice a qural that has fed within the past three hours due to the coloration provided by the blood it has ingested.

-- Andrew Ragland --

EARTHDOWN Q & A

WHEREIN LOUIS J. PROSPERI TAKES TIME OUT OF HIS BUSY SCHEDULE TO ANSWER ALL OF THOSE EARTH SHATTERING QUESTIONS THAT WE EARTHDOWN PLAYERS AND GAMEMASTERS HAVE...

Editor's Note: In this column we will take the time to answer those Earthdawn questions which you send to us. So send more to beleaguer Lou with!

For this first installment of this column, we'll take a look of some of the most commonly misunderstood aspects of magicians and spellcasting in Earthdawn.

1. There are three types of Spellcasting, Matrix Casting, Casting from A Grimoire, and Raw Magic. When can each of these be used?

Matrix Casting is the most common type of Spellcasting practiced in Barsaive, and can be used at anytime. The limitations associated with Matrix Casting are that a magician can only cast spells he has learned and written into his grimoire, and only spells of Circles equal to or less than his own Circle. See pages 153 -154 of the Earthdawn rulebook for a complete explanation of Matrix Casting.

Casting from a Grimoire can only be used when casting spells that the magician has not yet learned. Once a magician has learned a spell, that is, made a successful Read and Write Magic test for the spell and written the spell in his own grimoire, that spell can no longer be cast from a grimoire. Unlike Matrix Casting, Casting from a Grimoire can be used on spells of any Circle. The limitations associated with Casting from a Grimoire are that a magician cannot cast spells he has previously learned, and casting spells from a grimoire is more difficult than normal. See pages 154 -155 of the Earthdawn rulebook for a complete explanation of Casting from a Grimoire.

Raw Magic is the most seldom used form of spellcasting in Barsaive, and is by far the most dangerous. A magician can cast a spell with raw magic at any time. using Raw magic, a magician can cast any spell of any Circle that the magician has learned. The limitations of Raw Magic are that the magician must have learned the spell, and of course, casting in this manner exposes the magician to the polluted magical energies in astral space. This exposure can lead to damage to the magician as well a Horror mark. See pages 155 -156 of the Earthdawn rulebook for a complete explanation of Matrix Casting.

2. Once a spell has been placed in a matrix, how many times can a magician cast it?

Once a magician has attuned a spell matrix to a given spell, he can cast that spell as often as he wants, as long as it remains in the matrix. If the spell is somehow dislodged from the spell matrix, the magician can only cast the spell using raw magic.

This is one of the most mis-interpreted aspects of spellcasting in Earthdawn, because it is unlike any other

game system. Most game systems employ either a limit to the number of times per day a spell can be cast, or limit a magician to a certain number of spell 'points' or cause damage to magicians when they cast spells. The reasons for the spellcasting system in Earthdawn has to do with the internal logic of how magic is used. Adepts are able to use magic in varying ways based on their Discipline. Swordmasters use magic to wield weapons, weaponsmiths use it to study and forge weapons, and magicians (Elementalists, Illusionists, Nethermancers, and Wizards) use it to cast spells. Spells are the tools used by magicians in Earthdawn. Because there is no limit to how often a Swordmaster can use her magic to fight with he swords, there is also no limit to how often a magician can use his Spellcasting abilities.

3. Can a magician be interrupted while casting a spell?

No. Magicians cast the spell at the moment that make the Spellcasting test. They do not require the entire round to cast the spell. Since each character performs their actions at their Initiative, if a magician is struck before his Initiative, he can still continue to make his Spellcasting test.

4. Can a magician be interrupted while weaving threads to a spell?

No. For the same reasons as detailed above, a magician cannot be interrupted while weaving threads to a spell.

5. Can threads previously woven to a spell be lost?

Not normally. The only way this can occur is if the magician does not cast the spell in the round after the last thread was been woven. In this case, the spell threads are lost, and must be woven again..

6. Can a magician hold threads previously woven to a spell?

Not according to the rules as they are written. I am considering an optional rule that might allow magicians to hold threads in place before casting the spell. See the section entitled Optional Rules below for details about this option.

7. Can a magician be interrupted while reattuning a spell matrix?

Yes. If a magician is forced to perform any other action aside from reattuning his matrices, he is interrupted, and all of his matrices are wiped clean and emptied. One such way this might occur is if a magician is Wounded while reattuning a spell matrix. If a magician is Wounded, and makes a Knockdown test, it would be considered an different action (as he is shifting his focus from reattuning to remaining standing), and therefore cause his matrices to

be wiped clean. If, on the other hand, the magician simply falls down due to the Wound, he may maintain his focus on his matrices, preventing them from being wiped.

Optional Rules

The following optional rules are being considered for inclusion in the upcoming Earthdawn magic sourcebook. Gamemasters and players should feel free to use these optional rules in their campaigns, and send comments and suggestions to FASA Corporation, 1100 W. Cermak Rd., Suite B305, Chicago, IL 60608, Attn: Earthdawn Playtesting

Casting Raw Magic

When using Raw Magic, a magician need not weave any threads before casting a spell. The magician instead takes strain points to reflect the unsafe channeling of magic through him. The amount of Strain taken is equal to the number of threads the spell normally requires, multiplied by the Circle of the spell. For example, a Wizard casting Razor Orb using this method would take 12 points of Strain (2 threads x 6(Circle of Spell)).

After taking the Strain, the magician makes the Spellcasting test, and if successful, the spell effect takes place. The magician still makes a Warping test, and may still suffer damage and being Horror marked as a result. See Raw Magic, pages 155 -156 of the Earthdawn rulebook.

Holding Spell Threads

Maintaining spell threads: Spell threads can be held by taking Strain (blood magic). Each round, the magician takes Strain for holding a spell thread before casting the spell. The amount of strain is the number of rounds the magician has held the thread. For example, holding a thread 1 round causes 1 point of Strain, holding for a second round causes 2 more points, holding for a third round causes 3 more

points, etc. The amount of Strain taken is the same regardless of the number of Threads being held and the Circle of the spell.

Earthdawn Product Schedule

The following is a listing of upcoming Earthdawn products. The release dates shown are estimates. In some cases, the authors attributed may change. The information presented below is as up-to-date as is possible. Also, we (FASA that is) want your feedback on this product schedule, as well as your opinions of the Earthdawn products already available. Feel free to write us at the address above with your comments.

Creatures of Barsaive

December 1994

Author: Fraser Cain

Price: \$18.00

This sourcebook details 50 new creatures for Earthdawn, ranging from the small and (relatively) harmless, to the huge, ferocious, and lethal. This sourcebook also includes guidelines for using creatures in adventures, as well as creating new creatures.

Shattered Pattern

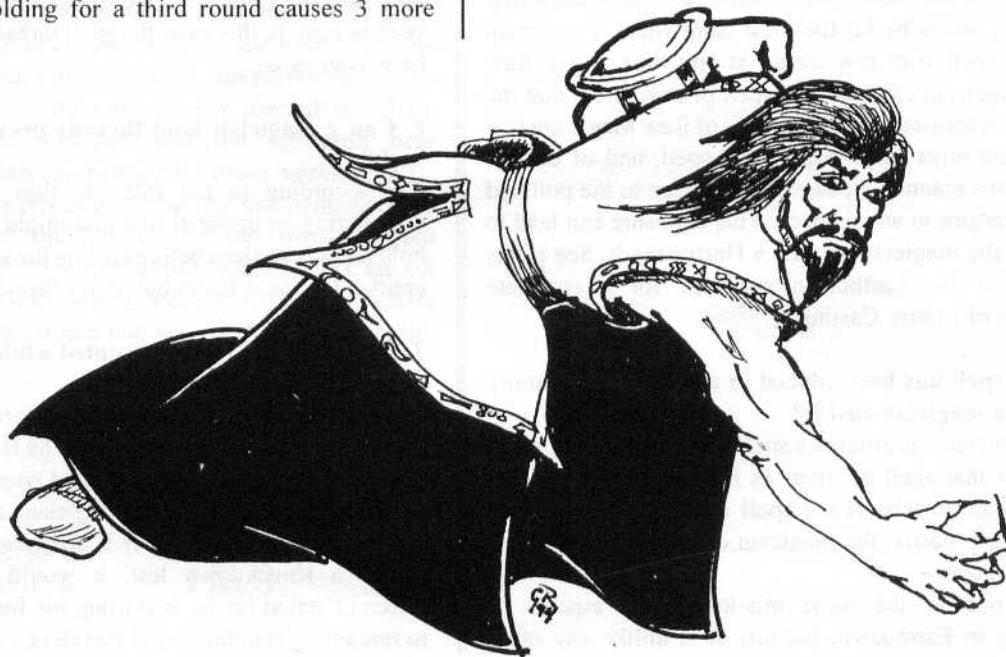
November 1994

Author: Louis J. Proseri

Price: \$10.00

An elderly elf asks the characters' help in learning his Name and identity. But the truth behind the elf's Name leads to much more than the characters could expect, as they find themselves caught between the forces of Horror and Dragon.

This adventure is for a group of 6 - 8 characters of any Disciplines of 5th - 7th Circle.



Legends of Earthdawn Volume I

January 1995

Author: Allen Varney, Don Webb, Robin D. Laws, Teeuwynn Woodruff, Sam Witt, Nicole Lindroos Frein and others

Price: \$12.00

Legends of Earthdawn Volume I presents the reader with 30 legends from the land of Barsaive, describing ancient heroes, magical treasure, Horrors, and creatures. This book also includes adventure ideas for each legend, providing gamemasters with 30 adventure seeds, all based on legendary tales of Barsaive's past.

The Adept's Way

March 1995

Author: Robin D. Laws, Nigel D. Findley, Teeuwynn Woodruff, Sam Witt, Nicole Lindroos Frein

Price: \$18.00

As Denizens of Earthdawn Volumes I & II provided a first-hand look at the Name-giving races of Barsaive, The Adept's Way offers players and gamemaster a first-hand look at the Disciplines practiced by adepts in Barsaive. This sourcebook also includes roleplaying guidelines and new rules for each of the Disciplines.

Horrors

May 1995

Author: Robin D. Laws, Teeuwynn Woodruff, Sam Witt, and others.

Price: \$18.00

The Horrors are the reason Barsaive is in the state of affairs it is. These despicable creatures from astral space are some of the most powerful and destructive beings ever to roam the world. This sourcebook offers new insights into the Horrors, including new Horror constructs, new Horror powers, and detailed descriptions of 16 Named Horrors, among the worst and most devastating of the Scourge.

Blades

July 1995

Author: Louis J. Prosperi, Robin D. Laws, Nigel D. Findley, Teeuwynn Woodruff, Sam Witt, Nicole Lindroos Frein

Price: \$10.00

The ancient Kingdom of Cara Fahd was once protected by a band of ork heroes who wielded the Blades of Cara Fahd, a matching set of magical daggers destined to save the kingdom from destruction. Hundreds of years later, the Blades have fallen into the characters' hands. If the characters learn the Blades' history, they can tap into their power. But as they do so, they also risk unleashing a powerful magical threat into the world. Each of the adventures in this collection describes how the characters can learn the Key Knowledges of the Blades of Cara Fahd. This adventure collection provides gamemasters with a very unique magical treasure to give his players' characters, and also a model of how gamemasters can create adventures based on magical treasures.

Sky Point/Vivane Boxed Set

August 1995

Author: Carl Sargent and Marc Gascoigne

Price: \$25.00

In the aftermath of the Theran War, the Theran Empire was driven back and was left in control of only the southwest corner of Barsaive. At the center of the Theran occupied territory in Barsaive are the city of Vivane and the military fortress known as Sky Point.

This boxed set describes the Theran stronghold in Barsaive, offering much information about the city of Vivane and the Sky Point outpost. This set also provides gamemaster with a look at the extent of Theran holdings in Barsaive, and a look at what the Empire has planned for the Kingdom of Throal and the entire province.

Sky Point/Vivane Adventures

September 1995

Author: Carl Sargent and Marc Gascoigne and others

Price: \$10.00

This is a set of 3 - 4 adventures set in and around Vivane and Sky Point, and the Theran controlled area of Barsaive.

Magic Sourcebook

November 1995

Author: Yet to be Determined

Price: \$18.00

Magic is at the heart of the Earthdawn game system, and this sourcebook takes the existing magic systems and expands them beyond what you thought possible. This sourcebook offers players and gamemasters a spell design system as well as lots of new spells, new optional rules for spellcasting, rules for summoning spirits, and new options for adepts of all Disciplines.

THE SEARCH FOR WISDOM

Located in the footholds of the Twilight Mountains near the former troll kingdom of Ustrect, the tomb of King Runvir was built around the Oracle Font of Garlen.

The Oracle Fountain would allow a person to approach, throw in a coin, and ask one question. It would then answer the question as best it could, though sometimes the answers would be a little vague. It was tended by a priest to Garlen and six assistants.

Slightly over six hundred years ago Runvir, the King of Ustrect, used the Oracle, and a magical item known as the Stone of Wisdom, to help run the Kingdom. He followed the Oracle's advise and relied on the Oracle's prophecies. In addition, the Stone of Wisdom allowed him to see who he could trust, and prevented him from taking bad advise. With the aid of these two items, he led his kingdom to a peace and prosperity they had never achieved before. The army was powerful enough to protect the borders, and small enough not to drain the country's resources. The arts flourished, and craftsmen became valued not only for the necessities, but for the artistic value of their crafts.

Before the King died, he started construction on his tomb. He decided the tomb should be built into the hillside with the Oracle Fountain, where he had received his best insights in running his kingdom. During the construction of his tomb, assassins from a neighboring kingdom tried to kill him. The king's guards were taken by surprise, and only the six servants in the room managed to slow down the assailants long enough for the guards to act. The servants died in their attempt, and the king rewarded their loyal servants by burying them in his unfinished tomb. He sealed them in with six slaves so that those that served him in life would have others to serve them in death.

As the King grew old, more of his loyal followers died, and he had a burial vault built into his tomb for his four most loyal warriors. He buried them with their trusted warhorses, their weapons and armor, various works of art that depicted them, fragrances and oils, and items of material wealth so that they would want for nothing in the afterlife.

The King started to have his loyal palace guards interred in catacombs as they passed away. Finally, when the King passed away, he was mummified along with his two oldest, most trusted advisors. He has sealed in with everything he could possibly need in the afterlife, and knew he would have loyal servants, guardsmen, knights, and advisors waiting for him.

One hundred years later the Scourge began. The servants of Garlen sealed the tomb and oracle font, hoping that it could survive the Scourge and be reopened when the world was safe.

Though the tomb was sealed, a Horror named Sharvik the Deceiver managed to break his way in through the mountainside. He was unaware that the sealed tomb and oracle font was not a populated kaer. He started a destructive search for signs of life within the complex, and eventually made his way into the great hall. It was then that the Passion Garlen took notice of this Horror that had made his way into one of her holy shrines. She worried that he would corrupt the oracle font itself and used her power to seal all of the exits from the great hall. Sharvik the Deceiver pounded at the exits, using all of the karma he had at his disposal, but to no avail. He managed to weaken the magic that held him in the room, but could not break free. The Horror has sat there ever since.

When the Scourge ended, a questor of Garlen and his retinue returned to reopen the Oracle Fountain. They came upon Sharvik, and a mighty battle was fought. The questor's minions fell to the Horror one by one, feeding Sharvik new karma, for Sharvik feeds on death. The wounded questor retreated from the great hall with a few survivors, and found that Sharvik was unable to follow. But the magic sealing the great hall had been weakened, and Sharvik managed to animate the bodies of the fallen guards and send them after the fleeing questor. In the final battle, the last of the questor's minions fell, and the questor was trapped in the complex, unable to work the elevator by himself and escape.

When they were never heard of again, the church of Garlen presumed that the Fountain had been destroyed during the Scourge, and that the questor and his party had died



while trying to find it. The church turned its efforts in other directions.

A year ago, Jorgin Tovar, an Eighth Circle Wizard Adept and advisor to Garlthik One-Eye in Kratas, noticed that Garlthik's once sharp mind had started to grow dull. Jorgin worried that if Garlthik's enemies were to find out, they would try to overthrow him. Jorgin saw that Garlthik had begun to doubt his own judgement. Jorgin then began to research ways to restore Garlthik to his former self. After nearly a year of researching, he believes he has found the answer. A magical item named the Stone of Wisdom was said to have vast power in aiding its wielder to see the truth and to think more clearly. The Stone of Wisdom was last reported being in the possession of King Runvir, the troll king of ancient Ustrect. There were no records of anyone having possessed the Stone since then.

More research turned up the fact that Runvir was entombed at the Oracle Font of Garlen in the foothills of the Twilight Peaks by Death's Sea. Figuring that the Stone was entombed with him, Jorgin set about hiring heroes he thought were capable of entering the tomb and returning with the Stone.

What Jorgin was unaware of was the fact that Vistosh, the leader of a rival faction in Kratas, had already begun to suspect that something was wrong with Garlthik. Vistosh was unable to get close enough to Garlthik to find out what, so he started to have Garlthik's advisors and associates watched. When Jorgin hires the heroes, Vistosh is informed. Though he doesn't know what they were hired for originally, he plans to have them captured in order to find out.

When this fails, and the heroes leave the city, Vistosh relies on his spies to find out what is going on. All they can find out is that Jorgin hired a band of heroes to retrieve some lost magical item. Vistosh figures that the item must be important, so he places spies at the city gates to await the heroes' return. Once they return, his spies will try to trick them out of the item. If this fails, he has ruffians who will take a more physical approach.

Location: The Tomb is located in the footholds of the Twilight Mountains, on the slopes overlooking Death's Sea.

From Bartertown: Center Sextant On; Kratas

Align: θ **With:** Jerris

Sight Along Point: δ

Follow: Dis At: Sundown

Days Travel: 16 days walking, 10 days riding.

PLOT SYNOPSIS

Lately, in the city of Kratas, the famed ork thief Garlthik One-Eye has been falling to the ravages of age. He is the ruler of the city, and his advisors are worried that his mental facilities are beginning to slip. They fear that rival gangs, especially Brocher's Brood led by Vistosh, a corrupted elf and former Blood Warder to the Elven Queen Alachia, will soon make a move to take over control of the city.

One of Garlthik's advisors, a Wizard Adept named Jorgin Tovar, has stumbled upon information about a magical pendent called the Stone of Wisdom. He believes that this

pendent can offset the effects of age on Garthik's once brilliant mind. Jorgin has spent the past few months researching the item, and now believes that he has found its location.

Jorgin believes that the Stone of Wisdom was entombed in a lost shrine to Garlen with a troll king named Runvir who ruled over the ancient land of Ustrect. Now that Jorgin has discovered what he believes to be the location of the shrine, he needs to recover the pendent. However, Jorgin knows that Vistosh has spies keeping an eye on Garlthik's people so Jorgin has decided to hire outsiders to send after the item.

Jorgin will meet with the characters at a small inn called The Raven. He will act the part of a wealthy mage in need of adventurers to recover an ancient item of interest to him. He will offer the adventurers 500 silvers each, and the promise of powerful patronage, if they recover the item.

Once the players have agreed to go on this mission, he will supply the location, and the approximate amount of time it will take. He will pay half of the money up front, and make one of the party members take a Blood Promise (Gamemaster Book page 48) to return the Stone of Wisdom to Jorgin at The Raven within one month. Once that is done, the players will outfit themselves and head off to the Twilight Peaks.

Unkown to the players, Vistosh has had Jorgin followed, and now knows that the players are involved with something to do with Garlthik. He doesn't know what they are up to, and will send a group of thugs to try and capture them and bring them in for questioning. The thugs will fight to subdue, and should be driven off.

The players then head off towards the Twilight Peaks, where they will fight off a group of troll skyraiders, a few fire eagles, and finally find the entrance to the Tomb of Runvir. After battling their way through the tomb, rediscovering the Oracle Font, and recovering the Stone of Wisdom, the players will head back.

Once back at the gates of Kratas, agents of Brocher's Brood will intercept them and try to gain whatever it is that they recovered, first by trickery, and then by force. Once the tagents of Vistosh have been dealt with, the players can return to the Raven, meet with Jorgin, and complete their mission. Once this is done, Jorgin will use the Stone of Wisdom to help Garlthik regain his senses. Finally, the now recovered Garlthik will meet with the characters and congratulate them. The party that aids Garlthik One-Eye will certainly be heroes, and will have earned the gratitude of a very powerful individual.

THE MYSTERY MAGE

OVERVIEW

This encounter starts after the heroes have arranged for rooms at The Raven, an odd inn that used to be a guard post in the city. The party now sits in the common room, enjoying a cool drink, when a mage stops by looking for heroes to aid him in recovering a magical item.

SETTING THE STAGE

You are finally relaxing in a small tavern after locking most of your gear in your rooms. The ale is cool and refreshing, and the barmaids are friendly and attractive, flitting merrily with the various customers.

The heavy wooden table bears the scars of past customers carving names and sayings into its surface. The crowd is quiet, sitting in groups, playing cards or dice, talking in hushed tones, and drinking ale or wine.

You notice a man enter and approach the bar. He is wearing dark robes embroidered in odd geometric patterns. He talks quietly with the bartender who then points in your direction. The man turns, looks you all over, and approaches.

"Greetings, travelers. I am in need of a brave band of heroes, and my friend Klevis, the innkeeper, has advised me to speak with you."

You look the man over. He seems to be past middle-age, possibly in his late fifties, early sixties. His eyes still look clear and lively, and his hands are steady.

"I am Jorgin, a mage here in Kratas. I have been conducting research into a magical item for some time and I believe I have finally learned the location of the item. Now I need to hire a group of heroes to go and recover it. This should take a few weeks, but no longer than a month. For this, I will supply a map to where the item is, and 500 silvers each, half in advance, half upon completion, to anyone willing to undertake this dangerous journey. Are you interested?"

If the heroes agree, he will continue. "The item is The Stone of Wisdom, a large pearl over two inches in diameter, on a beautiful chain. It is located in the tomb of King Runvir, a troll who ruled the ancient lands of Ustrect. He was entombed with countless amounts of other treasure, of which I care nothing for. It is yours for the taking. The Stone of Wisdom must be returned to me. If you agree to this, I will swear a Blood Promise with one of you, the promise will be that you will return the Stone of Wisdom to me, here at the Raven, within six weeks. I will promise to pay you the remainder of the silver owed to you, and to help you research two thread ranks of magical items that you may possess. Is it a deal?"

Once the heroes agree to these terms, the Blood Promise will be sworn. This will require 4 points of Blood Magic from both Jorgin and one of the heroes. Each must describe what talent or skill they will use to accomplish the deed. Jorgin will swear to use his Item History talent for the month after the heroes return with the Stone of Wisdom. Whatever skill or talent the player picks will be increased by 1 step until the Stone of Wisdom is returned to Jorgin. Jorgin's Item History will be increased by 1 step until he completes his two weeks of research into whatever magic item the heroes wish him to research.

Once this is done, Jorgin will get out a map to the tomb and hand it to the hero who made the promise with him. He will then get up to leave. He will turn to the heroes and say, "I wish you good travelling, my friends. When you return and meet with me here, I will be the first to buy you all drinks." The mage turns, and heads out the door into the darkness.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Vistosh has spies following Jorgin. They will not know what was discussed, but they will report the meeting to him. This will cause Vistosh to become curious, and he will order a band of his ruffians to capture the heroes in order to find out what the meeting was about.

The Raven charges 5 coppers to stay in the common room, and 1 silver to have a private room. The private rooms have one large bed that can sleep up to three people, and a large trunk. The door can be barred from the inside, and the windows still have bars on them from when this was a town watch building.

As for food and drink, average ale goes for 5 coppers, and good ale for 1 silver. A bottle of wine goes for 2 silvers. A simple meal of cheeses, breads, and fruits goes for 3 coppers, and a meal of pork, bread, cheeses, fruit and an average ale goes for 1 silver. The tavern closes at two in the morning when Klevis, the owner leaves with the day's profits, and Harris, the evening bartender, bars the door, and spreads his bed roll out behind the bar.

TOUBLESHOOTING

This encounter should end with the characters accepting Jorgin's offer. Even if they do not, Jorgin will beg them to reconsider, and tell them he will return the next night to see if they have changed their minds. The conversation with him will still be reported to Vistosh, and he will have them attacked, not knowing that they refused Jorgin's offer. This should enrage the characters enough that the next meeting they should take the offer.

HEADING OUT

OVERVIEW

After outfitting themselves, the heroes start to head out of Kratas and on their way. As they head through the streets of Kratas, they are ambushed by ruffians working for Brocher's Brood. These ruffians are trying to capture them alive to bring them to Vistosh, so they will fight to subdue.

SETTING THE STAGE

You have payed the inflated prices charged by the merchants in Kratas for the supplies needed to make the journey to the Twilight Peaks, and are now heading out of the city of thieves. You make your way through the twisting, rubble strewn streets in the direction of the city gates, contemplating the adventure you are about to undertake. Suddenly, there is some movement in the shadows.

BEHIND THE SCENES

A group of ruffians will attempt to ambush the heroes and take them in for Vistosh to questions. They will attack quickly and quietly. The heroes will have to make PER Tests with a target of 6 to avoid being taken by surprise for the first round. There are two ruffians for each hero.

RUFFIANS

Attributes

DEX: 13: 6/D10 **STR:** 13: 6/D10 **TOU:** 13: 6/D10
PER: 9: 4/D6 **WIL:** 10: 5/D8 **CHA:** 10: 5/D8

Initiative: 6/D10 **Physical Defense:** 7

Number of Attacks: 1 **Spell Defense:** 6

Attack: 9/D8+D6 **Social Defense:** 6

Damage:

Fist 6/D10

Club 9/D8+D6

Short Sword 10/D10+D6

Number of Spells: NA **Armor:** 2

Spellcasting: NA **Mystic Armor:** 0

Effect: NA **Knockdown:** 6/D10

Recovery Tests: 2

Death Rating: 35

Wound Threshold: 9 **Combat Move:** 30

Unconsciousness Rating: 27 **Full Move:** 60

Legend Points: 60 each

Equipment: Short sword, club, dagger, leather armor

Loot: 1D6 x 10 silvers

Skills: Melee Weapons 3: 9/D8+D6, Streetwise 2: 6/D10,
Unarmed Combat 3: 9/D8+D6

Commentary:

These thugs are working for Vistosh and will attack to subdue, using the Attacking To Stun rules (Earthdawn page 200). Each ruffian will retreat if he takes two wounds. If caught and questioned, it will take an Good Success against their Social Defense to make them talk since they have a huge fear of what Vistosh can do to them. All they know is that Vistosh hired them to capture the heroes alive, and hold them in an abandoned building in the eastern section of town.

CHECKING UP ON VISTOSH

A successful Streetwise Test with a Target of 5 will uncover the fact that Vistosh heads the Brocher's Brood, the second most powerful gang in the city. A Good Success will also find out that Vistosh is an elf from the Blood Woods. An Excellent Success will find out all of the above and the fact that Vistosh used to be a Blood Warder for Queen Alachia before being banished. He now intends to replace Garthik One-Eye as ruler of Kratas.

CHECKING UP ON JORGIN

A successful Streetwise Test with a target of 5 will uncover the fact that Jorgin is a powerful Wizard Adept who is well respected for his honest dealings with others. A Good Success will uncover that Jorgin works for Garthik One-Eye. An Excellent Success uncovers the fact that Jorgin is one of Garthik's most trusted advisors.

TROUBLESHOOTING

If the characters are loosing to the ruffians, have some of Jorgin's ruffians come to their aid, holding off the attacks while giving the characters time to escape. If the characters capture a ruffian, question him, and decide to check up on the meeting site, remind them of the Blood Promise, and the speed necessary to complete their mission. If they insist on checking out the meeting, it will not take place since Vistosh will be warned that the heroes defeated his band of ruffians.

TROLLS OF THE PEAKS

OVERVIEW

The heroes reach the foothills of the Twilight Peaks and are attacked by Troll Crystal Raiders who are patrolling through the area. These trolls intend to take the heroes and make them into Newots (the troll equivalent of slaves).

SETTING THE STAGE

You have been journeying for almost two weeks. You have travelled through forests and plains. Now, the majestic mountains that make up the Twighlight Peaks are before you. You can't be more than a few days from your destination. As you cross through the foothills and head towards the southern slopes, there is the sound of crashing coming through the trees that line the trail. Suddenly, a half-a-dozen trolls emerges from the woods before you. One of them strides forward and speaks, using the rough Dwarven tongue used across Barsaive.

"Hold, trespassers. I am Thoris Rockthrower of the Bloodlores. Surrender yourselves and be prepared to be taken to the Trollmoot as Newots."

BEHIND THE SCENES

A character who makes successful Troll Lore Test with a target of 5 will realize that a Newot is about the same as being a slave. A Good Success will let the character know that the Bloodlores are one of the more brutal Trollmoots. If the characters do not surrender, the trolls will attack, only they will attack to kill, not to capture.

THORIS ROCKTHROWER

Racial Abilities: Heat Sight (to 250 yards)

Attributes

DEX: 13: 6/D10 **STR:** 17: 7/D12 **TOU:** 15: 6/D10

PER: 12: 5/D8 **WIL:** 14: 6/D10 **CHA:** 13: 6/D10

Initiative: 4/D6

Physical Defense: 7

Number of Attacks: 1(2) **Spell Defense:** 7

Attack: 11/D10+D8 **Social Defense:** 7

Second Attack: 9/D8+D6

Damage: 12/2D10

Number of Spells: NA **Armor:** 6

Spellcasting: NA **Mystic Armor:** 2

Effect: NA **Knockdown:** 7/D12

Recovery Tests: 3

Death Rating: 38

Wound Threshold: 10

Unconsciousness Rating: 29

Combat Move: 30

Full Move: 60

Legend Points: 100

Equipment: Ringmail, broadsword

Loot: 2D4 x 10 silvers

Skills: Air Sailing 3: 9/D8+D6, Melee 5: 11/D10+D8, Second Attack 3: 9/D8+D6, Streetwise 3: 8/2D6, Tactics 3: 8/2D6, Wilderness Survival 3: 8/2D6

5 TROLL WARRIORS

Racial Abilities: Heat Sight (to 250 yards)

Attributes

DEX: 13: 6/D10 **STR:** 17: 7/D12 **TOU:** 15: 6/D10

PER: 12: 5/D8 **WIL:** 14: 6/D10 **CHA:** 13: 6/D10

Initiative: 4/D6

Physical Defense: 7

Number of Attacks: 1

Spell Defense: 7

Attack: 9/D8+D6

Social Defense: 7

Damage: 12/2D10

Number of Spells: NA

Armor: 8

Spellcasting: NA

Mystic Armor: 1

Effect: NA

Knockdown: 7/D12

Recovery Tests: 3

Death Rating: 38

Wound Threshold: 10

Unconsciousness Rating: 29

Combat Move: 30

Full Move: 60

Legend Points: 95 each

Equipment: Hardened leather armor, footman's shield, broadsword

Loot: 2D4 x 10 silvers

Skills: Air Sailing 2: 8/2D6, Melee 3: 9/D8+D6, Streetwise 1: 6/D10, Tactics 1: 6/D10, Wilderness Survival 1: 6/D10

Commentary:

These trolls will fight to the death or until Thoris Rockthrower falls, in which case, they will retreat.

Once the trolls have been defeated, the heroes can continue of their quest, though the encounter should serve to remind them that the Twilight Peaks are the homes to numerous Trollmoots, and that the trolls may not take trespassing and tomb robbing lightly.

TROUBLESHOOTING

The only possible trouble is if the trolls actually defeat the characters. If

this looks likely, have a drakkar from a rival clan show up in the sky overhead, and Thoris will order a retreat, promising to come back for the characters another time.

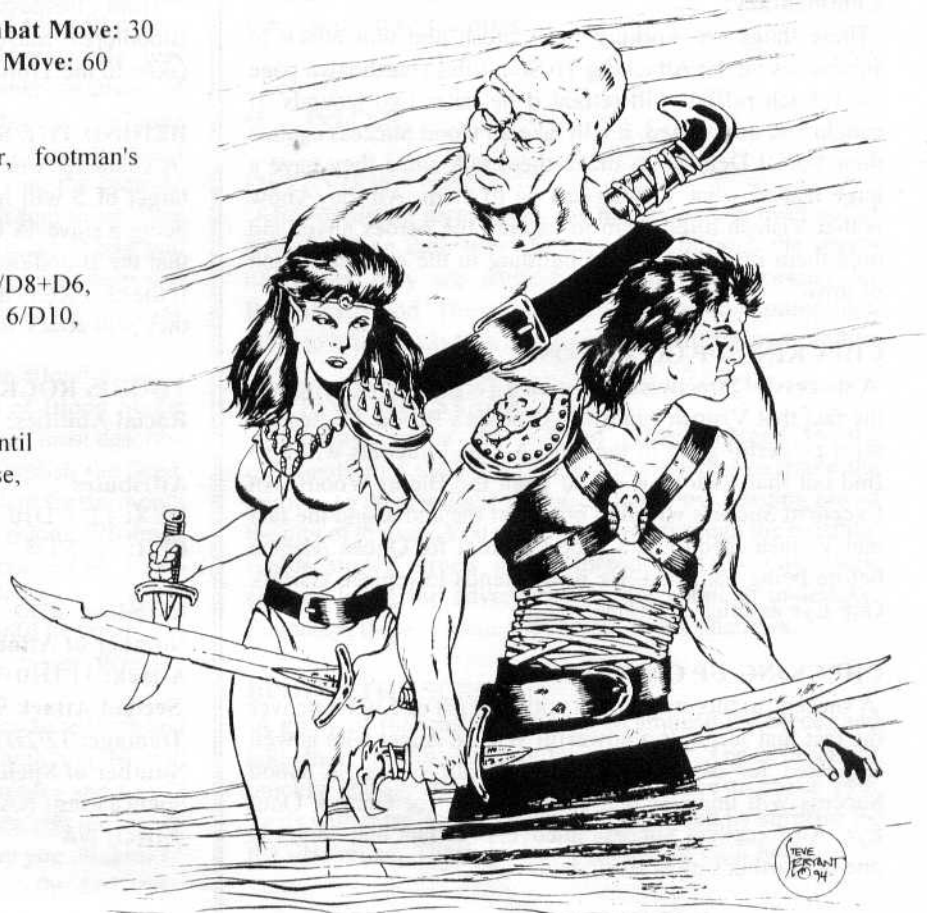
THE TOMB OF KING RUNVIR

OVERVIEW

The characters reach the tomb of King Runvir, explore the long forgotten crypt, and discover the Horror waiting within. Discoveries within the tomb will remind the heroes that before the Scourge slavery once flourished in Barsaive.

SETTING THE STAGE

After spending the past few weeks travelling and fighting your way past the trolls that call this mountain range their home, you are moving around the southern slopes of the Twilight Peaks. Death's Sea blazes away, glowing a hellish orangish red to your left. You are following what remains of a cobblestone road, though there are only traces of the road left, most of it has been covered with rubble or overgrown with dried, windblown weeds. It is hot. Even though it is not yet summer, it is uncomfortably hot. You wipe the sweat away, and peer through the haze. The road seems to have been climbing for the past hour, and now, up ahead, you can make out the mouth of a cave. You make your way up, and enter the deep cave. It is cooler inside, and the vast cave must be easily 100' by 70'. There seems to be places to tie up horses, and places to build fires and



set up camp.

THEMES AND IMAGES

The characters should feel relief when they leave the heat and find the still sealed tomb. The relief should slowly turn to suspense and fear as they get deeper into the tomb and realize that the tomb was breached after all. Images should include the darkness, the character's lights reflecting off of the walls and floors, casting eerie shadows all about them. The discovery of scenes of beauty, and excellent craftsmanship, offset by the appearance of Horror constructs and the final Horror.

BEHIND THE SCENES

The large cave is where visitors used to make camp and stay while waiting to see the oracle. It is here that the heroes can make camp and ready themselves for the exploration about to come.

LOCATIONS

1) *Before you is a very plain wooden door bound in iron. There is a large keyhole in the center.*

The area in front of the door is trapped.

Pit Trap

Detection Difficulty: 7

Disarm Difficulty: 7 (In a small alcove there is a hidden lever that disarms the pit)

Trigger Condition: Pressure Plate

Trap Initiative: 8

Trap Effect: 25 foot fall for Step 15/D20+D6 damage.

Once the character hits the bottom, he triggers the second part:

Spear Trap

Detection Difficulty: 9

Disarm Difficulty: 7 on the same lever as the pit disarm.

Trigger Condition: Pressure Plate

Trap Initiative: 10

Trap Effect: Spears launch from the walls and do Step 15/D20+D6 damage

The door is locked with a expertly crafted mundane lock, target of 10. Once opened, a plainly carved hall extends for 30' and ends in a door with another door on the right wall.

2) Another pit trap is located at the end of the hall by the two doors. Use the Pit Trap above without the spear trap. One door leads to a room filled with gears and mechanisms. The scene is dominated by a large crank. This is used to raise and lower the elevator that the other door leads to (A). Neither is locked.

3) Fake Door. This door leads nowhere and is bolted to the wall.

4) Lying on the floor is another ornately carved wooden

door, this time depicting horsemen charging across the plains.

5) *You see four stone caskets, and lying by the sides of these caskets are the remains of four horses. By each casket is a work of art, one is a small statue of a horseman in armor, mounted on a charging horse (worth 65 sp), one is a painting showing a female warrior in armor (worth 55 sp), one is a tapestry showing an armored Dwarf on a war-pony, and the last is a painting of an Ork cavalryman on a rearing warhorse. Against the far wall is a chest (magically locked with a target of 12 needed to open). Inside is a bag containing 100 sp. The chest also contains 2 booster potions, a Desperate Blow amulet, riding tack trimmed in silver worth 250 sp, a saddle trimmed in silver, with matching saddlebags worth 500 sp, and a small bag with 30 gp. This vault has been corrupted and each of the former heroes is now a Cadaver Man wearing 4 points of armor, and carrying rusted, pitted swords. These Cadaver Men have an additional +2 on their attack tests (included in the stats below).*

Cadaver Men

DEX: 4/D6 **STR:** 6/D10 **TOU:** 7/D12

PER: 3/D4 **WIL:** 6/D10 **CHA:** 4/D6

Initiative: 4/D6

Physical Defense: 5

Number of Attacks: 1(4) **Spell Defense:** 6

Attack: 8/2D6

Social Defense: 11

Damage: 10/D10+D6

Armor: 4

Number of Spells: NA

Mystic Armor: 0

Spell Casting: NA

Knockdown: 7

Effect: NA

Recovery Tests: 2@D12

Death Rating: 36

Combat Move: 25

Wound Threshold: 9

Full Move: 50

Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Legend Points: 125 each

Equipment: Rusted swords, rotting armor

Loot: None

Commentary:

They will frenzy after taking a Wound, attacking four times per round until they have killed whoever wounded them, or until 10 rounds have passed. They are the remains of King Runvir's elite warriors.

6) *This door is beautifully carved in abstract designs.*

7) *You enter a plain guardroom with a rotting table and benches, and a barrel that doesn't look water tight.*

8) *This room contains branding irons, manacles, whips, clubs, and other instruments of torture. As you look over the scene you notice something gathering shape from the blackness. A Demiwrath will attack, it has an additional +2*

on its attack tests.

Demiwraith

DEX: 7/D12 **STR:** 6/D10 **TOU:** 6/D10
PER: 6/D10 **WIL:** 8/2D6 **CHA:** 5/D8

Initiative: 9/D8+D6 **Physical Defense:** 7
Number of Attacks: 1 **Spell Defense:** 9 (14)
Attack: 9/D8+D6 **Social Defense:** 13
Damage: 9/D8+D6 **Armor:** 6
Number of Spells: (1) **Mystic Armor:** 4
Spellcasting: 12/2D10 **Knockdown:** 7/D12
Effect: Chilling Touch **Recovery Tests:** 1@D10

Death Rating: 38 **Combat Move:** 60
Wound Threshold: 10 **Full Move:** 120
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Legend Points: 275

Equipment: None

Loot: See below

Commentary:

A Demiwraith is not a true undead so its Spell Defense is raised to a 14 against spells designed to effect undead. When a Demiwraith hits an opponent, it must roll a Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of the target. If successful, the target will take 1 point of damage per round and be frozen in his tracks until he makes a WIL roll of 9 or better or until the effect is dispelled with a 9 or better.

This Demiwraith is the remains of the last questor of Garlen who tried to explore the tomb decades ago. There was no one left to work the elevator, and he was stuck down here where he eventually became possessed. The brooch has symbols of Garlen carved into it.

You watch as the fallen body regains a peaceful appearance, lying on the floor in torn robes that identify him as a questor to Garlen. Hanging from his belt is a broadsword (it is the sword Razorclaw, see Treasures), and pinned to his chest is a beautiful golden brooch (worth 250 silvers).

9) *You open the door and see a spectacular sight. Display cases line the walls showing small trinkets and items from the days of King Runvir. They serve to preserve the culture that prospered under his leadership. Most of the cases are smashed, and most of the items are broken or rotted. (A successful PER TEST with a target of 7 will find a small piece of lava carved to resemble a castle tower worth 45 silvers that is still intact). Standing up from near one of the cases is a rotting body holding a sword. As it begins to move towards you, you can see another lurching forward. Two more step out into the open.*

There are four Cadaver Men in the room. They have nothing of value, and are the remains of some of guards that the questors to Garlen brought with him. They were

animated by the Horror trapped in room 19.

4 Cadaver Men

DEX: 4/D6 **STR:** 6/D10 **TOU:** 7/D12
PER: 3/D4 **WIL:** 6/D10 **CHA:** 4/D6

Initiative: 4/D6 **Physical Defense:** 5
Number of Attacks: 1(4) **Spell Defense:** 6
Attack: 7/D12 **Social Defense:** 11
Damage: 10/D10+D6 **Armor:** 3
Number of Spells: NA **Mystic Armor:** 0
Spell Casting: NA **Knockdown:** 7
Effect: NA **Recovery Tests:** 2@D12

Death Rating: 36 **Combat Move:** 25
Wound Threshold: 9 **Full Move:** 50
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Legend Points: 125 each

Equipment: Rusted swords, rotting armor

Loot: None

Commentary:

They will frenzy after taking a Wound, attacking four times per round until they have killed whoever wounded them, or until 10 rounds have passed.

There are five other doors in the room, though one of them has been knocked from its hinges (leading to area 13).

10) *Another stuck door, this one leads to a small storeroom containing candles, rotting furs, decaying cloth, stoneworking tools, torches, and a keg of oil.*

11) *The door to this room is stuck and will have to be broken down, though it is old and rotting, so it should not be much trouble. As you enter the room, a soft light glows from a fountain of water. A female voice softly says, "Enter in peace, my children". The fountain has two engraved silver bowls, one on each side. (Each is worth 25 silvers). There are coins in the fountain, mostly silver, but there is some gold (63 silvers and 8 gold pieces).*

A coin thrown into the fountain will activate the Oracle, and the female voice will be heard, "What information do you seek, my child?" The Oracle will only answer one question per person per year. The water can be used as a healing potion, or a Kelia's Antidote, but only if drunk from the silver bowl. The font can only be used this way ten times per day before the magic becomes inert. It can also act as a Last Chance Potion, but doing so will render the font's magic inert for a month.

There is a door to one side of the fountain, and a passageway leading to a bunch of doors on the other.

The doors (in hall A) all lead to small chambers containing a rotting cot, and a decaying chest. The chests are all empty. The other door leads to a more ornate bedroom. The bedroom has a carved wooden bed with molding covers, a

desk collapsing from dry rot, and a rotting rug. There is also two more rotting corpses who were more guards of the questor.

The corpses turn and attack any intruders. On the desk is an ornate writing kit worth 40 sp.

2 Cadaver Men

DEX: 4/D6 **STR:** 6/D10 **TOU:** 7/D12
PER: 3/D4 **WIL:** 6/D10 **CHA:** 4/D6

Initiative: 4/D6 **Physical Defense:** 5
Number of Attacks: 1(4) **Spell Defense:** 6
Attack: 7/D12 **Social Defense:** 11
Damage: 10/D10+D6 **Armor:** 3
Number of Spells: NA **Mystic Armor:** 0
Spell Casting: NA **Knockdown:** 7
Effect: NA **Recovery Tests:** 2@D12

Death Rating: 36 **Combat Move:** 25
Wound Threshold: 9 **Full Move:** 50
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Legend Points: 125 each

Equipment: Rusted swords, rotting armor
Loot: None

Commentary:

They will frenzy after taking a Wound, attacking four times per round until they have killed whoever wounded them, or until 10 rounds have passed.

12) The door to this room is locked with a magical lock, target number of 11. *As the door opens and the light penetrates into the darkness a grisly sight greets your eyes. There are six skeletal figures huddled by the door, wearing rags and rotted clothes. A huge stone slab rests in the center of the floor. The stone is carved with the following words in trollish- Here rests Thom Hendriks, Garl Kelling, Jarvin Keyes, Igan Tuffer, Logar Jant, and Brak Trevin. They were the most loyal servants a King could ever have, and gave their lives so that their King would live. They rest here in a place of honor for all times. With them are entombed six slaves so that they may enjoy in the afterlife the same service they provided in life.*

Beneath the stone slab, that needs a STR test with a target of 10 to move, there is ten feet of packed earth covering the caskets of the servants. They are buried in the clothes they died in, and one has a 40 sp carved silver ring.

13) *Lying sprawled on the floor are three bodies. One is in rusting and torn metal armor, and a broken sword is still in his grasp. The other two are in rotted robes of priests of Garlen. There is nothing of value.*

14) *You step into these corridors and realize that you have entered catacombs. There are burial niches in both walls holding skeletal figures in rotted armor clutching rusted and*

pitted weapons. Seven of these bodies have items of jewelry: a 15 sp carved brass ring, a 65 sp amber pendant, a 25 sp amethyst ring, a 40 sp silver pendant shaped like a lion, a 15 sp plain silver ring, a 55 sp ivory bracelet, and a 65 sp plain gold ring.

If disturbed - you can hear the bones beginning to move, the grating of metal and bone, as the skeletal remains lurch forward. There are 12 Skeletons that are animated by the Horror's evil. They are all over seven feet tall, being the remains of troll warriors.

Skeletons

DEX: 5/D8 **STR:** 5/D8 **TOU:** 4/D6
PER: 5/D8 **WIL:** 7/D12 **CHA:** 5/D8

Initiative: 4/D6 **Physical Defense:** 6
Number of Attacks: 1 **Spell Defense:** 5
Attack: 6/D10 **Social Defense:** 11
Damage: 8/2D6 **Armor:** 4
Number of Spells: NA **Mystic Armor:** 4
Spell Casting: NA **Knockdown:** 5/D8
Effect: None **Recovery Tests:** 1@D6

Death Rating: 22 **Combat Move:** 30
Wound Threshold: 5 **Full Move:** 60
Unconsciousness Rating: NA

Legend Points: 20 each

Equipment: Rusty Sword
Loot: As above

15) *Before you the corridor is packed with stone, dirt, and other rubble. Obviously, the ceiling collapsed and this passage was buried.*

16) Iron Bars Trap

This trap drops heavy iron gates, blocking the passage on either side of the number 7, and hopefully trapping any intruder.

Detection Difficulty: 7

Disarm Difficulty: 8 (a switch hidden behind a false stone)

Trigger Condition: Pressure plate

Trap Initiative: 7

Trap Effect: The person will be trapped until rescued. If they make a poor success in initiative, they will be hit by the bars for step 12/2D10 damage. A STR Test of 20 is needed to lift the cage, up to two people can try on each side of the cage, for a total of 4 people trying at a time. Add the combines STR Steps together and make one roll.

17) *You open the door, and shine a light inside. You can see a rack, several manacles mounted to the walls, an iron maiden, a brazier, and a pit filled with some type of bubbling liquid. The bubbling liquid is a powerful acid that will do step 10 damage for 3 rounds after contact. This room was*

used to enforce discipline and execute criminals that were found guilty by subjecting them to a question to the oracle font. It was rarely used, and it was highly frowned upon by the priets to Garlen who manned the font.

18) As you enter this vast chamber, easily over 100' long by 80' wide, you look around in wonderment. The room is still lit by several light quartzes mounted in the four huge pillars that support the ceiling. There are seven display cases located around the walls, and each has a tapestry hanging behind it.

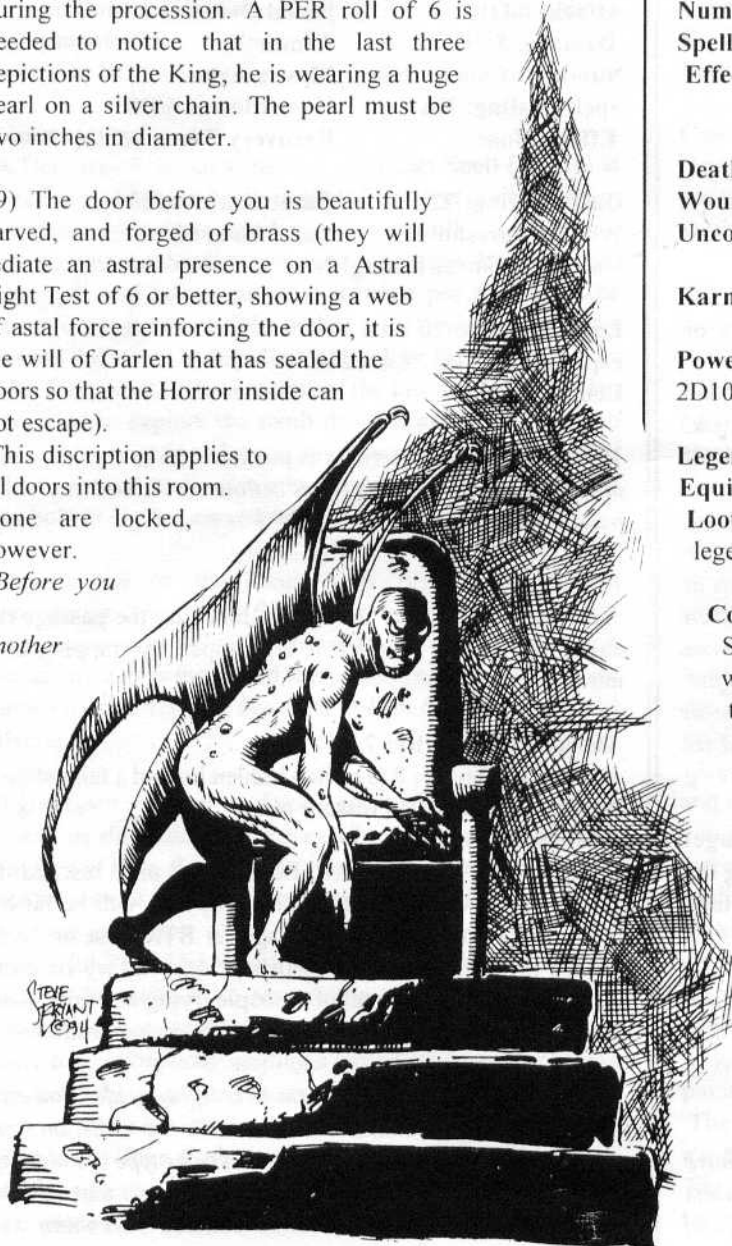
The tapestries depict the reign of King Runvir, showing him as a babe, a youth, a young troll warrior leading troops into battle, being crowned king, being married, standing in front of the beginning of the tomb's construction, and the funeral procession into the tomb. Each of the display cases hold actual items from those times. The royal rattle, his first toys, his first sword and shield, the wedding coronets, the tools used to start construction, and the flag that covered the body during the procession. A PER roll of 6 is needed to notice that in the last three depictions of the King, he is wearing a huge pearl on a silver chain. The pearl must be two inches in diameter.

19) The door before you is beautifully carved, and forged of brass (they will radiate an astral presence on a Astral Sight Test of 6 or better, showing a web of astal force reinforcing the door, it is the will of Garlen that has sealed the doors so that the Horror inside can not escape).

This discription applies to all doors into this room.

None are locked, however.

Before you is another



spectacular sight. A vast throne room with huge stone pillars that reach to the ceiling, and steps leading up to a huge black marble throne veined in silver. There is a closed door on the raised dais (stuck shut), and seated on the throne is a large, hulking figure with scaly skin. He has leathery wings, and a sword leaning against the throne. He stretches, and you can hear a voice coming from inside your heads. "Greetings, my little toys. It has been so long since I had someone to play with."

Skarvik the Deceiver

DEX: 10/D10+D6 **STR:** 12/2D10 **TOU:** 12/2D10
PER: 9/D8+D6 **WIL:** 9/D8+D6 **CHA:** 10/D10+D6

Initiative: 10/D10+D6 **Physical Defense:** 13
Number of Attacks: 2 **Spell Defense:** 12
Attack: 13/D12+D10 **Social Defense:** 13
Damage: 18/D20+D12 **Armor:** 9
Number of Spells: 2 **Mystic Armor:** 5
Spell Casting: 12/2D10 **Knockdown:** 12/2D10
Effect: 12/2D10 mystic **Recovery Tests:** 8@2D10
damage

Death Rating: 60 **Combat Move:** 75 (90)
Wound Threshold: 18 **Full Move:** 150 (180)
Unconsciousness Rating: 52

Karma Points: 10 **Karma Step:** 8/2D6

Powers: Animate Dead 13/D12+d10, Horror Mark 12/2D10, Mystic Blast (under spell effect)

Legend Points: 1500

Equipment: Great sword

Loot: The great sword is worth 1000 silvers and counts as legend points.

Commentary:

Sharvik broke into the tomb several centuries ago, but was trapped by the powerful magical wards placed in the great hall. Since then he has animated some undead, and had a good time when the questors of Garlen arrived, but is still bored silly. He will attack to kill as many as possible, needing to feed on their deaths in order to accumulate karma. For every person he kills, Sharvik gains one Karma Point. Sharvik gains an additional point for every circle an adept has attained.

Sharvik can not escape this room yet, he needs to accumulate 30 Karma Points to break free. Because of this, he tends to avoid using karma. Of course, he is intelligent, and if it looks like he is loosing, he will start to use what few karma points he has left to try and survive.

If the heroes are starting to loose, all they have to do is run from the room and the Horror will be unable to catch them. They can then use the Oracle

Font at 11 to heal themselves, and attack again.

20) *As your light illuminates the walls of the corridor, you can see strange writings engraved into the stone.*

The writing is in trollish and reads "You are entering the Burial Vault of King Runvir the Beneficent. Pay Respects to a Great Troll and a Great King."

21) *You enter the burial vault of the King. The chamber is huge, with eight pillars reaching to the ceiling with skeletal remains chained to them. There are three stone caskets, and though all are ornately carved, there is no doubt as to which holds the remains of the King. By each casket is a tapestry depicting the a man in the prime of life. Two are dressed in the embroidered robes of mages, but the center one is that of a troll in armor, mounted on a rearing warhorse. It must be the King.*

By the King's casket is an armor rack holding troll sized chain mail, and a trollsword (+2 extra steps of damage since it was forged by a Weaponsmith). Both seem to be in perfect condition.

In one corner of the room are ceramic jars sealed with wax (food and seeds, all of which have gone bad centuries ago). There are bones of horses still laid out in the center of the vault. Furniture is set up, along with games of chance, and books. There is a small box at the foot of the king's casket that holds 5 sticks of incense (if the incense is used to help meditate during a Karma Ritual, the adept will be able to receive twice as many Karma Points, though he will still have to pay the full cost in Legend Points).

There are a few statues and paintings, but the statues look to heavy to move, and the paintings are all old and peeling. There is a chest in front of the casket of the King that holds a gold bracelet worth 150 silvers, a gold ring shaped like a lion's head worth 130 silvers, and a gold neckchain worth 100 silvers.

Lastly, a locked chest (target of 8 to open) in the south-west corner of the room holds 1500 sp, 300 gp, a golden ring with a sapphire worth 500 sp, a small bag with 2 700 sp emeralds, and a ruby pendent worth 1000 sp.

You open the casket of the king, and shine your light inside. You hold your breath in wonder when you see the mummified body of the troll king. Around its neck, suspended on a silvery chain, is a two inch pearl that you realize must be the Stone of Wisdom.

TROUBLESHOOTING

There are two things that can go wrong. The heroes could get killed by the Horror or his minions, or they could retreat without the Stone of Wisdom. If it looks like the Horror is going to kill them all, Garlen can speak to them in their heads, telling them to retreat from the chamber and find the Oracle Font which can be used to heal them. She will tell them that she has the Horror trapped within the throne room and that he can not escape.

If they decide to leave without the Stone of Wisdom, remind them of the Blood Promise, and how unhealthy it would be to have a powerful wizard angry at them.

FIREBIRDS. VERY PRETTY

OVERVIEW

This encounter takes place after the heroes leave the tomb and head back down the Twilight Peaks to return to Kratas. As they head down the slopes near Death's Sea, a family of Fire Eagles assaults them.

SETTING THE STAGE

As you make the slow trip down the lower reaches of Twilight Peaks, you feel the stifling heat rising off Death's Sea. Your quest is half over, now all that remains is to return to Kratas and complete your deal.

You wipe the sweat from your brows when you catch a bit of movement from the corner of your eye. Suddenly, an ear-piercing scream breaks the silence.

BEHIND THE SCENES

The heroes have attracted the attention of a flock of six fire eagles that have been roosting in the mountains nearby. They dive down out of the sky to attack the characters using swooping attacks. Once four have been rendered unconscious or dead, the rest will flee. This encounter serves to remind the heroes of the dangers involved with travelling this close to Death's Sea.

6 FIRE EAGLES

Attributes

DEX: 11/D10+D8

STR: 5/D8

TOU: 4/D6

PER: 5/D8

WIL: 5/D8

CHA: 6/D10

Initiative: 11/D10+D8

Physical Defense: 6

Number of Attacks: 3

Spell Defense: 8

Attack: 8/2D6

Social Defense: 8

Damage: Claws (x2): 6/D10

Beak: 5/D8

Number of Spells: 1

Armor: NA

Spellcasting: 6/D10

Mystic Armor: 2

Effect: 8/2D6 (fire tail)

Knockdown: 7/D12

Recovery Tests: 2

Death Rating: 30

Wound Threshold: 7

Combat Move: 110/50

Unconsciousness Rating: 21

Full Move: 220

Legend Points: 85

Equipment: None

Loot: Fire eagle eggs, fire eagle feathers

Commentary:

See page 59 of The Barsaive Gamemaster Book in FASA's Barsaive Campaign Boxes Set.

TROUBLESHOOTING

The only thing that can go wrong is if the fire eagle wipe out the characters. This is highly unlikely unless the heroes are in terrible shape when they leave the tomb. If this is the

case, reduce the number of fire eagles, or skip this encounter altogether.

HOME AGAIN. HOME AGAIN

OVERVIEW

In this encounter the heroes make their way through the gates of Kratas. Once through the gates, they will be detained by agents of Bocher's Brood claiming to be agents of Jorgin the Mage. They will claim that Jorgin has been detained with other business, and has sent them for the item.

SETTING THE STAGE

It has been a long couple of weeks, trekking through the plains and woodlands of Barsaive, sleeping in the great outdoors, and bathing in whatever streams you could find.

Now, your muscles ache, your clothes are dirty and torn, and you would kill, well maybe not kill, but certainly maim, for a nice, cool ale. Finally, you approach the gates to Kratas and the end of your long quest.

As you pass through the gates, the few guards there are, if you can call them that, look you all over. One steps forwards with a smile on his face and says, "Welcome to Kratas. The entry fee is five silvers each."

You look them over, but decide against forcing your way through. All it would do is invite retaliation later during your stay in the city of thieves. You reluctantly pay the toll and continue past the gates.

Suddenly, a dwarf comes hurrying your way. He stops about ten feet away and looks you all over. A smile breaks out across his face and he steps towards you, sticking out his right hand.

"Greetings, my friends. I am Thygold Doriksin, secretary to Jorgin the Mage. I am glad to see that you have returned safely to Kratas. I hope your mission went well?"

Thygold will listen to whatever the heroes have to say and then continue talking, "Jorgin has been called away on urgent business and I have been watching the southern gate for about a week now, hoping to catch you upon entering. I was instructed to take charge of the item, and see to your payment. May I see it please?"

BEHIND THE SCENES

Thygold is working for the blood elf Vistosh and Brocher's Brood. He has been watching the gates for about a week, that much of his story is true, but the rest is total fiction. He is not sure what he is supposed to intercept, but he is an excellent actor, besides being a Fourth Circle Thief Adept. He will do his best to try and talk the heroes out of the item, claiming that he will meet them with the rest of their reward at The Raven.

Thygold will need a Good Success on his Acting Test, with the target being the highest Social Defense of the characters. If successful, explain to the players that the dwarf is trustworthy, and his offer is valid. If it is an Average Success, explain that his story sounds good, but it is a little suspicious. If he fails his Acting Test, the heroes will see through his plan.

If the heroes seem unwilling to hand over the Stone of Wisdom, Thygold will motion for his ruffians to attack, backing away from the conflict. On the second round, he will use his Silent Walk to get behind some one and use his Surprise Strike.

THYGOLD - FOURTH CIRCLE DWARVEN THIEF

Racial Abilities: Heat Sight (up to 250 yards)

Attributes

DEX: 16: 7/D12 **STR:** 13: 6/D10 **TOU:** 13: 6/D10
PER: 14: 6/D10 **WIL:** 11: 5/D8 **CHA:** 16: 7/D12

Initiative: 7/D12	Physical Defense: 9
Number of Attacks: 1	Spell Defense: 8
Attack: 11/D10+D8	Social Defense: 9
Damage: 10/D10+D6	
Surprise: 17/D20+D10	
Number of Spells: NA	Armor: 2
Spellcasting: NA	Mystic Armor: 2
Effect: NA	Knockdown: 6/D10
	Recovery Tests: 2

Death Rating: 55

Wound Threshold: 9

Combat Move: 33

Unconsciousness Rating: 43

Full Move: 65

Karma Pool: 12

Karma Dice: D6

Legend Points: 140

Equipment: Padded cloth armor, shortsword, 2 daggers

Loot: 250 silvers, a gold ring (worth 45 silvers)

Talents: Avoid Blow 3: 10/D10+D6*, Climbing 4: 11/D10+D8, Durability 4, Fence 4: 11/D10+D8*, Karma Ritual 2, Lock Pick 3: 10/D10+D6*, Lock Sense 3: 9/D8+D6*, Melee Weapons 4: 11/D10+D8, Picking Pockets 5: 12/2D10, Silent Walk 4: 11/D10+D8*, Surprise Strike 4: 11/D10+D8**, Thread Weaving 2: 8/2D6, Trap Initiative 2: 9/D8+D6*

*Can spend Karma **Can spend additional Karma

Skills: Acting 4: 11/D10+D8, Legends and Heroes 2: 8/2D6, Streetwise 3: 9/D8+D6

5 RUFFIANS

Racial Abilities: Versatility Talent

Attributes

DEX: 13: 6/D10 **STR:** 13: 6/D10 **TOU:** 13: 6/D10
PER: 9: 4/D6 **WIL:** 10: 5/D8 **CHA:** 10: 5/D8

Initiative: 6/D10	Physical Defense: 7
Number of Attacks: 1	Spell Defense: 6
Attack: 9/D8+D6	Social Defense: 6
Damage:	
Fist 6/D10	
Club 9/D8+D6	

Short Sword 10/D10+D6

Number of Spells: NA Armor: 2

Spellcasting: NA Mystic Armor: 0

Effect: NA Knockdown: 6/D10

Recovery Tests: 2

Death Rating: 35

Wound Threshold: 9

Combat Move: 30

Unconsciousness Rating: 27

Full Move: 60

Legend Points: 60 each

Equipment: Short sword, club, dagger, leather armor

Loot: 1D6 x 10 silvers

Skills: Melee Weapons 3: 9/D8+D6, Streetwise 2: 6/D10,
Unarmed Combat 3: 9/D8+D6

Commentary:

The ruffians will retreat as soon as they take two wounds. Thygold will retreat if he takes a single wound. He is a con man, not a fighter. Once the ruffians have been run off, the heroes can continue to The Raven.

TROUBLESHOOTING

If Thygold ends up with the Stone of Wisdom, things have gone wrong. If it looks like this will happen, the heroes will be in trouble. They should have a week or so before the Blood Promise is broken, and they will have to recover the Stone before the time runs out. This will be an adventure all to itself.

If the situation develops into a fight, and the heroes look like they are about to lose, some of Garlthik's gang can intercede and run them off.

BACK AT THE RAVEN

OVERVIEW

This is where the heroes will find Jorgin, give him the Stone of Wisdom, and receive the last of their pay. He will agree to take whatever magic item they want researched. He will get in touch with them in two weeks.

SETTING THE STAGE

You finally manage to make it to The Raven. As you step through the door, you are still tense, waiting for some last minute ambush. Looking around the common room, you spot the familiar faces of Harris, the bartender, and Klevis, the innkeeper. Finally, you spot Jorgin sitting at a corner table, watching the door. He sees you, and waves you over. As you near the table, you see he has a pitcher of ale waiting.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Jorgin will ask if the mission was successful. He will then ask to examine the Stone of Wisdom. He will examine it astrally, and nod his head that all is well. He will then look up to the heroes and say, "You have completed your end of the bargain. I hope that all went well. I have the remainder

of your payment." With that, he reaches into his robes and takes out a large pouch. He shoves it across the table. "If you have an item you would like to have researched, I will take it now. I will meet you here one last time, two weeks from tonight to complete my end of the deal. As for now, relax and enjoy yourselves. Your reputations are well deserved."

Jorgin will pay an additional 100 silvers for each bird's worth of fire eagle feathers. It will seem as though now that he has the Stone of Wisdom, that he is in a hurry to be going, but he is still bound by the Blood Promise, so the heroes should be fairly sure he will return with whatever they give him to be researched. The heroes will find that he has paid for their meals that evening, and for three rooms for the next two weeks.

About now, the heroes should start to relax and enjoy the satisfaction of a job well done.

TROUBLESHOOTING

The only thing that can go wrong here is if the characters decide not to give Jorgin the Stone of Wisdom. This would be a mistake. The character who made the Blood Promise will be breaking his oath, and will take the damage and the runic scars. And Jorgin is not a wizard to be trifled with. He is an Eighth Circle Adept, and will be very angry. He will remind the heroes of the Blood Promise, and will remind them of the fact that he is an Eighth Circle Wizard. If they still refuse to turn over the Stone of Wisdom, Jorgin will get up and leave. Klevis will not allow them to stay at The Raven, since he doesn't want Jorgin upset with him, and word will quickly spread through Kratas of the heroes' treachery.

Jorgin will get even at a later date, when the heroes are off guard. Lastly, you will get to skip the final encounter.

MEETING THE RICH AND FAMOUS

OVERVIEW

This is when Jorgin returns with the magical item he has researched. It is also when personal thanks are given by Garthik One-Eye, ruler of Kratas.

SETTING THE STAGE

You sit relaxing at The Raven. It has been a good two weeks. Two weeks of peace and quiet. Of drinking the best ale and enjoying good food and good company. The barmaid smiles as she brings you another round of ales. Tales of your exploits have made their way around town, and you are enjoying the small amount of fame you have earned.

Tonight, you meet with Jorgin one last time. He will return your magical item, and tell you what he was able to learn. Finally, your quest will come to a close.

The door opens and you spot Jorgin entering, his embroidered robes flowing in the breeze. He spots you and heads over to your table. Pulling up a chair, he sits down and smiles.

"Greetings, my friends. Let us first take care of business."

BEHIND THE SCENES

Jorgin will first return the magic item, and tell of two thread ranks. He will include the Key Knowledges. Once this is done, he will have completed his promise, and the damage from the Blood Promise can now be healed.

He will then tell the heroes that there is one other person who would like to give his personal thanks. With that, an ancient ork will step from the shadows. The ork only has one eye, the other is covered by an beautifully embroidered patch. A female windling with dark hair and black wings hovers by his shoulder. The ancient ork looks the heroes over with his one good eye, and then speaks.

"Well met, brave heroes. I am Garthik One-Eye, magistrate of this city. I came here to meet the bold adventurers that have served me and my city so well. You may never know what a great deed you have accomplished, but you have my gratitude. If you are ever in trouble and in need of aid, remember that you are welcome here in Kratas, and I will do my best to give you what aid I can." With that, before any of you can utter a single word, the old ork steps back into the shadows and disappears. When you look around, Jorgin has vanished, too.

TROUBLESHOOTING

The only thing that can spoil this final encounter is if the heroes actually try to attack Garthik One-Eye. This would be a major mistake. Garthik One-Eye will disappear into the shadows, using the tenth circle thief ability of Shadowcloak. The windling hovering near his shoulder is Terricia, a female windling assassin. She will leave with Garthik, but may return at a later date to take vengeance.

The heroes' biggest worry will be Jorgin. He will attack the characters with the best of his abilities, retreating if things look especially grim. Do not feel bad if Jorgin kills of a character or two, so be it. If they were crazy enough to attack a legendary hero, they deserve what they get.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

JORGIN TORVIN

Racial Abilities: Versatility

Attributes

DEX: 14: 6/D10 **STR:** 10: 5/D8 **TOU:** 11: 5/D8
PER: 19: 8/2D6 **WIL:** 19: 8/2D6 **CHA:** 14: 6/D10

Initiative: 6/D10

Number of Attacks: 1

Attack: 11/D10+D8

Damage: 9/D8+D6

Number of Spells: 1

Spellcasting: 17 (19/D20+2D6)

Effect: As per spell

Physical Defense: 8

Spell Defense: 10

Social Defense: 8

Armor: 2 (5)

Mystic Armor: 3 (6)

Knockdown: 5/D8

Recovery Tests: 2

Death Rating: 64

Wound Threshold: 8

Unconsciousness Rating: 48

Combat Move: 33

Full Move: 65

Legend Points: 1900

Equipment: Staff of Agrikal

Loot: 2D10 x 10 silvers, a gold ring worth 250 silvers

Talents: Arcane Mutterings 5: 11/D10+D8***, Astral Sight 8: 16/D20+D8**, Book Memory 8: 16/D20+D8**, Book Recall 5: 13/D12+D10*, Durability 8, Enhanced Matrix 8, Enhanced Matrix 4, Evidence Analysis 7: 15/D20+D6*, Hold Thread 8: 16/D20+D8*, Item History 7: 15/D20+D6, Karma Ritual 6, Lip Reading 4: 12/2D10**, Melee Weapons 5: 11/D10+D8, Read/Write Lang 7: 15/D20+D6*, Read/Write Magic 8: 16/D20+D8*, Resist Taunt 4: 12/2D10, Speak Language 5: 13/D12+D10**, Spell Casting 9: 17/D20+D10*, Spell Matrix 8, Spell Matrix 8, Spell Matrix 5, Thread Weaving (Wizardry) 8: 16/D20+D8*, Versatility 3, Willforce 8

*Can use Karma **Must use Karma ***Can use additional Karma

Skills: Alchemy and Potions 5: 13/D12+D10, Barsaive History 4: 12/2D10, History of the Scourge 4: 12/2D10, Legends and Heroes 4: 12/2D10, Research 5: 13/D12+D10, Streetwise 3: 11/D10+D8

Spells In Matrices:

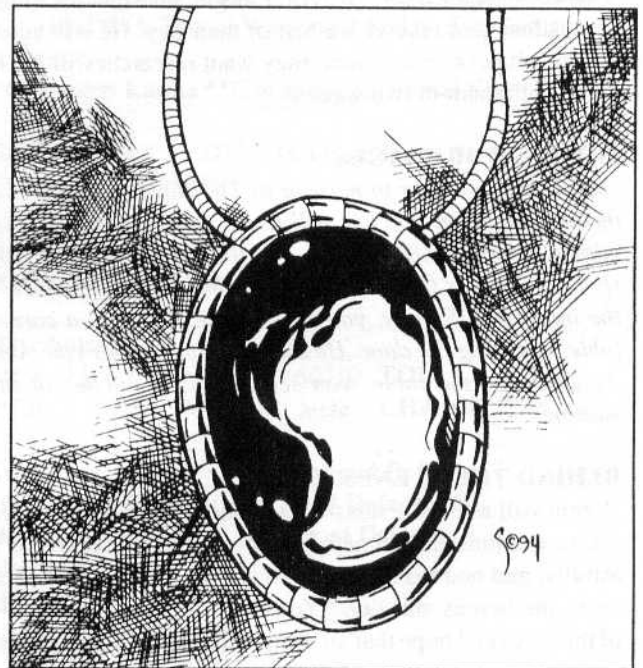
Mage Armor, Mind Dagger, Razor Orb

Spells in Enhanced Matrices:

Crushing Will, Dispel Magic

Commentary:

Jorgin has served as one of Garthik One-Eye's advisors for over 2 decades. He admires what Garthik has managed to do for Kratas, and is fiercely loyal to his friend. Jorgin is a brilliant researcher and has access to a complete library of tomes gathered from the ruins of Kratas and years of adventuring.



Though he normally has more peaceful spells in his matrices, he is a cautious man who makes sure that he is well prepared for dangerous meets.

TREASURES

STONE OF WISDOM

Location: The Stone of Wisdom is located around the neck of the mummified remains of King Runvir in room 21 of the tomb. It is a beautiful pearl about 2" in diameter suspended on a silvery chain.

Maximum Threads: 1

Spell Defense: 12

The Stone of Wisdom was used by the troll king Runvir of Ustrect to build and rule his kingdom wisely. It was entombed with him when he died.

Rank 1 **Cost: 200**

Key Knowledge: The name of the pearl, it is the Stone of Wisdom.

Effect: The stone grants +1 on all PER Tests.

Rank 2 **Cost: 300**

Key Knowledge: Who was the last wielder of the stone. The last wielder was King Runvir.

Effect: Add +1 to the wielder's Social Defense.

Rank 3 **Cost: 500**

Key Knowledge: Who gave the stone to Runvir. It was a wedding present from his wife Ariana.

Effect: The stone increases the wielder's Spell Defense by +1, and the Social Defense by +2.

Rank 4 **Cost: 800**

Key Knowledge: Where did the pearl come from. It came from the Aras Sea near Urupa.

Effect: The stone adds +2 to PER Tests, and any attempt to manipulate the wielder now needs a greater success level. Instead of needing an Average Success, a Good Success is needed. If the level of success normally needed is a Good Success, now and Excellent Success is needed.

Rank 5 **Cost: 1300**

Key Knowledge: Who was the stone originally enchanted as enchanted by the obsidian wizard Ulthir.

Effect: The wielder's Social Defense is now increased by +3, and the Spell Defense is increased by +2.

THE STAFF OF AGRIKAL

Location: The staff is wielded by Jorgin Tovar, advisor to Garthik One-Eye. It is a natural wooden staff that twists around itself.

Maximum Threads: 2

Spell Defense: 11

Rank 1 **Costs: 200**

Key Knowledge: One must learn that this is the Staff of Agrikal.

Effect: The staff now does +4 damage steps.

Rank 2 **Cost: 300**

Key Knowledge: One must learn what type of adept Agrikal was. Agrikal was a Nethermancer Adept.

Effect: The staff adds +2 Physical Armor.

Rank 3 **Cost: 500**

Effect: The staff adds +2 Mystic Armor

Rank 4 **Cost: 800**

Key Knowledge: Where was the wood of the staff taken from. It was taken from the Servos Jungle.

Effect: Physical Armor and Mystic Armor increases to +3.

Rank 5 **Cost: 1300**

Effect: The staff adds +2 to the wielder's Spellcasting Step.

THE SWORD "RAZORCLAW"

Location: The sword is located inside the Tomb of Runvir (room 8). Razorclaw is a beautifully crafted broadsword with an exceptionally keen edge. The crossguards on the hilt are shaped like eagle talons, and there is writing etched down the blade (the writing is in elven and says, "Razorclaw"). The mark of an abstract G rune is stamped into the pommel. The broadsword was forged by a Weaponsmith Adept and normally does +8 steps of damage.

Maximum Threads: 2

Spell Defense: 12

Rank 1 **Cost: 100**

Key Knowledge: What is the name of the blade. It is written in elven down the length of the blade.

Effect: The sword adds +1 to the wielder's Physical Defense.

Rank 2 **Cost: 200**

Key Knowledge: Who crafted the blade. The blade was crafted by the elven Weaponsmith G'Thir of Evesgird.

Effect: The sword does an additional +2 damage steps, raising its damage step to +10.

Rank 3 **Cost: 300**

Key Knowledge: Who was the blade last wielded by. It was wielded by Dorthial, questor to Garlen.

Effect: The sword now gives the wielder +2 to his Physical Armor.

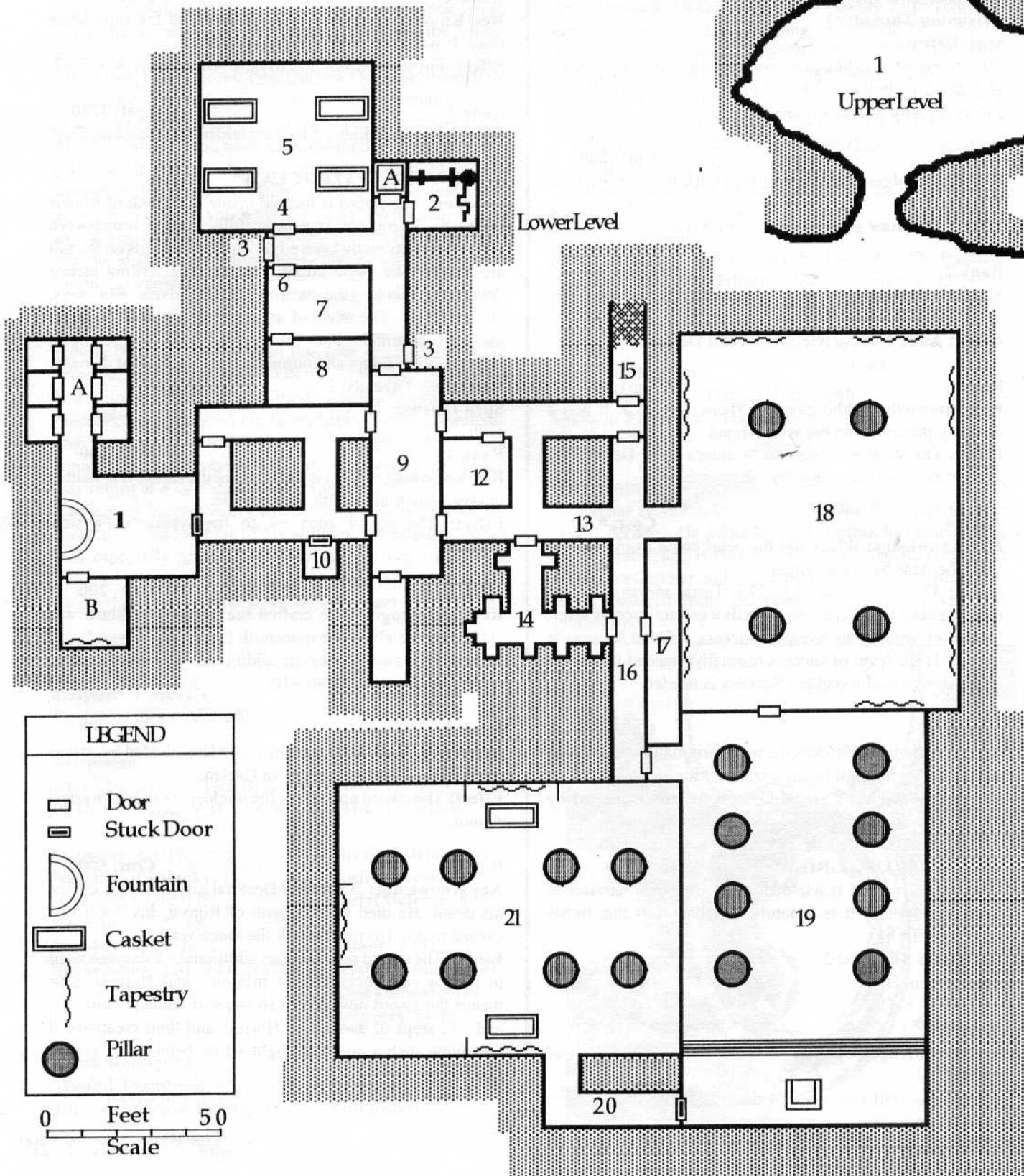
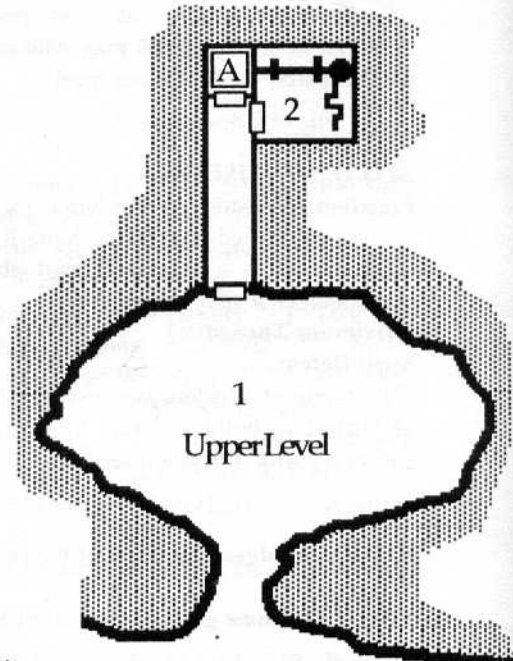
Rank 4 **Cost: 500**

Key Knowledge: Where did Dorthial die, and what caused his death. He died in the Tomb of Runvir, his death was caused by the Horror Sharvik the Deceiver.







Effect: The sword now does an additional +2 damage steps to Horror constructs, Horror minions, and Horrors. This means the sword now does +10 steps of damage normally, and +12 steps of damage to Horrors and their creations. It will glow with a soft blue light while being used against these enemies.

-- David Caraley --

THE TOMB OF KING GRUNVIR



LEGEND

-  Door
-  Stuck Door
-  Fountain
-  Casket
-  Tapestry
-  Pillar

0 Feet 50
Scale

SERVALEN

From the accounts of Tarliman Joppo:

Located on the shore of Lake Pyros, Servalen is a bustling, brawling community of some 7,500 Name-givers at best estimate. There being no central tax rolls, and what with the scorchers varying the number of troops in town with no warning, determining population is difficult. Many of the people in Servalen are transients, ork scorchers and riverboat crews on liberty, mercenaries waiting to be hired, explorers staging for expeditions into the jungle, and merchants from Urupa, Ardatha and further working out deals with local traders.

Servalen is a village that outgrew itself, whose government did not anticipate the popularity that their location would bring. Being set on the shore of Lake Pyros brings a good deal of trade to the city, although not as much as in safer regions. Having a dangerous jungle at their doorsteps (and frequently creeping in as well) brought the villagers to believe that few would come.

Instead, the dangers of pirates on the lake, poisonous animals and savages in the jungle, and the Thunder Mountains to the south brought a good number of Name-givers. The sort it brought, though, were not what the villagers would have preferred. In a few short years after the village's founding, bars and military equipment shops outnumbered what the original villagers considered more legitimate businesses. Although the situation is not as bad as in Kratas, the disreputable element certainly has the upper hand.

Center Shantaya's Sextant on Throal, and align point U on Parlainth. Sight along point daeth. Follow Thystonius midnight. Servalen lies 10 days ride, 16 days walk from Throal.

ABOUT THE LAYOUT OF THE CITY

Servalen is loosely organized into the Docks, the Market, the Bilge and the Hill. The outlying farms are close by, and indeed the boundaries between city and farmland are vague.

The Docks include the piers and the region immediately surrounding them. Bars and flophouses are prevalent in this district, as are warehouses and the offices of the traders who make their living from the riverboat traffic. This is a dangerous area during the day. At night, travellers should move in groups of no less than five, keep a hand on a weapon and know the location of the nearest questor of Garlen.

Kitavik Hechen, Peaceforcer. A lithe, graceful human in her late forties, Kitavik is an accomplished swordmaster, having attained the ninth circle. She and her partner, Lassiminde Downspinner, an Elven warrior of grim and silent demeanor, have patrolled the Docks for the last seven years. Kitavik is determined to keep the rot from spreading, and if some of her prisoners find their trip to the magistrate cut short by

a stroll off the end of a pier, well, that's one less prisoner to be sold off to the pits. Her enforcement of the law tends to be harsh and quick, more tempered by justice than mercy. Lassiminde being a Questor of Mynbruje, he tends to back up her decisions more often than he argues with them. The two are known locally as Ice and Stone. More than one attempt to do away with them has ended with the would-be assassins swinging from a rope, or being fished out of the river downstream. Of note, most of the law-abiding citizens of the Docks get along with the pair quite well, and are normally happy to see them. Recently, Kitavik has adopted a human child orphaned by robbers, and is training the boy in the ways of her Discipline. Rumor has it that she is thinking of retiring from the Peaceforcers as soon as her replacement is ready.

The Market is a random collection of shops, stalls, pushcarts and blankets spread with goods that extends inland and north from the Docks. Here the merchandise that comes off the river is sold, and local products are bought for shipment elsewhere. The smoke of the smithies, the stench of the beast-sellers and the tanners and the butchers, and the noise of hundreds of people all hawking their wares is enough to produce headaches. There is neither rhyme nor reason in the arrangement of the shops or the streets, and indeed in some areas the traffic lanes will shift and change according to where the mobile vendors have set up for the day.

Litallo Mosvendar, spice merchant. Owner of one of the more prestigious shops in the Market, built of stone with magical protections against thieves (and a very large dog with a taste for live meals), Litallo makes his home on the Hill. He deals in large quantities of spices both native and imported, supplying the city's larger kitchens and food preparation industries, such as the smokehouses and the butchers. His shop caters to the wealthier clientele, carrying smaller quantities of staples and exotics. His daughter, Salira, is a budding socialite given to lawn parties at the Mosvendar residence. Invitations to these parties are capriciously given, sometimes on the spur of the moment should Salira encounter an out of town bard or other promising entertainment. Her parents put up with a great deal, making exceptions for her occasional bouts of wild behavior and telling themselves that if they could only re-establish themselves in a better location, closer to Throal, that she would not be so bored and would settle down. In the meantime, Litallo maintains an even temper and goes on with his business. He dresses conservatively, by Elven standards, and has an open, honest face, if a bit careworn.

Mosta Verdeen, elementalist for hire. Mosta is a round, enthusiastic dwarven woman with a terrific gusto for life. She dresses in brilliant colors and lots of sparkly jewelry, laughs loudly and enjoys her work. Her shop in the Market is crammed full of trinkets, magical novelties, potions and

just plain junk, making it difficult for anyone larger than her to maneuver. Mosta does a thriving business in cold chests, boxes with elemental air and water woven into them to chill anything placed inside. She also sells a lot of charms and magical weapons to mercenaries and scorchers, as well as providing basic household items such as firelighters to the general populace. Mosta serves as the hub of Servalen's tiny spellweaver community, holding frequent gatherings at her house up on the Hill where far too much food and drink is served and the guests spend the evening gossiping, trading magical techniques and generally enjoying themselves. Travelling magickers are invited if Mosta knows that they are in town.

The Bilge extends south from the Docks, and inland a little ways. More bars, more flophouses, houses of ill repute, gaming parlors, and all the services a pirate or scorcher seeks on liberty are here. Illicit goods are traded in the street. Weapons and the skill and nerve to use them are mandatory. The city fathers would love to see a good fire rage through this district, but fear the repercussions if such a thing were to happen.

Jacor Rosten, proprietor, Grinning Skull. Better known as Three-Finger Rosten, Jacor owns and bartends one of the more popular watering holes for free lances. This is definitely the place to hire mercenaries who will not ask embarrassing questions. Be prepared to buy several rounds, as tradition dictates that the prospective employer provide the refreshments during negotiations. Three-Finger is a human swordmaster who lost part of his dominant hand to a Theran in a border conflict. He still wears his old uniform tunic, and boasts loudly that he still fits into it well, which he actually does. He despises Therans far beyond the usual Barsaivian distaste, and will gladly help out with contacts and connections any effort that is likely to harm the Empire. The Skull is a typical Bilge bar, wooden walls and dry-leaf roof, with trophies of past campaigns strewn liberally about for decoration. Strong drinks of average to poor quality are all that are available. There are private rooms available for interviewing, at a cost of four silver per hour.

Diktain Shieldeater, pitmaster at Three Arrows. A massive ork retired from the Red Fangs tribe, Diktain runs the fighting pit that is the primary attraction at Three Arrows. He arranges the fights in cooperation with the betmaster, oversees the animal handlers and the guards for the prisoners, and announces the fights. On occasion, he breaks up trouble in or around the pit. Diktain takes no guff and gives no slack. His name comes from an incident during his fighting years, when a Theran locked blades with him, and the two stood glaring at each other, shield to shield, both straining for an advantage. Diktain leaned to one side, and took a bite out of the Theran's shield. The move cost him a broken tusk, but it so unnerved the Theran that he dropped his guard. Diktain still has both the shield and the head of the Theran, both mounted on the wall in his office. The tusk he had capped with gold. Off duty, he can be found either in his office doing the paperwork, or out front, drinking with other scorchers. What he does not know about the trade in animals and prisoners could be writ large on a windling's

toenail with room left over.

G'vork Haultimber, enforcer for the Bilge Taverners Guild. A former crystal raider who got his name from his habit of carrying a tree as a club, G'vork has the swamp-end of the Bilge in his charge. His job is to collect the Guild dues from each tavern and bar, ensure that the proprietor is buying his supplies from approved sources, and act as a watchman for the area. If a Guild tavern gets into trouble that its own bouncers can't handle, G'vork and his dozen or so underlings can be summoned to deal with the problem. This prevents bar fights from damaging business, at the expense of damaging a few customers. G'vork knows personally every bartender, bar owner, ale cart driver, bouncer, butcher's delivery boy and hostel operator in his district. He recognizes on sight all regular customers and streetwalkers, as well as anyone who has ever made enough trouble to require his attention (and survived). The green tunic he favors, with the Taverners Guild emblem on the sleeves and over the right breast like a badge, makes him very easy to spot.

The Hill is a long, narrow rise of land extending from the north of the Market inland to the north and west. Most of the citizens who do not work in the Bilge or at the Docks have their residences here, above some of the smoke and noise and stench. There are also a few passable inns here, including one or two with Guild marks -- although the traveller would do well to question the validity of those marks.

Beyond the Bilge is swamp, jungle and shoreline. There is very little room to expand further outward, away from the city, thus the Bilge has begun to expand into the Market. Beyond the Market is farmland, and of course the Hill. The residents of the Hill keep a fearful eye on the border between the Market and the Bilge. They do not like to see their buffer zone diminishing, and the rot growing closer.

ABOUT THE APPEARANCE OF THE CITY

Servalen has no fire laws, or at least none that are enforced. Buildings are thrown together out of whatever is at hand, mostly wood. Unfortunately, stone would be a better choice throughout most of the area, due to the proximity of the jungle. Termites and wood-boring beetles find the city a feast, wood that does not resist their presence. The continual dampness encourages rot. The wooden structures fight a constant battle to keep from crumbling or collapsing outright.

In the Bilge, stone is simply out of the question. The ground is soft, almost marshy at the southern end. Land subsidence precludes the use of heavy building materials. While tile or thatch is a preferred roofing material elsewhere, in the Bilge the large green leaves of the jungle trees, some as large as a troll's shield, are often used. While still green, these leaves provide good roofing, as they are resistant to catching fire from stray sparks, and shed rain like a duck. When dry, however, and this does take a long time in the humid climate, the leaves become no better than tinder for the first spark that happens along. Rain pelting down on the dry leaves makes a sound like gravel pouring onto metal.

Conversation is impossible inside a leaf-roofed building during a storm.

The Hill generally uses the frame and plaster technique common throughout Barsaive, and roofs with tile or thatch depending upon the owner's wealth. More houses are roofed with thatch, obviously, than with tile. Fire is not as much of a hazard here, due in part to well-trained fire brigades, and partly to the houses being set a little apart from each other whenever possible. Some of the larger structures, such as the homes of wealthier inhabitants and the inns, will have their first story made of stone, and any upper levels of wood and plaster. Creosote, a black, sticky tar obtained from the swamps south of town, is smeared liberally about the foundations of the buildings to ward off insects, usually for a foot up the walls and out along the ground. Some of the buildings will also have poured creosote on the ground before construction of the floor. These places will have a distinctive oily smell permeating the entire structure.

Most buildings will have large windows with metal bars across the openings. The reason for this somewhat odd arrangement becomes obvious if one considers the environment. A large opening is required to allow even the slightest breeze. On the other hand, with thieves abounding, the bars are also a necessity to protect the building from invasion. The gaps between the bars, alas, are too large to prevent small creatures and insects from entering. Most building owners cannot afford the fine wire mesh that the wealthier Hillers and merchants use to completely stop the outdoors from becoming the indoors.

ABOUT THE POPULACE

The original villagers were human, elven and windling, with a scattering of dwarves and few of other races. Once the village became a going concern, scorcher tribes returning from duty near Death's Sea and in the southern mountains began setting up hostels for their people, which meant orks taking up permanent residence to run the establishments. T'skrang also began to frequent the town as river trade picked up.

At the time of this writing, the population is largely human and ork, with some elves, many t'skrang in the Bilge and Docks regions, and a few members of other races. The windlings who have stayed seem to be adventuring and thieving clans who do not as a rule raise children in the city.

The populace is divided into two primary groups, the Dockers and the Hillers. The Dockers are all those who make their living in the Docks or the Bilge, and who, while they might like to see their lot improve, are not in favor of ridding the city of its unsavory element. The Hillers are largely those who live on the Hill, who would like to see the Bilge burn flat to the ground and the city return to being a quiet farming community. The two clash frequently, often violently. If something does not resolve the situation soon, the city may erupt into open warfare between the two groups.

ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT

Servalen is ostensibly governed by a council of nine elders,

as the kaer it came from was during the Scourge. These elders are chosen by the council from the residents of the city when there is an opening. The council makes laws, creates taxes, disposes of city revenues, and generally sees to the operation of the city. There is a court system, based on Throalic law, that answers to the council, with seven magistrates for the Hill and Market.

In reality, the council controls only the Hill and the outlying farmlands, and has some measure of control over the Market. The council's Peaceforcers, who have in their charge maintaining adherence to the law, act as a watch as well as providing bailiffs to the magistrates. They are overburdened with the Market and their attempts to create order on the Docks, and do not normally venture into the Bilge. The general attitude on the Hill is to let the Bilge sink into its own rot. With any luck, a riot will break out one night and by morning the Bilge will have removed itself from existence. If a Bilgerat kills another Bilgerat, well, that's one less rat in existence.

Thus, the extent of the law, its enforcement and interpretation is determined by the area of the city. Throalic law holds sway on the Hill, has a loose grip on the Market and the Docks, and may as well not exist in the Bilge.

CONCERNING BUSINESS IN SERVALEN

While the Market does not offer the variety of the Throalic Bazaar, it does have a good selection of smithwork, leather and cheap jewelry, and exotic spices. Nearly anything made of metal, especially items needed in war, is available. Prices tend to be higher than in Throal by some ten to thirty percent, partially due to the distance raw materials for ironmongery must travel.

T'skrang goods, including fish and river spices, are in plentiful supply. More exotic spices harvested from the jungle are also offered for sale. Some of these can be quite surprising to the palate. The traveller is advised to be wary of the tiny yellow peppers, usually sold dried or pickled but occasionally fresh. One of these requires an entire pitcher of ale to quench the flames. On the other hand, there is a pungent root that the farmers dig up in the jungle that is quite pleasing when ground fine and added to stews and grilled meats.

In the Bilge, many items are offered for sale, most of which are not legal, or at least frowned upon, under the Throalic code. Poisons and fell magicks can be found with a very few questions. The buyer of course assumes all risk, both for the possession of the item and for anything untoward that occurs in the process of making the deal. There are rumors that some of the houses of ill repute are involved in the slave trade with Thera, either as suppliers or customers, or as both.

The market closes for the early afternoon. Most natives retire indoors to spend the time in quiet pursuits, card games, catching up on the accounting, or sleeping. The market reopens shortly before the dinner hour, and most shops do not close until an hour past sundown.

Because of the humid climate, elementalists do a thriving business in cold chests and magically-produced ice. Some of the bars will keep their ale casks in cold chests. Chilled

drinks are quite popular, but bring a high price, up to three times what would normally be paid for the beverage.

ON LODGINGS

The traveller with either no care for his safety, or with sufficient force of arms, companions and reputation may find pallets or rooms on the Docks for a very minimal price. This price may rise sharply in the middle of the night, however, as the charge for the lodgings is renegotiated over the edge of a dagger. The Bilge has inns that offer rooms, but they are pest-ridden and plagued with thieves. Again, there are rumors of slavers, and of people who have gone upstairs to bed and gone out the back unconscious into the hands of the Therans.

The inns on the Hill are by far the safest choice. Two are worth mentioning. Barking Ligana has a brightly colored local lizard rampant with its mouth open upon its shingle. Its Guild mark has been recently renewed. Harl Jerren, the human proprietor, is a cautious sort, careful about who he lets his rooms to, and quick to call the Peaceforcers at the first sign of trouble. The food is good, if unimaginative, and worth the money. His stable is guarded by one of the largest trolls in the province, known only as Dicer, probably from his habits with the cutlass he carries - the blade is easily the length of a human's leg. There is no bathhouse at the time of this writing, as the piping to carry water from upriver had been damaged in a storm. The locks are sturdy, and so are the doors, and the windows all have bars over them that are easily released from inside but not from without. The ale is only passable, as it is made upriver and does not travel well.

Kygren's Roost. The shingle bears a nest with a large, ungainly water bird perched precariously over it. This seems somehow appropriate, as the inn is perched at the brow of the hill, looking out over the Market. The building has obviously been added to several times, by different builders, none of whom had more than passing relationship with Upandal. The floors are a tiny bit tilted in spots, some of the doors stick from being out of true, and travellers should know not to set their mugs on the mantel, as the mortar is not that solid. The proprietor is a great, grinning scarecrow of a human named Velden Budgden, who seems a bit askew himself. While he is an enthusiastic host, and can tell the traveller quite a bit about the city and its environs, his discourse is rambling and spotted with non sequiturs. His wife, Lutha, handles the kitchen, moving her vast bulk from counter to stove to cold-room to pantry with the grace and majesty of a galleon under full sail. She too is a cheerful sort, never without a smile and a fresh-baked pastry to offer. Velden's sons and daughters work in the common room, the bathhouse and the stables, and there are either a great many of them, or they move very quickly. The food is excellent, the ale potable although a bit thin, and there is even a musician on occasion. The entire place just seems a bit odd, something that is perhaps a combination of the architecture and Velden's rambling and his wife's constant cheer, and maybe something else. Whatever it is, Velden should consider applying for a Guild mark, as his inn is worthy of it.

CONCERNING ENTERTAINMENT

The chief entertainment on the Hill seems to be worrying about when the Bilge is going to expand large enough to swallow the rest of the city. There are few bards in the city, those that make their home here being folk who could not find a position anyplace else. Thus, the level of talent is generally poor.

Music in the Bilge tends to be river chanties and rude, boisterous soldier's songs, mostly dealing with conquests both martial and amorous. Little dancing is pursued. Some of the better houses of ill repute, if such a place can be said to be better, will bring in musicians from other cities to provide the relaxing strains that help their customers to spend more, or to not notice the drugs in their drink and the fingers in their purse. It does not do to be too good, however, as that distracts customers from the real business, whether that be in a house of ill repute or a bar. Servalen has very little to worry about in this regard.

The primary entertainment in the Bilge consists of drinking contests, fights in the streets and wagering on the same, gambling, and pit fighting. This last custom must certainly have been brought in from Thera, and like the other major Thera import, slavery, Barsaive would be better off without it. A pit is dug into the earth, usually with its sides made higher and steeper with wooden walls. Spectator benches are erected around three sides of the pit. Into the pit are cast two opponents. In Thera, these would be slaves, armed but not armored, and the fight would be to the death, with only the survivor allowed to climb out of the pit. Here, the opponents may be prisoners of war who are not considered worth ransoming (usually Therans of ignoble birth), criminals, or one or both may be animals. A popular combination is a condemned criminal and a blood monkey. Wagers are made before each bout, with betting continuing up until its resolution. Sometimes the victor is allowed to go free after the match, but this is unusual. It is more likely that those who have lost money on the fight will force the victor into another bout, hoping for his death, or that those who have won money will see a chance for further gain. Hurling objects into the pit to try and influence the fight will invariably result in a brawl in the benches, sometimes with the offender being thrown into the pit himself. This happens two or three times a night, depending upon the crowd and what they have consumed before arriving at the pit. Vendors of ale and grilled meats have their stalls by the entrance. The combined smell of unwashed bodies, sweat, blood, stale beer, smoke and death is enough to turn all but the strongest of stomachs. Sadly, the Peaceforcers have been unable to stop this barbaric practice.

In the Docks, nearly every bar has a game of some sort in the evenings. A few gambling parlors may be found, but these do not turn a brisk trade. Apparently the reputation of the Bilge overshadows whatever the Docks may have to offer. Most of the money that is spent on gambling goes to the Bilge.

There are no playhouses in Servalen.

CONCERNING NATURAL HAZARDS

What with the jungle being so close, an abundance of small and not-so-small animal life has crept over the boundaries and made its home in the city. Chief among these non-Name-giver residents are the mosquitos. These tiny insects feed on blood, draining too small an amount to be noticed, but the bite turns red, swells, and itches abominably for two or three days. Mosquitos travel in clouds of hundreds, and infest the city. Being swarmed by them is enough to harry the most experienced traveller. For some reason, though, they do not seem to bother orks. Perhaps there is something in the blood that they do not like; the cause is unknown. Many people would like to discover what it is. There are two plants that are useful in dealing with these pests, one whose sap repels the beasts and one whose sap relieves the itching. Local apothecaries will be able to supply these. The sap of both is pungent and sticky, considered by some people to be nearly as bad as the insects they ward off.

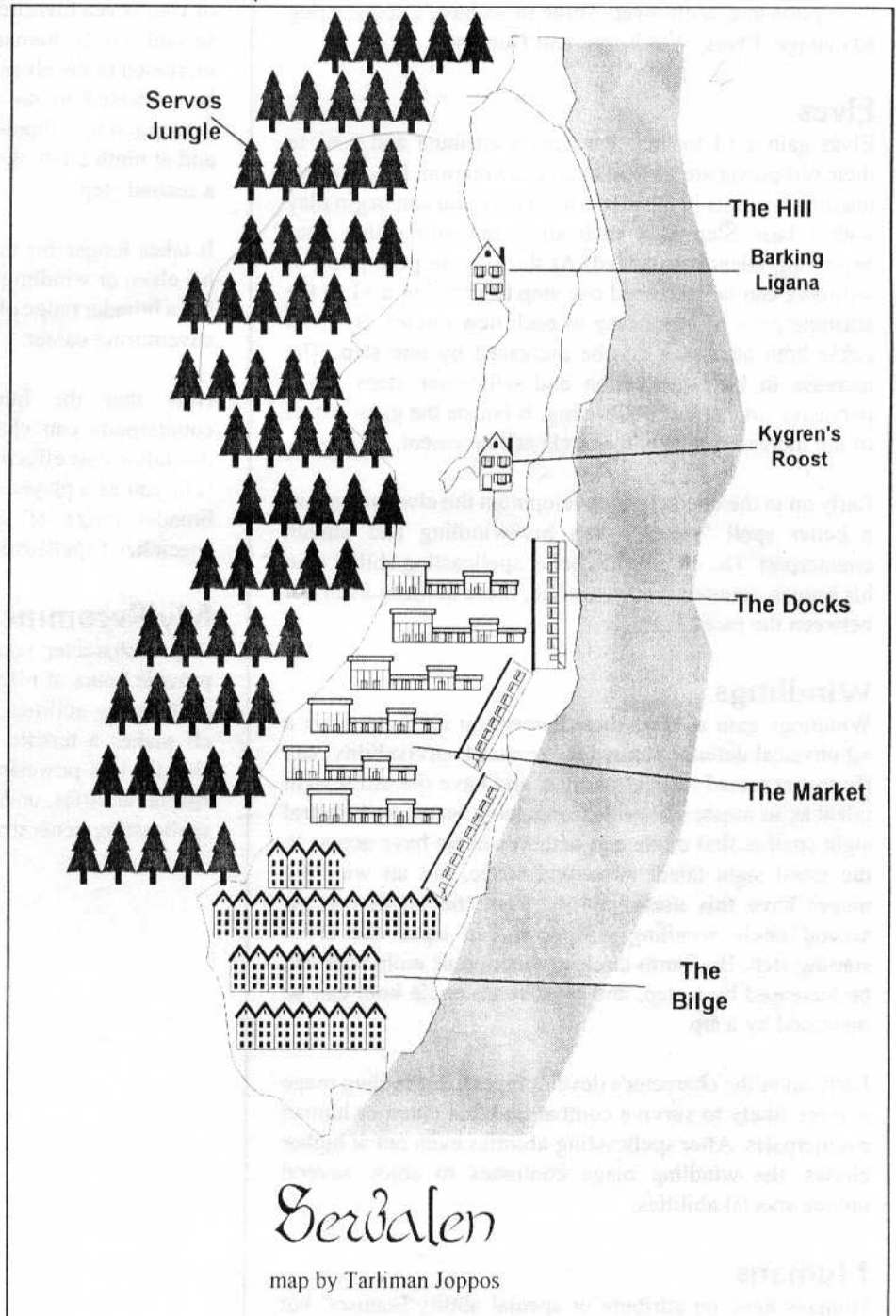
The city is also infested with tiny orange lizards known by the natives as spoogras. Growing to just under three inches in length, spoogras have a love of salt. This leads them into piles of dirt laundry, searching out old perspiration, into packs and rations looking for dried meats, and generally into places where they are not wanted. Their bite is annoying at worst, even to the smallest and frailest Name-giver, so dealing with them is simple enough - just toss them aside. Catching them is another matter entirely. Spoogras move like lightning. The fastest hands are sometimes eluded by these irritating creatures. Travellers should be certain to shake out their boots in the morning before putting them on, and should lock up their rations and other fragile gear in stout wooden or metal chests.

Venomous snakes occasionally crawl out of the jungle. Any shady or cool, damp area near the jungle should be approached with caution. Disturbing a sleeping reptile is a dangerous business. The bite of the larger serpents can generally be dealt with by applying a poultice, but beware of the tiny, brightly-colored snake known as the kyrell. Its bite can slay a troll in the space of three breaths. The kyrell's distinctive pattern of black bands separated by red and yellow stripes

should make it easier to avoid.

Spiders are a common sight in Servalen. The inhabitants maintain a cautious but friendly relationship with them. While some of these insects are venomous and can injure or even slay a Name-giver, they devour such a great number of other annoying insects that they tend to be left undisturbed to pursue their quarry. The egg sacs of non-venomous spiders are sought out and placed in safe locations in bars and shops, in the hopes that the spiderlings that hatch will remain in the structure to help free it of mosquitos and flies. The traveller should be aware of the attitude toward spiders, and ask before killing one.

-- Andrew Ragland --



CHARACTER CREATION OF EARTHDAWN SPELLCASTERS

I enjoy playing spellcasting characters in Earthdawn. Some of my observations on game mechanics and making the most of your starting resources follow.

Two attributes drive spellcasting talents in Earthdawn; Perception and Willpower. Three races have a spellcasting advantage; Elves, Windlings, and Humans.

Elves

Elves gain a +1 to their Perception attribute and a +1 to their Willpower attribute at character creation. If you invest maximum points in these two attributes you can begin play with a base Step 8 in each attribute, onto which your beginning talents are added. At third circle perception or willforce can be increased one step (by buying a +1 to the attribute prior to advancing to each new circle). By sixth circle both attributes can be increased by one step. The increase in base perception and willpower steps has a pervasive impact on spellcasting. It boosts the game effect of the increased talents for circle advancement.

Early on in the character's development the elven mage has a better spell "punch" than his windling and human counterpart. The elf also has better spellcasting ability than his human counterpart. Over time, these abilities even out between the races.

Windlings

Windlings gain a +1 to their Perception attribute, have a +2 physical defense bonus for increased survivability, can fly for increased tactical options, and have the astral sight talent as an innate ability. Wizards have access to the astral sight spell at first circle and nethermancers have access to the astral sight talent at second circle, but all windling mages have this useful ability from the beginning. At second circle windling willpower can equal the elven starting step. By fourth circle perception or willpower can be increased by a step, and by seventh circle both can be increased by a step.

Early on in the character's development the windling mage is more likely to survive combat than his elven or human counterparts. After spellcasting abilities even out at higher circles, the windling mage continues to enjoy several unique special abilities.

Humans

Humans have no attribute or special ability bonuses, but

they do have the versatility talent at first circle. When initially creating a human character you can take several thread weaving talents. This allows you to pick and choose favorite spells from different spellcasting disciplines at game start. For example, you might begin play with a mix of your seven favorite elementalism and wizardry spells. At second circle human perception or willpower can be increased to the elven starting step. By third circle both can be increased to the elven starting step. By sixth circle perception or willpower can be increased by a second step, and at ninth circle the other attribute can also be raised by a second step.

It takes longer for the human generalist to catch up with his elven or windling specialist counterpart, but the human has a broader range of spells to choose from during his early adventuring career.

Note that the human mage's elven and windling counterparts can choose to learn talents from a second discipline cost effectively at higher circles. The question is, "Do you as a player want less spellcasting ability across a broader range of spells early on, or more proficient specialized spellcasting early on?"

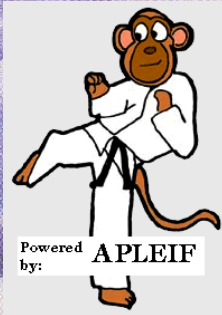
My Recommendation

Play a character you enjoy. Spellcasters of any race can provide hours of roleplaying fun. If you want to maximize spellcasting abilities, play an elf, windling, or human. The elf makes a terrific "pure" mage, the windling makes a slightly less powerful spellcaster but has some very nice special abilities, and the human mage makes a wonderful spellcasting generalist.

-- Drew Caldwell --

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