# ROADVENTURES Issue 5 Spring 1995



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The first three issues of RQA are all out of print in North America. Limited quantities may be available from foreign distributors. **RQA 4**, The Fall of Whitewall, is still available in limited quantities.

The **Best of RQA 1** is available in North America in limited quantities. This issue reprints the best material from the first 3 issues along with an all-new gazetteer of Jonstown.

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May Mother Krarsht devour the eternal soul of all who would steal!

ADVENTURE	ES
<b>FANZINE</b>	
The only publication dedic exploring the world of Glo through adventure!	rantha
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RQA is based on the fantasy world of <b>Glorantha™</b> , created I Stafford & the <b>RuneQuest</b> ™ role-playing game, developed Cha published by Avalon Hill. This is an <u>unofficial</u> <b>RuneQuest</b> ™pu	osium and







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# What's Happenin'

RQ Con 2 happened earlier this year in my home stomping grounds -- San Francisco! Not only were many of the RQ illuminaries present, but so were many RQA subscribers -- glad to meet all of you! Special thanks to the premiere RQ artist, Dan Barker, to whom I still owe a pint!

The most illuminating feature of the con for me was getting a chance to play in my first liveaction-role-playing game (LARP). David Hall and company put together an unbelievable effort in bringing How the West was One to life. My life has been changed -- I will never look at Glorantha the same way again. Thanks to everyone who helped put the con together.

Shawn Klimek is the artist for this issue, and many thanks to him for his wonderful art. Also thanks to David (Kube) for a last minute assist.



the Shelf

Greg Stafford has struck again in the world of Gloranthan fiction with The Fortunate Succession. Picking up where the Glorious ReAscent of Yelm left off, this is a gem of Dara Happan history. Available from:

Wizard's Attic P.O. Box 718 Hayward, CA 94543-0718 Phone: 1-800-213-1493

On The Shelf



Lords of Terror made it's debut at RuneQuest Con 2. It is a saddle-stitched 96 page booklet filled with lots-o-Gloranthan lore, specializing in chaotic baddies. Pulled together by RQA's own Stephen Martin, contains new material on the cults of Dorastor as well as reprinting parts of Cults of Terror. The cults featured in full write-ups are: Primal Chaos, Malia, Bagog, Thed, Krjalk, Porcharngo and Krarsht. Of special note are the updated Reminiscences of Paulis, which shed light on Dorastor during the Hero Wars. Stephen is now working on his own Dorastor supplement, The Book of Drastic Resolutions. He'll be publishing it on his own, and watch this space for more information as it is available.

Special Thanks to: Greg Stafford, Sandy Peterson, Ken Rolston and everyone at Chaosium & Avalon Hill

# **Mad Baron Voorstik**

Mad Baron Voorstik is an unofficial adventure for the **RuneQuest** role-playing game, and it is set in the world of **Glorantha**. The deluxe edition of the **RuneQuest** rules, available from Avalon Hill, is required to play this scenario.

#### Background

In the continuing power-struggles that are intrinsic to the cult of Thanatar, Greedo was an Engoli Headhunter who was going up in the world. He had recently clawed his way up to the status of Doomed One -- an acolyte -- gaining for himself a Guardian (Alzin, an allied spirit in human form) and new spells and abilities. After eliminating a rival in typical cult fashion -by severing his head and binding his soul into it - Greedo thereby gained knowledge of his rival's divine magic, including the vile Consume Mind cult spell. When the Thanatari captured a Lunar party who had blundered into his complex, Greedo had his choice of victims to try out the Consume Mind. He chose their commander, Baron Voorstik, a minor noble and priest of Seven Mothers. Ignoring Voorstik's pleas for mercy and the promise of a large ransom (for Greedo lusted for knowledge and secrets, not money), the Doomed One made his preparations for the complicated and difficult ritual. Unfortunately for him, supporters of Greedo's decapitated rival conspired to disrupt the ritual in revenge, and the casting went horribly wrong --Greedo's spirit found itself trapped in the Baron's head, causing them both to go mad.

The gleeful conspirators would have slain the hapless Baron there and then, but for an attack on the temple. Several of the Baron's entourage had escaped the ambush, and one of them --Jarath, his long-time companion-at-arms -- made it back to civilization. Jarath returned with a mixed force of Lunars, Orlanthi and Storm Bull cultists, all willing to put aside religious antipathies to strike a blow against Thanatar, the foulest of the chaotic cults. The Baron and those of his comrades still alive were rescued, the Thanatar temple was substantially destroyed, and although Greedo's soulless body was destroyed in the cleansing fires, his spirit Guardian Alzin managed to get away.

Voorstik's ordeal had a terrible effect on him, and soon after his rescue he was given a medical discharge from the Lunar bureaucracy and retired with his new wife to a small estate in an isolated valley of northern Sartar. The estate is located halfway between the Tarsh Road and the Eaglecock Hill in the Trader's Valley His old companion-at-arms, Jarath, followed him into retirement.

Whilst the Baron's madness did not get any better, neither did it worsen, until Alzin showed up and insinuated himself into the household. The Guardian's presence gradually awakened Greedo's personality and it soon became dominant to Baron Voorstik's. Alzin fed his master's appetite for wanton cruelty and they began to experiment ways to gain Greedo a new body. After the Baron's own wife was attacked by him, the shocked Jarath fled with her and all of the servants and most of the slaves.

#### The Estate

Baron Voorstik's estate is built in the typical Lunar style; a white-washed, oblong building built around a central courtyard. Although the fittings are expensive and elegant, the appearance of the place is quite shabby, with all manner of refuse strewn inside and out. The whole place stinks, and the closer one gets to the cellar steps, the worse the stench gets.

#### The Opportunist

Baladar is the last of the Baron's retainers to remain. He survived by siding with Alzin early on, and becoming his creature. Baladar fears and hates Alzin, but is unaware of his true nature. He knows that the Baron and Alzin are performing atrocious deeds in the cellar, but this does not concern him overly much. It soon became obvious that their activities there were their sole interest, and Baladar has taken to lording it over the estate. He is slowly stripping away the Baron's fortune and possessions. When he has taken all he can, Baladar plans to leave. And if he can kill Alzin and the Baron too, all the better.

In the meantime, he has been actively helping Alzin get victims for his master. Originally, he simply dragged in one of the slaves, but most of them fled with Jarath and the Baron's wife. Of those foolish enough to remain behind, several were killed by Alzin and the Baron in quick succession, and the rest ran away. So, Baladar has had to go further afield, preying on lone travelers and transients, either by luring them back to the estate with the promise of a warm bed or work, or by simply way-laying them. In the season since Voorstik's wife and friend fled, six people have disappeared in the district. However, because none were locals (Alzin is careful to avoid their suspicion), little interest has been taken.

#### The Mad Baron

Baron Voorstik now never leaves the cellar of the villa. He sits there gibbering in the dark, lucid one moment, completely unhinged the next. Greedo's personality is normally dominant, but, in times of weakness (particularly after Greedo has attempted one of his Thanatar rituals) the Voorstik personality regains control, and he beats against the cellar door, begging to be let out and pleading for his wife. It is Greedo's belief that he can somehow duplicate the Consume Mind spell, and get a body of his own back. Unfortunately for Greedo, he's wrong, and all that is left of the victims when his "research" is over is a bloody mess. The cellar now resembles a gruesome slaughter-house, and the stench is terrible.

#### The Approach

The characters are approached by Jarath, acting on behalf of the Lady Vanessa, Voorstik's young wife. Jarath is a grizzled Lunar army veteran, in late middle age and with a gamy left leg ("got that fightin' the rebels on Kree"). Vanessa, a slight, plain girl in her teens, accompanies him, all the time weeping. Fresh from the Deezola convent, Vanessa believes that once Alzin has been sent packing, all will be fine between her husband and herself again. If the players take the job, Jarath and Vanessa will arrive the next morning, with a Healer who they hope will be able to find a cure for the Baron's malady.

Jarath offers the characters 100 silver imperials each for what should be a simple, if brutal day's work. He states that under no circumstances is the Baron to be harmed, whatever he may do. At this point Vanessa tearfully beseeches the characters

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not to harm her husband, who is only "sick". If pressed, Jarath will tell of the Baron's ordeal with the Thanatari, and his increasingly erratic and violent mood changes thereafter. He will add one disturbing detail: after his release, the Baron's silver wedding ring gradually lost its luster, and Voorstik would spend hours on end polishing it. Nothing he did could restore its shine. (Astute characters may recall that any silver handled by Thanatari becomes irrecoverably tarnished.)

Jarath provides directions to the Baron's villa, which is a good day's journey up the Tarsh road from town. He will add a warning that the locals suspect Telmori bandits are active in the area, because several travelers have recently gone missing on the road. This is a red herring: there are no Telmori -- the travelers were accosted by Baladar. Subsequent to their meeting with Jarath, but before they set off, the characters hear from a crier of the reward offered for information on the whereabouts of a certain Alebard Shortshank, an Issaries mule trader. Shortshank disappeared on the Tarsh road several weeks ago. A description of the missing person is offered: short, curly red hair and beard, and with a distinctive enchantment tattoo covering his left arm and shoulder. Furthermore, Alebard Shortshank's mules were all marked with his unique brand. The local Issaries cult offers a 250L reward for knowledge about the missing trader (it is added that, if Shortshank is returned alive, he may offer a further reward also).

#### The Escapees

If one or more of the characters is a Lunar, or Lunar friend, just as the party are setting off a Lunar centurion will hail them. This is Nero, whose patrol captured two of the slaves who escaped from Baron Voorstik's villa. Jarath has positively identified the runaways, and mentioned that the characters are leaving for the estate. Rather than trudge his weary patrol back up the road again, Nero makes the characters an offer. If they return the prisoners to the Baron (who must initial a receipt) Nero will pay them 30L.

The two slaves, Vross and Hama, were Hendreki rebels caught in Heortland. They are bedraggled and in poor health from their weeks on the run, and chained together round the necks, wrists and ankles. Initially downcast and sullen, when they understand that they are being returned to the Baron, they will become extremely agitated and uncooperative. In fact, once they get to the turn-off to the estate, they will have to be dragged or carried. The prisoners can tell (anyone who speaks their language) of how their comrades were dragged, one at a time, into the villa, not to be seen again, and how blood-curdling screams echoed around the valley. Vross and Hama will beg for mercy, and do anything they can to escape.

#### **The Confrontation**

The Tarsh road, is broad, straight and true, a marvel to Issaries. The journey along it can be as eventful as the referee decides. At one point, a lone wolf slinks across the road just out of bow shot in front of the characters: they may suspect the Telmori are near, but a search will reveal no sign of them. The Baron's villa lies a short distance down a side road in a secluded valley. Tied up outside the villa stables are a number of mules. Each is marked with Alebard Shortshanks's particular brand.

As the characters approach the villa they will be met by Baladar at the gate, stumbling drunkenly, but still with most of his wits about him. Baladar knows that some time a confrontation would come, but because he was enjoying living it up as being lord of the manor so much, he put it out of his mind. Now that it has happened, his basic instinct will be to flee. If the characters try negotiating, Baladar will try bluff and bravado for a while in he hope of scaring them off. He will pretend he's Alzin if the characters mention the name, in the hope of impressing them (if asked, either of the slaves can refute this, and even identify him as Baladar, "Alzin's toady"). When asked where the Baron is, Baladar will mumble something about him being downstairs. If asked about the mule trader, Baladar will fumble with his words for a moment and say, "He's... ah.. talkin' to the Baron."

Soon enough, will Baladar see that bullying is useless and will attempt to get away. Baladar has stashed some of the choicest booty in his room (the former master-bedroom), and will try to get it first if he can. The sack contains 108 wheels and a small casket containing Vanessa's finest jewelry worth 2015L. If allowed to leave, Baladar will return to his room, take his loot and escape through a window. If caught in a fight, Baladar will probably surrender if he knows he can't escape or win.

Once Baladar has been dealt with the characters may think their mission is over! All they need to do is bring the Baron up from downstairs and wait for Jarath and the lady. However, at this point an insane, incoherent babble will be heard emanating from inside the villa, interspersed with terrible screams. It is the Baron, in Greedo-mode, experimenting on his latest victim, the hapless mule trader Alebard Shortshank. If left undisturbed, he will be dead at the Baron's hands in 25 melee rounds.

#### Baladar

characteris STR 1. CON 1 SIZ 14 INT 10 POW 10 DEX 14 APP 10	<i>tics</i> 2 1 4 0 0		attributes Move: 3 Hit Points: 13 Fatigue: 23 Magic Points DEX SR: 3		
area	missile	melee	armor/hp		
r leg	01-04	01-03			
l leg	05-08	04-06	1/5		
abdomen	09-11	07-10	1/5		
chest	12	11-15	1/6		
r arm	13-15	16-17	1/4		
larm	16-18	18-19	1/4		
head	1 <del>9</del> -20	20	0/5		
weapon	sr	attk% dam	age parr%	pts	
Broad Swo	ord 7	66 1d8	-	10	

Skills: Sneak(60), Hide(70), Speak New Pelorian(20), Speak Tarshite(30), Speak Sartarite(15)

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Spirit Magic: Befuddle(2), Mobility 1, Repair 1 Armor: Cloth Padding. Baladar owns a suit of hard leather armor that raises his AP to 4 which he will don if able. Treasure: Lady Vanessa's jewels -- see above description. Notes: Baladar is from the city of Slave Wall in Lunar Tarsh.

#### The Cellars

The entrance to the cellars is bolted from the outside, and is easy to open. Inside, the cellars are pitch-black. A Thanatar Darklight is burning at the far end of the cellar, on a rudimentary altar that Greedo/The Baron has made. This creates a ghoulish, purplish light visible only to Thanatar cultists. Until the characters bring a light-source down into the cellars then, Greedo and Alzin will be at an advantage. Six mad-head ghosts inhabit the cellars, the spiritual remains of the Thanatari's last six victims. These insane spirits will attack all non-Thanatari who enter the cellars, and if one possesses a victim, the ghost will use its new host to physically attack the other characters. If no other characters are near, the ghost will force its body to suicide, as expeditiously and messily as possible. The severed heads of these unfortunates litter the floor around the base of the altar. There is a Lhankor Mhy ritual that can be pronounced to destroy these spirits, described in both Lords of Terror and Shadows on the Borderlands.

When the characters descend into the cellars, Greedo and his guardian are busy at the altar with their newest victim (if the characters delayed going down to the cellars, the victim is dead and both are praying). Their attention will be alerted when the mad head ghosts begin their attack. Both will do all they can to destroy or capture the characters.

Alzin will take the initiative, because his master's mental imbalance. Greedo is incapable of casting most of his Thanatar magic or any spell which requires a lengthy ceremony, as he cannot concentrate for any length of time: Baron Voorstik's personality keeps interfering. This is why his renewed attempts at Consume Mind have consistently failed. Each melee round whilst Greedo is under the stress of the conflict, the Baron may attempt to regain dominance by a POW vs. POW roll. The first round the baron tries, it is if his POW is 1. Each consecutive round he tries, raise his chance by 1 POW until he reaches his maximum POW. Whilst this is going on, Greedo must succeed in a concentration roll (INT x 3) to cast his magic, all the time clawing at his own head in a vain effort to drive his tormentor out. If Baron Voorstik overcomes Greedo, the physical change will be instantaneous. The Baron will fall to the ground in a 'quivering heap, bawling for his wife, his life and his sanity. When a similarly stressful episode occurs, Greedo may make another dominance attempt of his own.

The Thanataris' tactic is simple: they will get the mad-head ghosts to do the work for them. Greedo will cast continuous Spirit Screen spells on them in order to make them as effective as possible. Note that because these spirits are insane and hate everything, Greedo must overcome a spirit's current magic points for the Spirit Screen to work. Note also that he can draw upon the Baron's magic points when casting his spirit magic. Meanwhile, Alzin will use the cover of darkness to skirt round behind the characters to shut and bolt the cellar door behind them. He will then try to put his garrote to best effect!

#### Mad Head Ghosts (6)

	IS BALLICESCH MAN AMERICANALE C		
character	ristics	attributes	
STR	2d6+6	Move: equals POW	
POW	<b>4d</b> 6	Magic Points: POW	
		a construction of the second sec	

Ghost 1 Spirit Magic: Extinguish 2 Ghost 2 Spirit Magic: None Ghost 3 Spirit Magic: Dispel Magic 2 Ghost 4 Spirit Magic: Disruption(1) Ghost 5 Spirit Magic: Befuddle(2) Ghost 6 Spirit Magic: None Trassure: These ghosts are all quite

**Treasure:** These ghosts are all quite mad and have no memory of their previous existence. Each round a ghost has 50% chance of casting a spell or engaging in spirit combat. Even the ghosts that have forgotten spells will try to cast them, but will always fail.

AI	ziı	n
	_	

characte	eristic	cs			attributes		
STR	11				Move: 3		
CON	11				Hit Points: 12		
SIZ	12				Fatigue: 22		
INT	14				Magic Points:	14	
POW	14				DEX SR: 3		
DEX	15						
APP	12						
-		,		•1.2		the second s	
area		missile		melee	armor/hp		
r leg		01-04		01-03	1+0/4		
l leg		05-08	2	04-06	1+0/4	•••	
abdome	en	09-11		07-10	1+2/4		
chest		12	•	11-15	1+2/5		
r arm		13-15	•	16-17	1+2/3		
l arm		16-18	•	18-19	1+2/3		
head		19-20	2	20	1+4/4	•••	
weapon		sr	attk%	damag	e parr%	pts	
Garrote	t	9	80	1d6	-	-	
Shortsw	vord	8	75	1d6+2	65	8	
† Not a d	comba	at weapo	n see	Shadows	s on the Border	lands	. pg. 77

Skills: Fast Talk(40), Speak Sartarite(34), R/W Sartarite(14), Scan(45), Search(55), Listen(50), Hide(60), Sneak(70), Human Lore(30), Cult Lore(15)

Spirit Magic: Bladesharp 2 (for garrote), Darkwall(2), Heal 1 Armor: Heavy padding and leather worth 2 points on upper body; tarnished silver helm (a gift from Greedo). See Gift. Items: Bleached Skull with Fanaticism 1 matrix (Engoli). Gift: +1 point skin armor.

Geas: Never wear metal armor other than tarnished silver Notes: Alzin is Greedo's Guardian, gained as a gift from Thanatar. This Guardian is a spirit that takes the form of a local clansman from the headhunter clan. Alzin is utterly loyal to Greedo. Alzin's body bears both the ritual scars of Thanatar and the Engoli Headhunter tattoos. Appropriate skill rolls are needed to recognize both.

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#### Greedo (spirit)

charact	eristics	attributes
INT	15	Magic Points: 18†
POW	18	† + Alzin's MP & crystal

Skills: Speak Sartarite(35), Speak Trade(30), Orate(60) Spirit Magic: Spirit Screen Rune Magic: Darkwall

Gift: Guardian (Alzin).

Geas: Always eat the flesh of each victim; Never ride an animal; Never eat plant life, except elves.

Greedo was assessed at having extraordinary Notes: potential by the secret Thanatari among the Engoli Headhunter and initiated into the cult at an early age.

#### **Baron Voorstik**

characteris	stics		attributes	
STR 1	6 (8)		Move: 3 (2)	
CON 1	6 (8)		Hit Points: 16	(7)
SIZ 1	6 `́		Fatigue: 20	(,,)
INT 1	3		Magic Points:	10
POW 1	8 (1)		DEX SR: 3	
DEX 1			Dam Mod: +1	Id4 (0)
APP 1	5 (7)		Ban Moa.	
area	missile	melee		
r leg	01-04	menee	armor/hp	
lleg	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	01-03		•••••
	05-08	04-06	0.0 (0)	•••••
abdomen		07-10	0/6 (5)	•••••
chest 🧹	12	11-15	0/8 (6)	
r arm	13-15	16-17	0/5 (4)	
l arm	16-18	18-19	0/5 (4)	
head	19-20	20	0/6 (4)	•••••
weapon	sr	attk% dam	age parr%	pts
Dagger	9	50 1d4		6

Skills: Speak New Pelorian(33), Tarshite(30), Trade(20) Spirit Magic: Not currently usable

Rune Magic: Not currently usable

Armor: None currently

Items: Redstone (8 MP storage crystal)

Treasure: Various including estate.

Notes: The statistics in parenthesis above represent the Baron's current, poor condition and possession by Greedo. A full set of skills and spells needs to be generated by the GM if he wishes to use the Baron in further adventures.

If anyone is mortally wounded in the cellars, the Gatherer of Souls, a Thanatar subservient spirit will appear before them. This spirit looks like a headless man in flowing black and silver robes, beckoning to the dead. It is made visible if Detect Spirit or Visibility is cast, or to anyone with Second Sight and to the dying. If the stricken person is either Alzin or Greedo, it will wait patiently for the Thanatari to die and then lead them to the Place of Waiting. If the dying character is a non-Thanatari however, it will immediately attack in spirit combat. If it succeeds, the victim loses 1d4+1 CON points and once the character is dead, the Gatherer steals the soul. A separate Gatherer will appear for each dying character: "dying" is defined

as having 3 or less general hit points or being in shock from massive body damage. Note that all Heal spells, potions and herbs are diminished by half if used within 30m of a Gatherer.

#### The Cleaning-up

If the characters fail, Greedo and Alzin will use their corpse in their fruitless experiments. Assuming the characters wir through, the characters can wait for Jarath and the lady Vanessa to show up. The villa is in a bad state, but searching wil uncover a number of luxury items in various states of repair of freshness, including several thousand tainted silver coins. No decent merchant would accept them. If Baladar didn't manage to take it, they will also find his booty-bag in the master bedroom All property in the villa is rightfully the Baron's.

What happens next depends on whether they killed Baron Voorstik or not. If the Baron was inadvertently killed in the fracas, the characters won't get their money from Jarath and Vanessa. Instead, the characters will be charged with murder of a Lunar noble and a warrant will be issued for their arrest! If the Baron survived the fight, he should be restrained nevertheless. Sometime in the night, Greedo will reassert his dominance, and try to kill a player character with a makeshift garrote!

The characters will receive their payment when Jarath, Vanessa and entourage arrive the next morning. When told about and shown the carnage in the cellar, the dismembered corpses and the severed heads, Jarath and Vanessa will be shocked. If Alzin is left alive at this point, Jarath will demand Alzin's instant execution -- the Baron (now with his own personality again, rather shell-shocked) will nod assent. He has the right of both low and high justice on his own estate. This episode will trigger another attempt by Greedo to reassert control, throwing the hapless Voorstik into fits and spasms. When Greedo regains dominance he will spit words of hatred at all-and-sundry, and will have to be restrained.

With the evil Alzin now dead, the Lady Vanessa feels that her husband will recover and they can now put the past behind them. However, there is the problem of the cellar, and the embarrassment it could cause. After conferring with Jarath, she will offer the characters 50 Wheels each for their silence about the matter. If the characters insist that this is a serious matter --Thanatari, missing people, sacrifices -- Vanessa will raise her offer to 65 Wheels each. Everyone must agree and swear to keep silent; if there one voice of dissent amongst the player characters, nobody will be paid.

If the character put money before morality, several months later they will hear the shocking tale of the Mad Baron who killed and ate his best friend, who decapitated his wife and wore her head around his belt, and who was taken back to the Heartlands by the Lunar authorities, there to spend the rest of his days under heavy guard in a Danfive Xaron asylum. If the characters demand action, they will miss out on the hush-money, but may gain satisfaction from uncovering and eradicating a Thanatari menace. Despite the Lady Vanessa's pleadings, the Baron will be taken away "for treatment". It is just possible an exorcism might work ....

# **Snake Pipe Hollow**

#### Introduction

Snake Pipe Hollow is well known throughout Dragon Pass as one of the foulest nests of chaos in all of Glorantha. Sartarites, Dwarfs and assorted others have been trying to eradicate this chaos for generations, with little or no success. The Lunar invasion of the pass heralds a new era, and who knows what evil will creep forth from the hollow. For a full history of the area, see the *Snake Pipe Hollow* game supplement from Avalon Hill.

#### **Politics**

Control of Snake Pipe Hollow in the upcoming Hero Wars will probably not be an important factor for several reasons; The sheer cliff walls on the south are a slaughter ground for any army trying to scale them. A much smaller force could hold of a whole army from the hills above. Even if the cliffs are taken, an invading force still faces four well defended settlements (Ironspike, Alda-chur, Alone and Herongreen) before entering Sartar proper. Also, there is a great danger of counter attack on the flank by Tusk Riders or Trolls. Of much more importance is Trader's Valley and the forts of Glasswall and Too Far. These are the important entry points between Northern Sartar and Tarsh, and are likely to see heavy fighting. Still, there are always rumors that the Lunar Empire will be annexing Snake Pipe Hollow and allying themselves with the chaos there.

#### **Plant Life**

The varieties of plant life increase dramatically in areas of chaos such as Snake Pipe Hollow and Dorastor. In Dorastor, the level of Chaos is thought to be the highest in the land. Here, there are few new varieties, but instead migrants from local lands that colonize Dorastor are quickly mutated and warped into twisted, weird forms. The plants of Snake Pipe Hollow follow a different life history; most of the chaotic varieties are indigenous to the area. Plants often show the mutations of gigantism, dwarfism, and discoloration -- which are common in chaotic areas. Any of the following plants are likely to be found in Snake Pipe Hollow, though possibly in some mutant form.

Trees: Elm, Willow, Dinosaur Elm, Apple, Irontree Pine, Stormapple, Oak, Lemon, Walnut.

Grasses: Corn, Winter Wheat, Hops, Barley, Oats.

Fruits and Vegetables: Prickly Melon, Potatoes, Wild Blue Parsnips, Grapes, Blueberry, Gooseberry, Tomatoes, Broccoli, Red Peppers, Garlic, Squash.

**Fungus and Moss:** Green Moss, Brown Hair Moss, Toad Tables, Eurmal's Crumbs, Truffles, Rundown Toadstool, Mad Dog Mushrooms, Spirit Moss, Chaos Curse Mushroom.

Flowers: Orlanth's Scepters, Dragon Lilies, Arroin's Lilies, Dandelion, Buttercup Maidens.

Misc. Bushes, Herbs, Roots: Giant Tarbushes, Manzanita, Mostal's Salad, Leechbushes, Tangibar, Red Clover, Missile

# A Guide to Northern Sartar

Roots, Kokolonni, Watercress, Footstoe, Squaa, Waymole, Dourroots, Red Thistle Men, Spice Root, Dill, Cinnamon.

Chaotic Plants: Apple Surprise (Exploding seeds), Eurmal's Trick (Looks nice, poisonous), Mothan's Melon (Looks awful, tastes great), Melmarrow (statistic gain and chaos feature gain), Running Grass (Chases you), Snake Grass (Bites you), Iron Bushes/Dwarf Bane (Useful, but some goes boom), Rot Bush (Smelly, good for alchemy/hallucinogens), Acid Traps (Traps), Hook Bushes(Hosts dangerous mites), Mallia's Helper (Spreads disease), Bloodwood (Sap is blood).



Gazetteer

22 Turns: This is one of the well-known paths down into Snake Pipe Hollow from the New Hills. It gets it name from the many twists and turns it takes on its way down the southern wall of Snake Pipe Hollow.

**2-Fisted Inn:** Two fists are what you need in this bar, since ale is served in two mugs, and you can box the proprietor, Hamfist, for your tab. The fact that the owner makes a good living, means that the balding man with a solid frame packs a good two fists.

Alda-chur: Though Havar Ironfist is Duke of Alda-chur and Prince of Far Point, but most people just refer to him as the Warlord. He rules an alliance of the Vantaros, Princeros, Tovtaros and Dinacoli from this city of the Vantaros Tribe. The worship of Orlanth in Alda-chur is slowly being replaced with that of solar deities imported from Dara Happa. Havar is building a new Sun Temple and hopes to attract foreign priests to Far Point.

**Badlands:** This is an area of dry, blasted earth where tracking is impossible. Chaotic snakes abound in the many pits here.

Bloated Boar Inn: On Tarsh Road, between Herongreen and Alda-chur, is the rowdiest and roughest inn in Northern Sartar. It is a slow night if there are only three fights. You can place bets on combatants with the bartender and owner, Burkeo, with the deep, maniacal laugh. This establishment is not for those with weak-hearts or for those who desire to keep their reputations unsullied or their bodies un-bruised. Since only the toughest



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mercenaries dare to visit, this is a great place to find the very best for your adventure, even if you will have to wait for them to sober up.

**Blue Boar Inn:** This well-known inn is situated near the Dinacoli Stockade along the King's Road in northern Sartar. Run by the brother of Burkeo, Bherrian. Often mistaken for his brother's notorious establishment, the Blue Boar is significantly tamer than its northern counterpart. The Blue Boar is a great gaming establishment, where you can play indoor darts, horseshoes, and cards for gold. Bulky Yelmalian guards are well

paid to keep the peace. Bherrian is a good source of information on the happenings of the area.

**Boarlands:** This wide swath of grasslands is known for the many wild pigs that roam here. These are the traditional lands of the Dinacoli tribe, who shocked everyone when they when they aligned themselves with Far Point and acknowledged Havar Ironfist of Alda-chur as their prince ten years ago.

Brenia's In Inn: This inn is run by a spicy-tongued woman, Brenia, who took over after the death of her father. Brenia is annoyed that she must compete with the Boar Brothers and the

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exotic Dancing Snake. She responds by offering the best ale in the area and excellent tasting food, like her spicy boar meat stew, with dumplings. Local talk has her being wooed by a Sartar rebel, a Lhankor Mhy priest, a nobleman, and one of Geo's Raiders. She refuses to give any of the rumors recognition.

**Broken Compass Woods:** Travelers think twice before going through these woods. This forest is thick with trees and lacks any trails but those made by small game. The wood gets its name from the fact that all forms of direction sense do not function within its boundaries (including magical forms). The Broken Compass Woods is also home to the Howlers, whose cries can drive a man to madness.

**Brontosaurus Valley:** This valley is the home to several large herds of huge dinosaurs. All of the large entrances to the valley are blocked by vast groves of living and dead trees, totally overgrown with mosses and foliage. This is purposefully done by the elves of the Stinking Forest to contain the beasts. Although the elves of the Forest typically avoid the valley, several small clans of trolls live within. The meaty brontosaurs are fine troll cuisine, and thus the trolls live a life of gustatory ecstasy. Occasionally, they trade the more tender brontosaurs with their brethren in the East. Occasionally, humans venture into the valley as well, led there by elf guides that they negotiate with at the Golden Grove.

**Bronze Hills:** These hills north of Tink once held valuable ore but are now mined out. See *Dreams Dragons Bring* in RQA 2 for more details.

**Bush Range:** This broad plain is alternately buffeted by medium strength winds and light, warm rains. Tall grasses are the main vegetation, and tracks through the grass criss-cross the entire range. The Bushchildren who live here are neutral towards the warring factions in Dragon Pass. They ride ponies and are experts at hurling javelins while at a gallop.

**Bush Run:** The wide track through the tall grasses of the Bush Range runs from the Falling Ruin to Bagnot. A major road running south to Shaker's Temple ends at the Bush Run. The Bushchildren rarely travel on this path, preferring to remain hidden to travelers.

**Bushwood:** This small woods is primarily composed of giant manzinitas and other rough scrub brushes. The Bushchildren have several sacred locations in the Bushwood, where they renew the magics that allow them to disappear into the tall grasses. Also, bandits are known to occasionally make a home in the Bushwood until driven away.

**Caves of Chaos:** Once an ancient earth temple, the wars that shattered the Gods Age plunged it into chaos. Physically located in the cliffs of chaos, this temple is fully described in the *Snake Pipe Hollow* game supplement.

**Chaos Garden:** This area east of the Ogrewood in Snake Pipe Hollow is well known for its chaotic vegetation. Elves often venture into this area to fight the abominations that grow here. This is a light wood, with many flowers and fungi interspersed in the flora, almost all of which has some taint of chaos. This area is also home to a powerful spirit called Hell's Gardener, who watches over the chaotic growths.

City of Wheels: This ruin is located in the Broken Compass Woods and dates back to the EWF. All of the buildings were on wheels so they could be moved to align with the stars and be used in forbidden magics. A few of them are still intact and there are rumors that EWF magicians are still trying to work their spells here.

**Cliffs of Chaos:** The northeast wall of Snake Pipe Hollow is the steepest and most treacherous of the valley walls and is riddled with caves. All manner of foul beasts and chaotic vegetation can be encountered here. Somewhere in the cliffs is the entrance to an ancient earth temple.

Cobbled Ruins: These ruins -- named for the perfectly cut cobble stones which still litter the area -- are all that remains of the Great Cobbled City, which was built by dwarfs at the start of the Second Age. Some say that the dwarfs hoped to control the Chaos that lived within the Hollow, while others theorize that they planned to study it. However, during the Gbaji Wars, the Chaos of the hollow had grown very strong, and thus it was able to overrun the city, despite many valiant Iron Dwarf defenders. Occasionally, ruined items of dwarfen manufacture may be found in the Cobbled Ruins, but anything of true value was looted nearly a thousand years ago.

Few remember that the Great Cobbled City was built on the site of an earlier structure named Kagradus Fort. None suspect that Kagradus Fort is still nearly whole, enfolded in the protective embrace of Ernalda.

**Dancing Snake Inn:** This inn along the Pavis Road is home to the Snake Pipe Dancers of Dragon Pass. See the write-up of the Cult of the Dancing Snake for details on this strange and unique inn.

**Dangerford:** Isle Dangerous sits in the middle of this strategically important ford and contains a well-defended fort.

**Dinosaur's Graveyard:** This powder-gray valley is believed to be where dinosaurs die. For this reason, this area is revered and avoided as hollowed ground by many. Many dangerous dinosaurs are here to dissuade the casual adventurer from pillaging the site.

**Donkey's Only Trail:** Despite it's name, this trail into Snake Pipe Hollow is wide enough to allow horses to be walked down. This trail is used to enter the Hollow from the east by those who lack the courage to use Giant's Walk.

**Dragon's Eye:** This massive non-Euclidean group of structures passes for what humans call a dragonnewt city. The Inhuman King of Dragon Pass rules from a great dragon temple here.

**Dragonpool:** This small lake is hidden in the northern part of the Ogrewood of Snake Pipe Hollow. The immediate area around the lake is heavily overgrown and difficult to approach. The pool is believed to be a spawning ground for Dragon Snails and is also the home of the Giant Shelled Gorp.

Dwarf Ford: This dwarf built ford is the safest spot to cross the Dragon River more many leagues in either direction. This ford

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has been the spot of many battles and King Jarolar Longstride died fighting here 1565.

**Dwarf Mine:** This ancient dwarf settlement was founded before Time by Isidilian the Wise. See the special insert for more information on the legendary Dwarf of Dwarf Run and his home.

**Dwarf Trail:** This is the main trail from Sartar, up through Dwarf Run, into Trader's Valley. Stops of note are Hannand where dwarven traders can be found and Dwarf Mine where Isidilian dwells. There is moderate river traffic alongside the trail.

**Eaglecock Hills:** These hills are nigh impassable and only the brave or the foolish would travel here. There is a lone shepherd who dwells in the highest valleys and guards magical sheep from the fierce Avirooks of the higher peaks.

**Elf's Walk:** This is the human name for the main trail into the Stinking Forest. Elven guards watch all who pass on it.

**Engoli's Fold:** This low, broad valley graces the interior of the highlands of northern Sartar. It is bordered by the Lost Man Hills to the north, the Longdoe Hills to the south, Alda-chur to the east and the Valley of the Chalk Man. This isolated spot is home to the much feared Headhunter Clan who worship O'tyan.

Enlo Woods: Many bands of wild trollkin have the run of these lightly forested hills

**Evergreen Elm:** This magical tree has existed since before the Dawn. It is a tree most sacred to Yelmalio, and so the scattered followers of the sun god within the Stinking Forest frequently travel here to give tribute. Sun worshipers from distant lands often hear of the Evergreen Elm as well, and if they give enormous tributes to the elves of the Forest, they are occasionally allowed to see it. The area about the Evergreen Elm is constantly warm, and an aura of peace and tranquillity seems to imbue it as well. The actual tree can barely be seen, because it glows with a dim light. Some Aldryami speculate that a tiny bit of the Green Age has been preserved by the Evergreen Elm.

Unfortunately, darkness seeks to destroy the Elm's light, as it always has. Every year, during the Sacred Time, a troll comes from the East determined to devour the Elm. The elves pick their greatest hero to repel him, and so far they have been successful.

Falling Ruin: This ancient ruin is known for its largest remaining structure, Miskander's Tower.

**Far Point:** This hilly country in northern Sartar is home to the Vantaros tribe and is ruled by warlord Havar Ironfist.

Fig Springs: This village is famous for their groves of magic fig trees. During Fire season, travelers try to buy these figs for they allow them to block out thirst significantly. The townspeople are known to be cheerful, but a little touched, because of their obsession with the fig. They are known to have frequent fig festivals, where citizens adorn themselves with fig leaves and come up with outrageous fig dishes.

Flooded Stead: This town used to be a thriving merchant and farming community. Then the barriers broke and the banks of the Dragon River flooded the town, killing off its residents. Despite the incredible loss of life, many of the buildings still stand. Since then, various outlaws setup camp there.

Fort Engoli: This is the stockade of the Engoli Headhunter clan of Far Point. Laran the Knife is the chief of the Headhunters, and is found here, leading worship to the fierce god, O'tyan.

Geo's Alda-chur Inn: Located in the northern Sartarite city, Geo's Alda-chur Inn is the only pro-Sartar nationalist force left there after Havar Ironfist's purge. It is unsure whether the Warlord's fear of Geo's Bouncer or his love of walktapi stew kept Havar from closing the inn. This inn's specialties is its wonderful barley bread and the above stew.

Geo's Creek Inn: Located to the east of Dangerford, this inn is frequented by many members of the Malani tribe. The specialty here is boiled creek craw dad. Small ones are caught by local fisherman using disruption spells to kill them. There are also giant crayfish known as craw-grand-daddies in the creek here that can smash a small raft in their powerful claws.

Geo's Hideaway Inn: Rumored to be north of Snake Pipe Hollow, Geo's Hideaway Inn is a refuge for those trying to escape the Lunar conquest of Sartar. This inn's specialties are walktapus stew and elven dishes.

Geo's River Inn: Located on the Dragon River South of the Silent Tree Ferry and east of the Bronze Hills, this inn specializes in preparing the giant catfish that are caught in the river near here.

**Giant's Walk:** This well-known entry way into Snake Pipe Hollow is the second favorite route for thrill seekers. Ranging from 150-200 feet in width, this path was literally bashed from the eastern cliff walls by giants, who are occasionally seen traversing this path from the Rockwoods to the Shade Table.

**Glasswall:** Situated atop the Glass Cliffs, the fort of Glasswall guards old Sartar from attack from the east. The Tarsh road winds its way up the steep cliffs.

**Godstead Inn:** Those who head to the Stinking Forest, or to Too Far, end up staying at Godstead. Everything you would need or want can be bought here. The place is busy with traders and travelers, and goods being bartered and sold. If you can get in the owner's good graces, he will quietly introduce you to the best dealers and navigate you around the con-artists. The owner, Elwin Godstead, knows many tales of the Stinking Forest and the Wanderer's Crypt.



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Hannand: The last city along the River is the small trading port of Hannand. Nestled cozily at the southern end of Dendelle Lake, Hannand is the last chance for supplies by the River for those seeking adventure in the dangerous wilds to the north. Hannand's most famous resident is Thronbald the Trader. This 'outlaw' dwarf trades artifacts openly from his ancient warehouse on the largest of Hannand's stone piers. Thronbald often acts as a go-between for Isidilian the Wise and those too afraid to venture into the bowels of Dwarf Mine.

Hellfang Bog: This fetid area is well known for poisonous snakes, noxious fumes and exploding gasses.

Herongreen: This stockade is at the important juncture of three roads -- the Tarsh Road, the Pavis Road, and the King's Road. Herongreen has been given to the Lunars by Havar Ironfist for use as a trading base. The town is more ruled by the Lunar bureaucracy than the Lunar military.

Hero's Fall: This area to the north of Glasswall has often been a battleground, and it has turned into a graveyard of those who were killed while defending the area against invaders. Popular elders of the Princeros and Vantaros tribes have managed to get themselves buried at Hero's Fall.

**Highwater Falls:** The Dragon River (usually just called the River) plunges 150 feet as it empties from the Swollen Place. This is the last pure water in the River for 30 kilometers. The River is polluted by the Ogrewood, and the foulness is nor removed until it reaches the Fist.

**Ironspike:** This fortress has traditionally been a guard post against the trolls of Skyfall lake and beyond.

Ivy Ruins: These ruins are the remains of an EWF fort that was constructed in the Second Age. It was an outpost used to watch and guard against the elves of the Stinking Wood, who never fully embraced the EWF's draconic ideals. At the height of its decadence, the EWF took many sacred plants and respected elves hostage within the fort, to ensure the good behavior of the people of the Stinking Woods. Today, many rare plants grow rampant over the ruins. Strange elves, who were warped and mutated by EWF experiments, still inhabit the ruins as well. They are unnatural and wild, and have been cut off from the rest of the kin.

Leaning Wall: This two kilometer long structure is a ruined wall that leans at a 45 degree angle. The wall rarely rises above waist height and there are rumored to be hidden catacombs somewhere beneath it.

Longdoe Hills: Game abounds in these hills and the Dinacoli Tribe has several clans that reside here. This area gets its name from the legendary Longdoe, which is the mate to the Eubuck, which only kings may hunt. There is always the danger of raiding Headhunters in this area.

Lost Man Hills: The many tracks and trails of these hills serve only to confuse travelers. Halve all track rolls in this area. Mammoth Rock: This large rock gets its name from the fossilized mammoth skeleton embedded in it. This marks the northern boundary for the Dragonnewt Hunting Grounds.

**Moss Shroud:** The trees in this forest are veiled with webs of moss, hanging from tree to tree. The moss canapé is so thick that the sun comes through in a green hue. This place is the source of many roots and other plant life that have magical properties. Shamans and magic users go here to gather these ingredients and share stories with others.

New Hills: Small steads and grazing sheep dot these lows hills. The people here live simpler lives than their tribal cousins in Alda-chur and the Sharl Plains.

Newt's 3rd Eye Inn: Slightly off the main road, Newt's 3rd Eye Inn offers a treasure trove of weapons and artifacts for the serious scholar or curious tourist. While still just a young boy, Hamal 'Newt' Ursong was apprenticed to a master metalsmith of the Third Eye Blue Cult. Newt's training was never completed though; an encounter with some angry dwarfs left him masterless before he had gained the secrets of the Third Eye. Convinced of the folly of further angering the dwarfs, Newt collected his master's treasures and bought himself an inn. Now what remains of the collection is on display in locked wallshelves. Newt is well known for his sense of humor, green mushroom ale, and distrust of dwarfs.

**Oak Valley:** This valley is Aldrya's last stronghold within the Stinking Forest. The ancient oaks of the valley tower over the sickly growths which compose the rest of the forest, and the elves there still enact their ancient dances of happiness and purity. Many of the elves of Oak Valley trace their roots to the same long-lived trees, and it is rumored that there is a sage so old that he remembers the ancient Dawn Age. Unfortunately, it seems that the tranquillity of the Oak Valley is doomed, for nearby forces of darkness and chaos have begun to launch new attacks upon it.

**Ogrewood:** This heavily forested area of Snake Pipe Hollow is commonly known to residents of Far Point as the Ogrewood. It probably gets its name from the infamous Cacodemon Altar of Snake Pipe Hollow, which is located there. Of special note is the unusual carnivorous animal life that dwells there such as the always hungry Hell-squirrels.

**Perilous Gorge:** The cliffs along this un-navigable stretch of waterway is the home of many Pterranodons.

**Rogue's Ruins:** This ruin is has a reputation as the hangout of a vicious bandit gang.

Sacred Earth: This wide open glade is where the elves say Gata nurtured the first seed of the Tallseed Forest. The tree was long ago devoured, and the ground is cracked and broken, but it still contains the power of the Earth Mother. When the elves meet in Council, they do so here. Likewise, when others come to visit the forest, rather than just trade, they are brought here. Before visitors may speak to the elves council, they are required to pay homage to Gata, and enact her dance.

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**Safe Trail:** The trail is the only real route from Alda-chur to Ironspike. This trail is surrounded by hills that provide bandits ample opportunity to ambush parties traveling back and forth. Because of this, many consider the name as sarcastic. Bandits call it the Road to Gold.

**Shade Table:** This is a huge obsidian block at the end of Giants' Walk. The giants come to Snake Pipe Hollow to sniff the wind for blood and tasty morsels.

**Shaman's Way:** This road was built by the magic of an early shaman. This route is used by those who wish to access the Moss Shroud. The road is magically protected -- spirits cannot pass during daylight.

Sharl's Plains: These sweeping plains are now home to the Vantaros Tribe, and is notable for the fields of barley that grow naturally here. Hoar Wolves from the New Hills are a problem here during Dark Season.

Silent Tree Ferry: The River is about 180 meters wide at this point. Eldegar the ferryman is an enterprising deaf-mute man, who provides a raft-ferry across. He is a muscle-bound and imposing man with a strong sense of sight and smell. Eldegar is well-respected by traders and outlaws alike, and it is common-knowledge that he is not to be messed with. He has the mark of Geo on his finger.

Skull Ruins: This is the skull of some giant monster and there is a ruined EWF city here. See RQA2 for more details.

**Snake Pipe Hollow:** This is the most famous chaotic area of Dragon Pass. See the rest of this issue and the game supplement of the same name for more information.

Sorrow's Peak: The Bloated Boar Inn keeps a tally of those who unsuccessfully try to conquer one the most forbidding peaks in Sartar. The soul that claims to have climbed this peak and survived is either lying like a trickster or silly with brain fever. People are still attempting the climb this for it is said there is a great treasure there, including a powerful anti-chaos ward. The sorrow comes from the hellish conditions encountered on the way up.

**Spider Ruins:** The remains of this ancient fort in Web Valley is haunted by both real spiders and by spectral spiders. Trolls have set up a small shrine to Gorakikki-Spider here.

Stinking Forest: This forest was once part of the great Westwood, which covered all the lands of Dragon Pass and Balazar. It was called Tallseed then. Slowly, humans cut away the Forest in the West, and trolls devoured it in the East. When the Tusk Riders appeared in the Second Age, and corrupted the land with their bloody rituals, the fate of the Forest was sealed forever. Now, it is called the Stinking Forest. Fungi, mold and lichen cover the scrawny trees, and the trolls and tusk riders outnumber the beleaguered elves. More information on the Stinking Forest will be presented in RQA issue 6.

**Stomping Grounds:** This shallow valley is home to all varieties of Gloranthan dinosaurs. Man high razor-grass is abundant here, and all visitors should be vary of stampede the dinosaurs here.

Tarsh Road: This is the major trade route from Sartar to Tarsh, and eventually to the Lunar Empire. It is regularly patrolled and is generally considered safe to travel.

The Dry River: A previous course of the River before it was changed. Many parts of it form steep gorges and crumbling ledges. Interesting fossils and artifacts can sometimes be seen on the eroded remains of the former banks.

The Fist: This massive lump of white gypsum rises over 50 feet into the air. This magical stone purifies the River of the chaos taint that it gets by flowing throughout the Ogrewood. Pilgrims occasionally journey here to make an offering to naiad who dwells here.

The Getaway: This broad path is the best know way from Trader's Valley up into the Stinking Forest.

The Rookery: These jagged peaks are impossible to pass by humans. Only giant birds, Avirooks, can make this area their home. These birds have been known to taunt those who are foolish to take this route, and drive them insane before falling to their death -- then the Avirooks have a nice meal!

The Golden Grove: Although the elves of the Stinking Forest react violently to most who enter their forest, all who journey to the Golden Grove are granted safe conduct. In the Golden Grove, elves trade with humans from the rest of Dragon Pass. Often, these humans come seeking the right to hunt the dinosaurs of the Brontosaur lands. The elves will usually grant both their permission and a guide in return for fruits from distant lands, cuttings from great trees or other items of Aldrya. Sometimes, when the elves are in particularly good spirits, they are willing to trade for cheery songs or vibrant dances.

The oldest legends say that the Golden Grove was once a place of beauty and tranquillity, a beacon that shone so brightly that it could be seen for miles around. Now, though, the trees are twisted and gnarled, and the once-golden leaves are a muddy brown. It is a place of sadness, and a reminder of what once was.

The Swollen Place: This broad marshy area is the home to many giant insects, especially dragonflies.

The Wakened Ones: For millennia, the chaos of Snake Pipe Hollow has oozed into the Stinking Forest, mutating and warping everything that it touches. The Wakened Ones form a grove of 43 trees which was awoken by the Chaos, and now conspires awful plots to destroy their normal brethren, and increase the power of their chaos allies to the South. Although the Wakened Ones are all rooted, they bend nearby runners to their will, and use them to communicate with the rest of the world.

The Wakened Ones are dark and twisted. They welcome the lichen and mold which comes from the East, and have become one with it. The smell of death and decay constantly hangs over them. Those who accidentally stumble upon the Wakened Ones usually find death within their branches. However, the Wakened Ones are always quite friendly to their allies, for their deep and deadly machinations depend upon the aid of mobile beings, who can carry their dark messages across Dragon Pass.

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**Thunderhead:** These rolling hills north of Trader's Valley are believed to be haunted by Thunder Spirits, and their roaring can be heard almost every night in the Thunderhead.

**Tink:** Once a mining boom town, when the ore panned out Tink became a home for outcasts and drifters. See RQA 2 for more details on Tink.

**Toadstone:** This is one of the better known chaos hot spots of the hollow. The Toadstone is a giant green outcrop of rock jutting 10 meters out above the river. It gets its name from the giant aquatic variety of chaotic cliff-toads that dwell here. The toads secrete acid all over their bodies an live in harmony with the many gorp that also dwell here.

Too Far: The stockade of Too Far sits on the east of Trader's Valley at the border of Tarsh. Control of Too Far was given King Moirides by the Lunars, and the Tarsh king has ordered a contingent of Bagnot Regulars to man this fort and guard against incursions from both Sartar and Snake Pipe Hollow. There is almost always a Lunar Military unit near Too Far in the Watch Hills.

**Tradecamp:** This is a semi-permanent encampment of various traders that only closes down at the end of Storm Season and the Sacred Time. There is no political affiliation at the camp and it is open to all. Tradecamp is well known as the place to find recovered artifacts from Snake Pipe Hollow.

**Trader's Valley:** This broad valley lies between Dwarf Ford and Too Far. The Tarsh Road runs right down the center and Tradecamp and the Godstead Inn are notable stops.

Vale of Bones: This long valley is made up of the ribcage of some giant monster. See RQA 2 for more details.

Valley of the Chalk Man: Ancient chalk paintings line the walls of this valley, drawn before Time by primitive shamans.

Varna's Path: This is one of the twisting and turning path down into Snake Pipe Hollow. Directions to this path down from the Lost Man Hills can be found at every inn in Far Point..

Wanderer's Crypt: This place is shunned by all travelers due to the rumors of a powerful dead wizard whose ghost haunts the crypt.

Wapa's Hotel: Wapa is a strange proprietor of this hotel. He disallows drinking and carrying on among his visitors. Wapa becomes the stern father figure, and if you do not like it, you can take your business elsewhere. He doesn't mind, because his hotel is famous for some of the softest and warmest beds in Sartar, and Wapa's great healing power.

Watch Hills: These hills top the rise to the south of Too Far. Lunar divisions regularly drill and patrol here. This is the traditional border of Tarsh and there are several ruined stockades here.

Web Valley: This valley is home to spiders of all type, tiny and giant, animal and intelligent alike. Many of them have come here from nearby Cliffhome, and are under the protection of the dark spirit, Cragspider, who rules there. Woe to the person who dares to harm one of her subjects. Strangely enough, elves and trolls live in peace in the Web Valley, despite the fact that they constantly war everywhere else within the Stinking Forest. Perhaps there is something about the spiders, or their webs, which cover everything, which soothes tempers within the Valley. Sadly, outsiders are not treated nearly as well within the Web Valley. Unless they are specifically invited, visitors are quite likely to meet their death by spider bite, troll maul or elf arrow.

Weeping Tower: This location features the ruins of Fort Tikand, the famous site of the defenders against Chaos. In 1035 ST. the fort was established and its military was so confident of victory that they sent for their families. Before the families arrived, a massive chaos force overran the fort and slaughtered all in it. When the families finally made it there, they were confronted with gory sight of their loved ones in a sea of blood. Most mourned, buried their dead and returned to their villages. The fort commander's wife, Ahlesha, overwhelmed by grief, insisted on staying. She had his body carried to the tower where she stayed the rest of her days. Her weeping is still heard clearly as ever in the ashen tower as evidence of her everlasting love.

Whispering Vale: This vale is surrounded by lofty cliffs with unusual rock formations. There are powerful west-winds which blow through the cliffs and create sounds like whispers. Shamans say that it is a place where Orlanth communicates with his people, and Orthlanthi disciples travel there for guidance. Others say that Kajabor, the son of the devil, is whispering lies leading listeners to their demise or misfortune.



# **Gondo's Revenge**

Gondo's Revenge is an unofficial adventure for the **RuneQuest** role-playing game, and it is set in the world of **Glorantha**. The material herein comes from the authors' campaigns, and you are free to pick and choose the elements that suit your own game play. The deluxe edition of the **RuneQuest** rules, available from Avalon Hill, is required to play this scenario, as is the game supplement **Snakepipe Hollow**. Greg Stafford's **King of Sartar**, available from Chaosium, is helpful in running this scenario or any game set in the Dragon Pass area of Glorantha.

#### Introduction

The year is 1622 and the Lunar Empire is on the verge of crushing all resistance in the Kingdom of Sartar. The invasion that began twenty years earlier with the sack of Boldhome is now complete with the fall of Whitewall. The Red Emporer has declared this to be the *Extra-Full Moon Year*, and citizens of the Empire have been granted a year without taxes and Temples of the Reaching Moon are sponsoring non-stop celebrations.

Adventurers have found themselves scattered all over Sartar since Whitewall fell -- there will be several lean years ahead for all of those loyal to the Flame of Sartar until a potential savior appears to re-unite the kingdom. This is a tale of such adventurers...

### Gamemaster's Summary

This adventure is designed for a group of adventurers of medium to powerful strength, such as a group of experienced initiates led by a rune level character. Gondo Holst, a powerful ogre and near hero, has come up with a scheme to make himself overlord of Snake Pipe Hollow and a force to be reckoned with in Dragon Pass. The party of adventurers will get caught up in his grand scheme and hopefully foil it.

Last Maran Gor high holy day, the usual earthquake shook northern Dragon Pass with an unexpected result -- the shaker opened up some up some cracks in the Cobbled Ruin of Snake Pipe Hollow that lead to an older ruin below. Broos reported this to Gondo (who was staying in the Ogrewood) and he investigated the site himself. Gondo could feel the power within the ruins, but was unable to excavate but a few shattered relics. He then returned to Cacodemon Altar and sacrificed seven sentient beings until he received a vision of an Iron Man, the powerful artifact buried below the Cobbled Ruin.

Gondo spent several weeks deep in fiendish thought until he came up with his master plan. He plans to trick Isidilian, the Dwarf of Dwarf Run, into excavating the ruins for him. Once the dwarf miners have recovered the Iron Man, he plans to ambush them and steal it before they realize is happening. After using chaos magic to animate the Iron Man, Gondo then plans to petition the Lunar provincial government at Furthest to appoint him Prince of Snake Pipe Hollow.

The players get involved first by carrying a message from the ogre to Dwarf Run, and then secondly as mercenaries

# The Return to Snake Pipe Hollow

working for Isidilian guarding the excavation site. On their way to Dwarf Run, the PCs encounter some of the stranger denizens of Far Point, including a Lunar bureaucrat, the notorious Engoli headhunters and Havar Ironfist, the warlord of Alda-chur. After meeting the Dwarf at his mine, venturing into Snake Pipe Hollow brings its own chaotic perils as the party scouts ahead for the dwarf mining expedition.

The adventurers have to cross Dwarf Ford and pass by the Weeping Tower. Both locations contain minor chaotic challenges. The Cobbled Ruins hold dangers as well -- most notably the dangerous plant life that has sprouted there. The remnants of Fort Kagradus lie below the ruins and must be explored as well. The fort contains both chaotic menaces and fabulous dwarf technology from the First Age. The miners arrive along with a giant Jolanti and are able to recover the Jron Man quickly.

Spectral Scorpionmen and wayward giants both pose threats to the camp at the ruins. The adventure ends with Gondo leading a broo attack on the Cobbled Ruins in effort to gain control of the Iron Man. The party is greatly outnumbered until a strange band calling themselves Geo's Hidden Raiders arrives and turns the tide of the battle.

#### Dates and Weather

Gondo's Revenge nominally begins in Sea Season of 1622. Whitewall's fall last year has become old news and the survivors have returned to their families or have gone underground. Orlanth's High Holy Day and the Sacred Time have passed, leaving cult members free of required duties for a little while. Rains will be heavy for the first two weeks and light showers will characterize the next two. The temperature will be cool at the beginning, but not to any extreme. By the time the rains turn light, the temperature will be very spring like. A sample timeline follows:

Sea Season 1622 Death/Windsday Death/Fireday Death/Wilday Death/Godday Fertility Week Stasis Week Movement/Freezeday Movement/Waterday Movement/Clayday Movement/Windsday Movement/Fireday Movement/Wildday Movement/Godday Illusion Week/Freezeday Illusion Week/Waterday Illusion Week/Clayday Illusion Week/Windsday Truth Week/Waterday

Dancing Snake Inn Herongreen Bloated Boar Alda-chur **Glassmine** Quarry Dwarf Run waiting area Isidilian Dwarf Ford/Weeping Tower **Broo Hunting Grounds** Arrival at Cobbled Ruins Explore Fort Kagradus Dwarf miners arrive Mapping ruins/setting up camp Dwarf excavations begin Giant Attacks Gondo Attacks Leave Cobbled Ruins Arrive at Dwarf Mine

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#### Notes on Rumors

There are rumors listed at the end of each section in which the PCs might interact with the local populace. Some of the rumors are important while others are just for flavor. Any rumor beginning with an asterisk (\*) is directly related to the adventure. Listed are the source of the rumor, the actual rumor, and its veracity. The Gamemaster is responsible for introducing these rumors through role-playing.

### I. The Dancing Snake Inn

This adventure starts in a better known inn of northern Dragon Pass. Located eight miles to the east of Herongreen Stockade along the Pavis Road, the Dancing Snake Inn is frequented by travelers journeying between Sartar and Prax. The inn is noted for its exotic atmosphere and the strange earth cultists who dwell there. This is a good place for adventurers to be 'hiding out' after the fall of Whitewall and the general fervor of the Lunar provincial forces against Sartarite nationals. The GM should use a method suited to the current campaign to bring the PCs here. It is suggested that events start on Death Week of Sea Season, 1622.

The inn is run by members of the Cult of the Dancing Snake. The weird spirit cult is often shunned by those Sartarites who are afraid of non-Orlanthi. The Cult of the Dancing Snake for more details. The PCs may be shocked by the cultural differences exhibited by the Snake Pipe Dancers. After the adventures have settled in and the GM has introduced the unique inhabitants of the inn, they will be approached by a grizzled trader as the adventure begins.

#### **Gondo's Job**

Gondo Holst is an old and crafty ogre who has traversed the long distance between Dragon Pass and Balazar many times. Gondo first appeared in the long out-of-print game supplement *Griffin Mountain*. The ogre is here at the Dancing Snake Inn posing as an Issaries trader. He is hiring mercenary messengers in order to get his nefarious scheme under way. His disguise is impeccable and he has weaved many spells of obscurement around himself. He will approach the party with an offer of employment. When traveling in this guise, he speaks with a strange accent and goes by the name Gabby of Dykene. Have the PCs make World Lore rolls to know that Dykene is north of the Rockwoods in Balazar.

The trader wishes to have a backpack delivered to Isidilian the Wise at Dwarf Mine. The party may not realize that this is the Dwarf of Dwarf Run himself! Gabby says he is currently heading to Jonstown and is unable to make the detour to see the Dwarf. He will pay up to 300 L. per party member, but will only offer 100 L initially. The PCs are responsible for bargaining up to the maximum price. The ogre will reluctantly pay the full amount in advance if the party agrees to swear oaths and become Issaries lay members. Gabby/Gondo has small statues of the god of communication that he will sell for 10 L each to complete the ritual of becoming a lay member. Remember that Gondo is 100% perfect in his role as an Issaries trader. After handing over the package to be delivered, he tells the party that he will be heading north in a couple of weeks and will try to located them on his way back.

The backpack contains three pieces of broken finger which date back to before Time. The finger is iron and magical and can be identified as such with a successful mineral lore and detect magic spells respectively. They are parts of an Iron Man -- an ancient artifact made by Isidilian of Dwarf Mine. Gondo fully expects the Dwarf to recognize them and set off in search of the rest of the artifact. The sturdy canvas backpack is stitched closed and Gabby makes the now Issaries members swear to Raw Greed (the cult spirit of reprisal) to protect the contents and not violate them. The party should head out to Herongreen in the morning where they can stock up on goods.

#### **Rumors in the Dancing Snake Inn**

From Drufus, an Issaries merchant sitting with Gabby: "The Lunars are trying to increase trade in the area and Herongreen has been declared a duty-free town." [True]

From Thrum Mavra, an Orlanthi rebel of the Colymar tribe: "The Lunars are building a temple to Kajabor in Snake Pipe Hollow and are trying to resurrect the chaos god." [False]

\* From Gottus Van, a Vantaros messenger returning to Alda-chur: "The Boarhead clan of the Dinacoli are involved in a deadly blood-feud with the Sun Deer clan of the Vantaros in the Longdoe Hills. Prince Havar is likely to order a regiment of pikemen to the area to put an end to the feud and smart travelers would best stay clear of the hills." [True]



### **II.** To Far Point

There are two well-traveled passages from the Herongreen area to Dwarf Mine. The route via Alda-chur is suggested and detailed below. The alternate route -- across the Donalf Flats, past the Dragon's Eye, and up Dwarf Run -- is left for the GM to detail. Rumors of dragonnewt war parties waylaying travelers can be used to dissuade the party from going this route (see rumors in the Dancing Snake Inn above). There are four sections in this part corresponding to areas where encounters are given --Herongreen, Boar Bridge, The Bloated Boar Inn and Alda-chur. The GM can add extra planned encounters our use the encounter table inside the back cover.

#### Herongreen

Herongreen is the first stop for the adventures on their journey towards Dwarf Mine. Herongreen stockade is of note because it is at the junction of the Tarsh Road, the Pavis Road and the Kings Road. It is a good place to pick up supplies if the

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party doesn't mind purchasing them from an Etyries merchant. Herongreen is a stockade made from rock-hard Troll-wood from Skyfall Lake. Havar Ironfist has given control of the town to the Lunar Provincial governor, who in turn has given control to the Etyries cult. The Lunars hope to open up trade in the area with the now friendly Dinacoli and Vantaros tribes, and the Etyries high priest has declared all trade in Herongreen to be duty free. Hermides of Tarsh is the chief administrator and always looking for news from Snake Pipe Hollow. He will pay up to 10 L for a good report on the area.

While in town, the PCs will encounter Senecus the Younger, a Lunar scribe with an Imperial Warrant to question all travelers. Senecus has been commissioned to gather information on the users of the Tarsh road for Imperial Transit Authority, the branch of the Lunar government responsible for maintaining the quality of roads. He has a lengthy questionnaire which must be asked in full before he will let the party go about their business. He will ask the following questions, in order:

Imperial Transit Authority	
Document 34R-37774a	
Registered with Furthest Irippi Onton Temple	r .
Bears seal of Imperial Approval	
Name? Destination?	
Reason for traveling? Place of birth?	
Do you accept the Red Goddess as your personal savior? Next of kin?	•
<ul> <li>How many weeks per year do you spend traveling on Imperial roads?</li> <li>Are you satisfied with the current condition of the road system?</li> <li>Do you support the idea of higher tax</li> </ul>	œs
for better roads?	

Senecus will patiently fill out the forms as he asks each character the questions, hmming and hawing in response to the players answers. He is accompanied by two burly guards and if the players wish to fight or escape they should be reminded that they're in a Lunar held stockade and that the penalty for harming a Lunar citizen or violating a warrant is crucifixion.

#### **Rumors in Herongreen**

\* From a Jordash, a Dinacoli warrior or the Brown Boar Clan: "Dragonnewt warriors are challenging any who approach within sight of the Dragon's Eye." [True]

From an Jurta, an old woman selling good luck charms: "The Snake Pipe Dancers get their extraordinary powers by mating with snakes." [False].

From a Loren, a traveling Boldhome merchant selling glass pots: *"The sun is intolerably bright in Alda-chur."* [Partially True -- this is a metaphor for the new Yelm temple in the city]

#### Headhunter's Trail

After picking up any needed supplies in Herongreen, the party should head out for their next major stop, Alda-chur. It is a two day trip by foot, with the overnight stop of choice being the Bloated Boar Inn. The last two weeks of heavy rains have slowed travel and news of the road has been sparse. Old-times will tell the players to expect some bogs and short detours on the road and took look out for flooding near Boar Bridge.

#### Eurmal's Trick (Eurmali Fallere)\*

This bush reminds us of the old adage, "if it looks to good to be true, it's probably chaos." Otherwise non-descript, this leafy bush has small blue berries that look delicious and give off a pleasant smell, even after breaking their skins. As those that fall for the trick soon discover, nothing is further from the truth. The berries are poisonous, though not usually fatal.† *† POT 1d4 poison per berry* 

The road isn't as bad as expected, and the PCs do make reasonable time to the bridge. The GM can add encounters with other travelers and random encounters as desired. A patch of Eurmal's Trick off the road-side is suggested. Even though the waterway is somewhat swollen from the rains, the Boar Bridge is still intact and crossable, and a large group of humans can be seen on the other side. Unfortunately a band of mounted warriors is using the break in the heavy rains to come down out of Engoli's Fold for a raid in the Boarlands. This is a young group of a dozen headstrong near-do-wells looking for loot Scan rolls can identify shrunken heads hanging from the saddles. The Engoli will chase any party that tries to flee from them. A light rain begins along with the confrontation.

The Engoli tribe of northern Sartar is known to outsiders for two things -- the fierceness of their warriors and their penchant for shrinking the heads of dead enemies. Called the Headhunters by most, the Engoli are avoided by others whenever possible. The headhunter clan lives in a relatively isolated valley called Engoli's Fold, which lies between the Tarsh Road and the Safe Trail. The clan-chief's seat is at Fort Engoli at the north end of the fold. The clan agreed to Havar's alliance and is nominally ruled by the Prince of Far Point, and the clan is obligated to provide forty armed warriors to Havar each year. The process of taking and shrinking heads is a clan quirk, and it enhances their reputation as fierce warriors. They also inscribe the foci for spirit magic in the heads. Unknown to most outsiders and other clan members, about 3 percent of the Engoli are secret Thanatar worshippers and there is a temple hidden somewhere in the hills above Engoli's Fold.

This group of Headhunters will block the Boar Bridge and heckle and harass the adventures. The Engoli's sheer number should have most sensible PCs running for cover, but this will be to no avail. The Headhunters use their horses to quickly surround the party and continue to hurl insults. After a short while their leader, Orio Toothson, will step forward and falsely accuse the party of violating sacred tribal ground, upsetting the spirits of the Engoli ancestors. He says the spirits demand

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vengeance through the shiv-dan-dan, a man-to-man knife fight. This is just an excuse to show off his prowess. If the party fast talks their way out of the shiv-dan-dan, the Engoli will proceed directly to the brawl below.

The shiv-dan-dan follows a specific ritual, and the Engoli will be quick to let the party know that any derivation will result in a quick spear from horseback. First, the players should be informed that one of them must step forward to fight for the entire party. Jubak, Orio Toothson's second in command, will tie a 6 foot leather thong first to his leader's left hand, and then to the left hand of the PC chosen to fight. Below are Orio's suggested knife skills. The GM should ad lib this fight as more of a competition, not a death match. The nearby bridge and swollen stream can add opportunities to the fight.

Orio will probably win the shiv-dan-dan. If he does, the party is free to heal their downed fellow and proceed on their way. If the PC wins, the Headhunters will jump down from their mounts and engage in an all-out brawl. They will not draw weapons unless the adventures do so first -- scan rolls will quickly realize that the Engoli are out to bust heads, not draw blood. This fight is very much like the rumble in the West Side Story. The GM should use whatever rules for unarmed nonlethal combat they like. The Headhunters should win just by sheer numbers and will ride off after busting-heads.

#### **Orio Toothson**



#### **Bloated Boar Inn**

The sounds of a fight greet the party as they arrive at the Bloated Boar well after sunset. As they approach the door, they will have to dodge the two drunken (and now bruised) clansmen being ejected from the inn and into the roadway. After their troubles with the Engoli, the party should be wary of another brawl.

Despite the rowdy welcome to the inn, the rest of the night passes without major event. Good food and a billet are easy to acquire, as is good conversation. The most important bit is for the players to get pointed to Geo's Alda-chur Inn. Ponybraid, the barmaid, is also fond of making a little extra cash by entertaining male PCs out in the haystack behind the barn. More information on the Bloated Boar can be found on page 5.

#### Rumors in the Bloated Boar

\* From Mac Mak-Mak, a Tarsh Exile: "Havar Ironfist of Alda-chur is nothing but a Lunar lap-dog. Geo's is the only place in town where one can escape his spies." [Half True].

From Marius of Goldedge, a Lunar Tarsh merchant: "The Engoli would as soon take your head as take your silver." [False -- The Engoli only take heads after combat with clan enemies]

\* From Ponybraid, the barmaid who overhears the party talking about Dwarf Run: "Gussak Drunkbeard in Geo's at Alda-chur is a renegade from Dwarf Run." [True]

#### **Prophesies of Isidilian**

#### A Draconic Event: Isidilian - S.T. 1600

During phase 235025, the inhabitants of the pass are slaves of the malfunctioning moon. The celestial dragon shall rise from the earth for the heavens, his function in the repair project, the initial halting of the red orb's progress across the sky sub-system. The celestial dragon shall measure 634 units in length and will weigh 2036 units.

#### Alda-chur

The walled city of Alda-chur should immediately give the party the feeling of being hostile to storm worshippers and Sartarite nationals. Vantaros warriors guard the gates and their officers are obvious solar worshipers with bright yellow plumes and Yelmic ornamentation on their bronze armor. The party should arrive just before dusk -- Havar has ordered that the gates only be open while Yelm is in the sky to watch over all who would enter his city. The warriors at the gate ask all who enter their names and business, which is then entered into a log. The city is mostly drab wooden buildings and the majority of Aldachur's citizens are farmers from the nearby Sharl plains. Most of the merchants and foreigners are obviously from Tarsh, and the Warlord is courting the favor of their king. The party should make straight for Geo's, and most locals can give directions.

Geo's Alda-chur Inn is the only location in town that still harbors any pro-Sartarite sentiments. One of Havar's first acts after unifying Far Point was to expel all of the Orlanthi from Alda-chur. Why he hasn't closed Geo's has always been a topic of speculation -- most of the cult's members believe it is the fear of Geo's Bouncer that has kept the Warlord from closing the Inn. See *Tales of the Reaching Moon* issue 3 or *Different Worlds* issue 1 for a write-up of the Geo Cult.

Geo's is a low one story building near the south wall. There are four rooms -- a kitchen, an eating room, a common room and a private room in the back. The PCs will be welcome even if they're not cult members -- the inn has been fairly empty since Havar has expelled all potential Orlanthi threats to his rule. The eating room is where the party will stay -- it is dominated by the fireplace in the center. There is a large cauldron in the fire and a smaller one to the side. The first contains hearty stew and the second is for donations to the cult. Talk is easy with the dozen current patrons of Geo's, and they are interested in news from other parts of Sartar. They can tell the party that Gussak shows up late in the evening and usually engages in heavy drinking.

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Travelers often purchase information about Dwarf Run and Snake Pipe Hollow from him. The GM should role-play out the various inn residents. while the party is waiting.

Gussak the Dwarf makes his appearance in the Inn about an hour before midnight. He is a renegade from Dwarf Mine who lives in Alda-chur by selling items that he makes with his dwarven skills. Gussak was expelled from Dwarf Mine by Isidilian for the heresy of declaring that all dwarfs should be allowed to learn any job desired. He as been slowly aging and has become increasingly dependent on alcohol. Gussak is gruff and dour, but is receptive to offers of silver. This dwarf is a vehicle for the gamemaster to answer player questions and add new information to the party -- he tells only what the GM wants. There are four categories of answers -- yes/no, single word, short answer and long answer. The price of each answer can vary from a few sovereigns to a pocketful, as set by the GM. Gussak becomes more and more glib as he continues to drink.

At around midnight, a drunken patron of the inn starts getting rowdy. After some pushing and shoving and shouting at some other patrons, he heads for the door. At the inn entry, he starts shouting 'Havar is being buggered by Moirides the molester!' out into the street. This is a signal -- the patron has been paid off by Drummak, Havar's head of the city guard. Drummak has been planing this raid for a while and hopes to gain prominence by rooting out this hotbed of sedition. Drummak is an evil looking man, resembling a hairy weasel with a mustache.

There are a dozen armed pikemen at both the front and back entrance. As Drummak leads the city guard in through the front door shouting that everyone is under arrest. Most of the locals will try to stream out through the back entrance. As soon as people come in sight of the Alda-churi warriors, they find that *slow* spells are being cast at them. Make it clear to the PCs that they are outnumbered by the Alda-churi warriors who are glowing with battle magic. Everyone should soon be under arrest. If they ask Drummak why they're being arrested, he will tell them that they are suspected seditionists. All of the party's equipment is dumped into individual sacks and placed in a wagon waiting outside.

After a night in an underground holding room, the players are brought before Havar Ironfist himself. The players will be advised by a priest that they about to enter the presence of a true hero, and any broach of propriety will be swiftly punished. They will be shackled together in a long line and led into Havar's audience chamber. The Warlord sits on a large throne wearing an impressive solid gold crown and competent looking guards flank him. He looks bored as he goes over a list that an aide puts before him. A guard announces that the PCs were arrested last night for conspiracy to commit sedition. Havar doesn't even look up from the paperwork in front of him when he pronounces his judgment -- "Guilty, one week's slavery in the quarry as sentence." The PCs are then led off without being allowed to argue their case and do their hard labor.

#### **Rumors in Alda-chur:**

From Dogrel, a town dissident: "Havar is clamping down in all dissidents in town because Moirides of Tarsh is coming to visit soon" [TRUE]

From Tad, a street urchin: "The legendary Snake Pipe has been recovered and is in the possession of a merchant in Trader's Valley." [False].

From Mab, a Humakti mercenary in Geo's: "Hermedes in Herongreen will pay handsomely for any artifact from Snake Pipe Hollow." [True]

### III. Dwarf Run

The broad area that the Dragon River flows through as it exits Snake Pipe Hollow in known as Dwarf Run. It gets its name from the ancient dwarf settlement at Dwarf Mine. There is little human settlement in this area.

### **Prophesies of Isidilian**

The Second Council's Move to Dorastor: Isidilian - S.T. 180 In the magical land of the Feldichi, mortals will be subjected to corruption by power of a kind and nature they are not built to understand or handle. Their grandiose plans and creations are projected to fail, and the Uz and Dragon-men shall together band their armies and destroy the forces of light. The doomsday machine of the Mostali will continue to march onwards to meet its unstoppable schedule.

#### **Glassmine Quarry**

It is a full day's march east from Alda-chur to the quarry at Glassmine. The typical flora of the Sharl Plains characterizes the morning, especially the barley fields surrounding the Vantaros steads. The afternoon holds the most difficult part of the journey as the PCs have to scale the cliffs of Dwarf Run. The mule trail is slow going, made especially treacherous by the workers all being roped together. Of relief to the party should be the familiar sacks containing their possessions on the pack animals. The PCs are not forced to wear slave collars unless they are trouble makers.

The days at the quarry should go quickly and without event. Along with the PCs are any other patrons captured at Geo's (the staff was not arrested) as well as a few other petty criminals. The day begins with in the PCs waking in the holding barracks and being fed bread and water. The march from the guard camp to the quarry is just over half an hour, where the characters will spend a backbreaking day in the quarry, mining stone for the new temple in Alda-chur. The GM can role-play the interaction with some of the other prisoners as desired. Friendships can form and NPCs that will be reintroduced in future adventures.

One event of major note will occur while the party is at Glassmine. On the evening of the fourth night, the camp will be attacked by a hungry walktapus. It slithers into camp exhaling a poisonous cloud and wreaking havoc. The guards strive to fight if off and eventually do so. This situation gives the PCs a chance to escape. The gamemaster should play it out -- remember that the characters equipment is in a tent near the center of camp. If

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the party completes their week of labor, they will be released from the mine and have their equipment returned.

#### **Rumors in Glassmine:**

From Drivel, a drunk from Alda-chur: "The dwarfs sacrifice humans to their terrible Cannon Cult." [FALSE]

From Laban, a thief from Alda-chur: "There has been an unusual amount of activity in Snake Pipe Hollow and Havar believes that a Yelm Temple will protect Alda-chur." [FALSE]

From Julipan, a guard: "Alda-chur is not the best place to be for Orlanthi -- I see an awful lot of them here on trumped up charges." [TRUE]

#### **Crossing the River**

After completing the remainder of their week of hard labor, the adventurers are ready to continue on their journey to Dwarf Mine. The River ranges 200-300 meters in width and is flowing swift. The best way to cross is to wait for a river raft to pass and hail it for a ride. At least three swim rolls would be required to cross, and severe penalties should be assessed for any swimmer wearing clothing or carrying equipment. If the party thinks about building their own raft, the sparse amount of wood and lack of proper tools quickly realizes this as unfeasible. This search for material is likely to turn up a patch of Snake Grass.

#### **Snake Grass** (Graminis Anguis)

This vicious species of grass is only native to Snake Pipe Hollow and the surrounding areas. Snake Grass grows in large clumps that measure up to 50 feet in diameter. Each patch of Snake Grass is the result of a single clonal lineage. It can often be found hiding in the midst of other types of grasses. The easiest way to recognize Snake Grass before entering a patch is to notice that in Snake Grass the blades wave slightly, as if blown by the wind, even on a calm day. On a windy day they may even be observed to sway against the wind.

The blades of Snake Grass are a dusty emerald green in color, with small black discoloration that resemble eyes when not viewed closely. They reach a top height of eight inches in Earth season. The tip of each blade is a small cutting barb. When small animals (or feet) travel through a patch of Snake Grass, dozens of tiny scratches can occur. The dripping blood provides the Snake Grass with the additional nourishment required to maintain its high level of activity.<sup>†</sup>

Even if you wear properly safe footwear, Snake Grass is not always safe to stroll through. Often times a given patch will possess a chaos feature of some kind.<sup>‡</sup> Even when they don't, Broos are know to often visit the same patch in the hope that some small animal has died nearby from blood loss.

† Soft Leather or stronger material will completely protect a foot from damage. If thinner cloth or no protection is present, walking through a patch will cause a point a damage to each foot. Small cuts will continue to bleed for up to three rounds, unless treated.

‡ Any given patch of Snake Grass has a 50% chance of a Chaotic feature from the Chaotic Features Table.

Shortly after the noon hour, a medium sized raft can be seen in the middle of the River. The PCs need to be able to get its attention, and a well prepared group will have a signal fire ready. The raft makes it way towards the east bank, and the rafter, Polonius, hails the party and asks their business. The raft seems to move itself without a crew of polers -- there is an undine bound to it. He is wary of bandits and chaos, and will order the undine to proceed with full speed if he perceives any threat. Polonius makes his living transporting goods and travelers from Hannand to Dwarf Ford. For a price of no less that 100 sovereigns (more if it a large party), he will drop them off on the far bank. Polonius is talkative older riverman originally from the Oslir Valley near Furthest. He is not very fond of the dwarfs at Dwarf Mine, and more than welcome to give his opinion to the party. Such statements like "Dwarf gold turns to lead a day after they give it to you!" are the fair that Polonius spouts.



#### **Dwarf Mine**

The approach to Dwarf Mine is an awesome sight and should be described to the players as such. The giant stone statues that lie on either side of the massive doorway look unbelievably life-like. A scan roll will reveal strange shiny brass cigars the size of horses in recesses in the cliff above the doorway. Several dwarfs come and go from the area. Show the PCs the picture of Dwarf Mine in the insert. The doors are flung open and it is both an inviting and foreboding mood that comes over the party.

Once at the doorway, the adventures are allowed to enter the first chamber by the iron-dwarf guards decked in priceless iron armor. This is a massive hall that could easily hold a person the size of the statues outside. The glitter of thousands of quartz crystals line the cavern walls. The party is ushered before Ubauric, a gold-dwarf the doorman for the mine. In a very dour voice he asks the PCs what their business is. When they mention that they have a package for Isidilian, he writes it into his schedule ledger, and tells the party that they must go to the

waiting area and a dwarf will come to get them. Ubaric gives directions to the waiting area outside the mine if the PCs request them or seem unsure of where to go.

The waiting area is outside the mine, about half a mile down the trail towards Hannand. It is actually a camp site and there are other visitors to the mine already camped out. The PCs will be surprised to see that there is a group of three dwarfs waiting here, but they keep to themselves and will speak to no one. Drusas, a Tarsh trader from Bagnot can tell the players that the dwarfs are from far away Nida. Drusas is here are the Mine in attempt to purchase dwarf food. He owns a copy of the Lhankor Mhy interview with Isidilian that is found in the center of this booklet. Drusas is willing to share this with the party for the right price.

If the PCs return to the mine before they are summoned, they will be reminded that their business has already been noted and that the schedule can not be deviated from. After a several day wait, the party is finally summoned back to the mine by a dwarf who refuses to speak. If the GM is following the suggested timeline, this takes place on Freezeday of Movement Week.

#### **Rumors in Dwarf Mine waiting area:**

From Drusas: "The statues in front of the mine are really giant Jolanti, and the Dwarf can command them to make war on his enemies." [True]

From Ceryl of Hannand: "Ubaric is really the Dwarf of Dwarf Run -- don't cross him if you value your life!" [False]

From Hurta of Tink" "Those twinkles in the roof of the main cave are Falangian diamonds." [False]

#### In the Service of Isidilian

A worker dwarf will summon them back to the Mine on the first day of Movement week. It is a short journey and the adventures will find themselves in front of Ubauric again. He tells the party that Isidilian is unavailable and that he is duly authorized to carry on the day to day business of the mine. Ubauric will insist that there is no other option and the PCs should eventually give in. When the heavy pack is finally opened and its contents revealed, the dwarf lets out an excited 'Oh my!' The heavy iron pieces are easily recognizable as giant fingers. Ubauric calls out 'Iron ho!' and four iron dwarfs appear out of the shadowy recesses of the reception hall. He instructs them to guard the guests while he attends some urgent business. The iron dwarfs refuse to talk to the party and are armed to the teeth -- any escape is futile.

#### **Prophesies of Isidilian**

# The Lament of Iron [The Iron Project]: Isidilian - Middle Storm Age

The Iron Project is the great Doomsday machine of the Mostali. These poor constructs cannot build, cannot shape, cannot make; they can only destroy. With each passing work cycle they grow ever stronger. When all the enemies of the World Machine have been defeated by them, who will protect us from our creations? Who will protect the World Machine from elemental outer chaos? Approximately half an hour later, Ubauric returns in the company of a plain looking worker dwarf. The worker dwarf walks up to the fragments of the Iron Man and holds them to his breast. To himself, the dwarf mutters 'I must remember back... I must look forward...' He then turns to Ubauric and says, "Take them to a visitor's chamber, I will speak with them later.'

Ubauric will not answer any questions other than that yes, that was the famed Isidilian the Wise, and that they have stumbled into something very important. The party is then taken to a holding room to await Isidilian's return.

The room is 10 meters deep and 20 meters wide with only one door. There are 8 stone niches carved into the wall with the barest of straw palettes to sleep on. There are two magical lanterns that light to room, complete with dimming hoods. The room is secure, and there is nothing to do but wait. After an indeterminate amount of time, a pale human with solid pink eyes (blind albino) will enter the room and offer the characters food -metal glasses filled with a dirt like substance and spoons. These are tin cans filled with #3064.

Eventually Isidilian will appear and make known the history of Kagradus Fort (see page 20) as well as answering questions. He will also add that prophesies indicate great events are to happen that may involve the players and the Iron Man buried in the hollow. Isidilian then asks the PCs to aid him in recovering the artifact. He holds forth in his hands the Orb of Resilience<sup>†</sup>, a shiny black ball, and he offers to give it to the party after completing this mission. The GM should facilitate having the party agree to work for the Dwarf.

Isidilian gives a cursory overview of what he wants the PCs to do for him. First, they are to see the quartermaster, Fworfang Goodtin, and outfit themselves as needed. Then they are to proceed into Snake Pipe Hollow and journey to the Cobbled Ruins. There they are to scout out the area and wait for a dwarf mining expedition to arrive. They are to guard the dwarfs while they recover the Iron Man and return with them to the Mine. The quartermaster has all of the standard supplies, plus dwarf made chain mail that is +2 AP available for loan.

† The Orb of Resilience is in reality a 1" wide rubber super-ball. One of Isidilian's secrets is that of fun -- something unknown to dwarf culture outside the mine.

#### IV. Into the Hollow

Once the PCs enter Snake Pipe Hollow, they will be venturing into a totally different world. Although the wilds and cities of Dragon Pass alike can often be quite harsh, they are nothing compared Snake Pipe Hollow, where chaos still rules. There, it is like Time has been banished, and the Great Darkness never ended. Black rolling clouds blown in by Urain the Bad Wind hug the cliffs.

Feel free to shake up the PC's sense of reality while they are in Snake Pipe Hollow. Sometimes Yelm doesn't rise on time within the Hollow, or he stops his eternal journey to hang unmoving for hours. The nighttime stars always look different over the Hollow, and on occasion they actually come alive, to fight epic battles that were decided ages ago. The rules of nature

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constantly warp within the Hollow as well. The River may flow East, back up the Cliffs towards Skyfall Lake, or the dead may rise, and continue on with their life. In Snake Pipe Hollow, nothing can be trusted -- not the plants, animals or even the ground itself.

Isidilian has suggested the PCs follow Dwarf Trail to Dwarf Ford, and then skirt along the south side of the River until it turns, at which time they should head straight southeast towards to the Cobbled Ruins. He has said that this is the safest route, because many of the chaos beings of the Hollow avoid the River south of the Toadstone, despising its cleansing qualities. This is the route that is assumed below.

While a few set encounters are given, to occupy the PCs trek to the Cobbled Ruins, the GM should feel free to supplement them with the Snake Pipe Hollow column of the Encounter Table inside the back cover or the Wilderness Encounters listed on pg. 14 of **Snake Pipe Hollow** game supplement. This would be especially appropriate if the PCs manage to draw attention to themselves in some way while in the hollow. Remember that Snake Pipe Hollow is a very dangerous place, and chaos lurks everywhere.

#### **Dwarf Ford**

Arriving at Dwarf Ford, the PCs will quickly see why Isidilian suggested they cross here, for Dwarf Ford is undoubtedly the easiest place to cross the River for tens of miles in either direction. The ford is perfectly level all the way across, and just a few feet below the normal river level. It is clearly of dwarven manufacture. Human Lore rolls allow a PC to remember that King Jarolar died defending Sartar at this ford.

When halfway across Dwarf Ford, standing upon the sandy island in the middle of the river, the adventurers will get their first sight of the chaos from the Hollow. All PCs should make Scan rolls. Any who are successful will be able to make out an unusually large gorp which is happily floating down the River, straight towards the PCs.

When the PCs first see the Gorp, it is 15m away if the best

scan roll was a normal success, 30m away if the best scan was a special, and 60m away if the best scan was a critical success. If no one succeeded at the scan, the players will notice it as it passes them. The gorp is floating down the river at 15m/round. The PCs may try to get to shore, not realizing that the gorp is quite happy and docile, and unwilling to attack anyone. If they wish to run across the ford to shore in either direction, they must make a DEX x 3 roll, with failure causing them to slip and go tumbling into the river. For each additional round that a PC spends carefully fording the River, he may increase his DEX roll by two levels (thus, a player who spend two rounds crossing the ford would have to roll DEX x5). Players who end up in the River will have to make swim rolls or begin drowning (see *RuneQuest* Deluxe Edition, pg. 82).

The PCs are really in no danger from this gorp, and may enjoy a bit of target practice with it. When the gorp closes to 0m, it will not make any attacks, but simply wash past the ford on the north side, and continue floating down the river. The only exception to this is if one of the PCs ends up in the middle of the River just as the gorp sweeps by (probably because they panicked and tried to get to shore). In this case, the gorp will be happy to envelop the unfortunate PC as a light afternoon snack.

If the PCs allow the gorp to get by them, it will continue floating down the river until it reaches some poor town further south in Dragon Pass. If this is the case, be sure to make the PCs feel guilty next time they're in this area, by telling of the terrible gorp attacks that have been occurring, and all of the poor villagers that have been devoured.

### The Happy Acid Gorp

characi	teristics	attributes
STR	0	Move: 1
CON	7	Hit Points: 21
SIZ	34	Fatique: n/a
INT	1	Magic Points: 6
POW	6	DEX SR: n/a



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## The Story of Kagradus Fort

### (As Told by Isidilian the Wise)

Snake Pipe Hollow has always been a breeding pit of Chaos, ever since the Rock Mostali first dug it, in the time without Sun, to trap the greatest Chaos army ever within. At first, we tried to destroy the trapped Chaos. Iron Mostali led people of all races into the Hollow, including the fabulous Iron Men, but they found that the anomalous forces were often too well hidden, and when they were not, they were sometimes too strong. Then, we tried to ignore the trapped Chaos. This worked for a time, and it seemed that the Chaos had been contained. But after the Sun was partially restored to the World Machine, the forces of disorder began to venture forth from the Hollow, to terrorize the nearby lands.

So, finally, we decided to guard the trapped Chaos. Kagradus, who was then King of the Humans of Dragon Pass, offered the best men of his Liornvuli Tribe. With the aid of Rock, Lead and Tin, the humans built Kagradus Fort in the center of the Hollow, upon a great rise. It had been mathematically determined to be the most defensible location within the Hollow itself. Under the leadership of Gold and Iron, the humans of Kagradus Fort watched over the Chaos of the Hollow, and helped to control it throughout the Dawn Age.

When the work order for Osentalka was nearing completion, a great disorder spread throughout the world. The Liornvuli, and many other humans, rose in revolt against the new god. One of their kind, named Lokamayadon, was able to calm them, but not before the damage was done. While the Liornvuli's attention was turned elsewhere, hordes of broo swarmed over Kagradus Fort, and destroyed it forever.

The next century was a battle for survival against the Gbaji god which rose from Osentalka's ashes in Dorastor, further breaking the World-Machine. The chaos of the Hollow joined his cause, and so it could scarcely be held back. Even after the hero Arkat slew Gbaji, the Unity of the races was still broken, and so the humans were never willing to return to the Hollow to reaffirm their ancient duties.

Early in the Second Age, the best dwarfs from Dwarf Mine tried to reestablish the fortress within the Hollow. They returned to the site of Kagradus Fort, and found that the fortress had utterly disappeared. Not even ruins remained. The dwarfs built the Great Cobbled City where the Fort had once stood, but it lasted for a less then fifty years, for the Chaos had grown too strong in the hollow.

Since that time, other forts, such as Tikand Garrison, have on occasion watched over Snake Pipe Hollow, but never have they actually been built within it, like Kagradus Fort was. Today, all the ancient forts are fallen, and only Dwarf Mine remains. I fear the Chaos grows ever stronger.

area body	missile 01-20			armor/hp D/21	·	
<i>weapon</i> Envelope	sr 1	attk% 100	<i>damage</i> 8 point acid	parr%	pts -	
Envelope	L	100	o point doid			

#### Skills: Glurp Happily(93)

Treasure: Silver Dagger worth 100 L within gorp.

**Notes:** This gorp is just so happy to be alive that it glows with exuberance. It bobs merrily, and may even glurp in good cheer when the PCs first spot it. See *River of Cradles* pg. 79 for more information on gorp.

#### The Weeping Tower

Near the end of their first day out of Dwarf Mine, the PCs will approach the Weeping Tower. The ruins have been quite thoroughly looted, and the PCs are unlikely to find anything of value. They may chose to investigate sounds of weeping heard from within the ashen tower that is at the center of the ruins, but they will be unable to find the source. See the gazetteer of Snake Pipe Hollow on page 11 for more information on the spirit that dwells within the Weeping Tower.

Eventually, the PCs will probably decide to camp for the night at the Weeping Tower, since the ruins do offer some limited cover and protection. The only potential danger is from a small patch of Rot Bush near the town. As they are setting up camp, they will be approached by Arlin Grumf.

Simply put, Arlin Grumf is an Ogre. However, he is nearly the opposite of the charismatic Gondo who set the PCs on this journey. He is a bear-like man, so covered in hair that he is bestial in appearance. His back is hunched, and malignant looking growths cover his body. Despite his ugliness, the PCs will probably think Arlin is human unless he smiles. At the worst, the PCs might suspect that he is a bear walker. However, if they see the sharp, jagged teeth within his mouth, they should have no doubt that he is an ogre.

Arlin has approached the PCs because he is hungry and curious. However, he will likely be intimidated by their superior numbers. Still, he will talk with them for a while, eager to learn why they are in the hollow, and happy to pass on any information that he can. If Arlin can actually get any of the PCs to wander off into the ruins with him alone under some pretext, he will leap upon the unfortunate victim, in hope of a tasty meal. Otherwise, Arlin will be non-aggressive.

Arlin isn't exactly the smartest ogre ever to walk the hollow, and he may very well give himself away while speaking with the PCs. When he's hungry, he occasionally begins to gnaw upon his left arm, and the PCs will very likely react badly to this when he begins to draw blood. If Arlin is attacked by the PCs, he will try to flee, but fight to the death if cornered.

#### Arlin Grumf

<b>•</b>
3
ints: 13
e: 32
Points: 8
u

		10-10		0-17	2/4		
chest r arm		12 13-15		1-15 6-17	4/6 2/4		
I leg abdome	en	05-08 09-11		)4-06 )7-10	1/5 0/5		
<i>area</i> r leg		<i>missile</i> 01-04	C	nelee )1-03	armor/hp 2/5		
DEX APP	10 6					ы М	

DEV OD. O

Skills: Craft: Skin(53), Chaos Lore(31), Human Lore(71) Spirit Magic: Shimmer 3

Armor: Varies due to growths on Arlin's body.

Items: A sack of bones from small mammals and birds. Treasure: None

#### Rot Bush (Fructicus Putrecere)

One of the many foul smelling, fetid and rotting plants of the Hollow, Rot Bush is of note because alchemists are know to pay well for its seeds. In viewing, the Rot Bush appears as a standard variety of Fructicus that has been rotting for several weeks. It gives off a foul smell, not unlike carrion.

The seeds can be collected safely from seed pods atop the apical stem. Rot Bush itself holds no danger to the collector, but its smell often attracts unwelcome guests that may pose a serious danger.

#### The Rest of the Journey

Through the rest of the journey to the Cobbled Ruins, the PCs will not be directly approached by any chaos beings. A stand of Bloodwood trees lies in the party's way, but wary adventurers may opt for a short detour around the chaotic trees. However, they will see some in the near distance, and may confront them if they choose,. The chaos creatures will not initiate any conflicts unless the PCs make spectacles of themselves. On the morning of the second day, the PCs will see a group of six broos hunting on the other side of The River, and towards noon, they will see a feared Walktapus in the distance.

If the PCs do somehow end up in battle with these creatures, use the stats in *Snake Pipe Hollow*, pg. 40-42, for the broos (Broo Groups One and Two), and the stats in *Snake Pipe Hollow Digest*, pg. 3, for the walktapus (Walktapus Two).

Towards the end of the second day out of Dwarf Mine, the PCs will see Toadstone across the river. See the gazetteer of Snake Pipe Hollow on page 11 for more information on the Toadstone. They will probably camp about where the river turns northwards. As they are making camp, they party is approached by two humans heading west a fast clip. The leading human warily hails the adventures with a greeting of Orlanth. He says is name Rolan, and is traveling from Ironspike to Trader's Valley with his companion (Greenbow the elf in disguise). He explains that he is traveling across the hollow instead of Far Point because there was some trouble with Havar Ironfist and a trader from Balazar (Gabby) was able to cover while they escaped. Rolan asks of dangers the PCs might have encountered, and can tell them that he saw giants leaving the Shade Table, so that area is safe for now. The two travelers then head on their way. Rolan and Greenbow are actually heading to Geo's Hideaway Inn and are members of the Hidden Raiders.

#### **Bloodwood** (Fraxinus' Sanguinis)

Bloodwood is a species of Ash thought to be recently(last few centuries) imported from Dorastor, where it is a favorite of the Poisonthorn Aldryami. The tree is a small hardwood, never growing more than 10 feet in height. The wood it provides, when finished, is remarkably strong and beautiful, with differing shades of red grains running through it. The branches and limbs grow almost perfectly straight, thanks to the work of the Aldryami who created the breed with weapons in mind.

Those seeking to profit from harvesting Bloodwood are often surprised when cutting the trees for the first time. Not only does the sap pour out rapidly, but is in fact real blood. Some trees have been rumored to give off a small whine at this violation, but this is not proven. To properly cure the wood and retain its color, the wood must be severed quickly and the blood flow staunched.<sup>†</sup> Wood drained of blood resembles plain Ash. Once the wound is sealed the wood must be allowed to sit for several weeks and then can be safely crafted in to products. <sup>‡</sup>

*†* Heal 2 or a successful First Aid is necessary.

‡ It is known the Aldryami of Poisonthorn have ways of keeping the plant alive through the entire process, giving the final product greater hardness and durability.

On the second day of the journey, the PCs will, if they are still following Isidilian's instructions, head straight southeast. Remind them that Isidilian warned that the chaos would be worse once they left they river especially when crossing the Broo Hunting Grounds. This should make them somewhat nervous, given the amount that they have already encountered. However, the last leg of the journey to the Cobbled Ruins will be unnaturally quiet except for a vicious patch of Running Grass. Not a single being will be seen, throughout the day, not even the smallest animal or insect. The PCs will arrive at the Cobbled Ruins a few hours after noon on the Third Day out of Dwarf Mine.

There is no map of the Cobbled Ruins presented. It is basically a large flat area with millions of cobblestones scattered about.

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### Running Grass (Graminis Cursus)

The most voracious of all know carnivorous varieties of chaos grass, this breed functions as one of the most efficient scavengers in Snake Pipe Hollow. Each patch grows no larger than five feet in diameter. When it reaches that size it splits into several small clumps of grass. The grass resembles a standard narrow-bladed variety, though it is the only know mobile grass. It does not actually move, but has a chaos-driven ability to grow forward rapidly while absorbing the grass left behind back into its system. This results in a remarkable speed for a plant.<sup>†</sup>

As a scavenger, Graminis Cursus has the ability to detect beings nearby, though how is not yet understood. It prefers dead food, but does not hesitate to begin eating dying or helpless prey. Sometimes several patches will hunt together to take down small, unsuspecting animals. The attack of Running Grass is incredibly painful, as those who have slipped and fallen with Running Grass nearby will tell you. The Grass actually uses its chaotic ability to grow onto the victim.<sup>‡</sup> In general though, Running Grass only follows the movements of people through the hollow hoping for an easy meal.

Running Grass often displays rudimentary intelligence, and keeps a safe distance from those that might threaten it. Some scholars have noted the humor of watching Grass attempt to hide behind objects while trailing someone. A last note is that the more intelligent patches often follow around bands of Broos, seeming to know innately what sloppy eaters they are.

#### † Running Grass can move at a rate of 3.

*t* This attack causes one point of damage to total body for each round the Grass is attached. It can only attack things on the ground, such as corpses or wounded men. Standing and shaking is a simple remedy for removal, as is fire, though only temporarily. The only way to kill Running Grass is to stomp it into oblivion. Its chaotic movement quickly extinguishes attempts to burn it and make it quite hard to stomp on

## V. The Cobbled Ruins

After arriving at the Cobbled Ruins on the afternoon of their third day out of Dwarf Mine, the PCs will discover that they are largely as Isidilian described them. Perfectly cut cobble stones, each unbroken one measuring precisely 4" x 4" x 8", litter an area that is approximately circular in shape. These cobbles originally formed the foundation of the second Dwarven Fort, but many have been stolen or destroyed over the years, and only scattered remnants remain. Many of the walls of the fort, both inner and outer, can still be made out, but none of these ruins are more than a foot high, and even that only in rare cases.

The Cobbled Ruins are rarely traveled through, and so they are largely overgrown by plants of every type. Ivy covers everything, but in places grapes and tomatoes may be found as well, growing along the ground. A few old oak trees also dot the ruins. Universally, all of these plants have been utterly corrupted by the chaos of the Hollow. Some are huge, while others are stunted. Coloration and texture of the plants also vary wildly.

The entrance to Kagradus Fort is easy to find. There is a large rift in the earth in the North part of the ruins. The hole goes but a few feet before opening into a cavernous opening.

#### **Prophesies of Isidilian**

The End of the World: Isidilian - Late Storm Age

The Breaking of the World Machine took place at the extreme end of the range predicted by the schedule. The storm gods continue their fighting that initiated the breaking of the World Machine. Destructive forces, primarily Aldryami, are continuing to break the World Machine further. The Mostali have released their Iron Doomsday Machine to counter this. The schedule reveals only the most terrible events. Elemental Chaos shall return to the world in full force, mixing freely with all the other elements. Model simulations indicate less than a ten percent chance of survival for the World Machine. Only rapid repairs will hold it together.

### **Exploring the Cobbled Ruins**

Isidilian warned the PCs that the Cobbled City fell a thousand years ago, and that it has been utterly looted in the time since. However, it is quite possible that they may still wish to explore the ruins, and see if they can find anything of value. If the PCs wish to try and loot the ruins of the Cobbled City, they should make Search rolls. If they are just rooting through the ruins, hoping to find something of value, these rolls should be made normally. If the PCs are making extra efforts, perhaps burning away vegetation, or attacking the ruins with digging tools, they should be given bonuses to their Search rolls between +1% and +40%. However, such actions might attract unwanted attention, at the discretion of the GM. There is no map provided of the Cobbled Ruins, and the GM should generate one as needed.

#### Apple Surprise (Malam Mirus)

The chaotic variant of the standard red apple of Sartar, Apple Surprise is the most common fruit tree found in Snake Pipe Hollow. It in all superficial ways resembles its safer relative. Apple Surprise's chaotic nature is only revealed when the seeds of its fruit are disturbed. When a seed is shaken or damaged (such as by teeth), it explodes. † This can only be prevented by boiling the apples beforehand. Broo bands are known to greatly overpay any merchant daring enough to sell them fresh, non- explosive apples.

† 1d4 Seeds in each apple. They each do 1 point of damage upon being set off (usually to the victim's head).

Each set of Search rolls represents approximately a halfdays worth of work. The players may continue searching and making rolls for as long as they like, at the rate of two a day, but this will definitely attract unwanted attention. The GM should roll at least once a day on Snake Pipe Hollow encounter table, more often if he feels it is appropriate, or if the players have been hanging around the Cobbled Ruins for a very long period of time. Searching through the Cobbled Ruins is not without danger of its own, for there are many plants concealed by the undergrowth which are quite dangerous. Whenever a PC makes a search roll, he should also make a POW x 5 roll. If he fails, he is unlucky enough to have stumbled upon one of these chaotic

plants in his explorations. Make one roll on the Cobbled Ruins Plant table and immediately apply the results as appropriate.

Ultimately, exploring the Cobbled Ruins is largely unproductive. Regular successes at Search produce no results. On a Special or a Critical, a player may roll once on the Cobbled Ruins Artifact Table.

#### **Cobbled Ruins Plant Table**

Plant Found -- roll 1d6

- 01 Poisonous Ivy (1D6 POT)
- 02 Poisonous Ivy (1D10 POT)
- 03 Poisonous Grape Vine (1D10 POT)
- 04 Explosive Tomato (does 2D6 dam to everyone within 10m)
- 05 Glue Vines (3D6 STR glue)

06 Malia's Helper

Note: all plants all have an immediate effect. When the player missed his POW x 5 roll, he stumbled into them, and exposed himself to their detrimental feature.

#### **Cobbled Ruins Artifact Table**

Artifact Found -- roll 1d100 (Value)

- 01-70 Unrecognizable Tool of Dwarven Manufacture (1d6L)
- 71-80 Barely Recognizable Dwarven Weapon (1d6L)
- 81-87 Battered Dwarven-made Eating Utensil (5L)
- 88-90 Battered Dwarven-made Pot (10L)
- 91 Totally Wrecked Musket (5L)
- 92-93 Defused Cannonball (10L)
- 94-95 Second Age Dwarven Silver Coin (50L)
- 96 First Age Council Silver Coin (100L)

97-98 Small Gem (100L)

- 99 Destroyed Iron Weapon -- 1 ENC. of metal (700L)
- 00 Battered Iron Battleaxe (700L+)

#### Hidden Bloom (Laterbrae Florescere)

Hidden Bloom is often cited by illuminated scholars as evidence that chaos is only vile and disgusting in appearance, and in reality it can contain hidden beauty. This is because although Hidden Bloom seems to be the ugliest, smelliest flowering plant you may even encounter, it is actually one of the most magnificent. The superficial appearance is due to its chaotic nature. Even people viewing a plant at the same time may see it differently, each noticing all the qualities they consider most horrid in the plant.

While there is still some debate on the issue, most scholars believe that the chaotic ability of Hidden Bloom is a self-defense mechanism. When a rotting flower is removed from the live plant, it rapidly transforms into a bloom of the highest caliber. The bloom is pentapetaled, with a virtual explosion of colors radiating outwards from the core. When placed in the sun the colors fluctuate slightly, giving the appearance of a small river of colors trickling down the petals. Even though now cut from the main plant, this now untainted bloom will last for several weeks in a standard water filled vase.

A single bloom has been known to fetch several hundred imperials in Alda-chur, where it is a traditional gift in most proposals of marriage. It is difficult to obtain, however, for flower seekers must not only brave the savage broos of the hollow, but they can often find themselves cutting and gathering hundreds of oozing, foul varieties of flowers before they come across one true flower. Without its chaotic camouflage, Hidden Bloom would surely have become extinct long ago.

#### Melmarrow (Malaorum Arienae)

This deceptively delicious and powerful fruit has been the bane of many an uninformed adventurer. It only grows in the most chaotic areas, but in known throughout Genertela. Melmarrow begins as a small mossy clump of leaves, then it quickly develops into a large fruit, absorbing all other parts of the plant in the process. All that is left for those that stumble upon one is the fruit itself, resembling a large yellow, furry, pineapple.

The fruit has a chaotic ability to lure those that discover it into eating it. Generally, those seeing it realize that the fruit has the power to increase their physical abilities. † It does have this power, but along with it consumers are given a new chaotic feature. Most laymen are unaware of this additional feature.‡ † A random statistic is increased by 1 upon consumption of the Melmarrow.

‡ A special success or better is required to know that the Melmarrow gives a chaotic feature in addition to the statistic gain that it communicates to viewers.

#### Mothan's Melon (Mothani Falliciae)

The Gray Sage Mothan was the first to categorize this plant from the Hollow and reveal its true nature. In a sense, this melon is almost the opposite in perception from Eurmal's Trick. Where that bush has beautiful, yet poisonous, berries, Mothan's Melon appears foul tasting and rotten but is incredibly tasty. Once opened, and the oozing skin removed, the soft pick flesh of the melon is easily scooped out for consumption. Mothan notes in his description that one must be very careful when harvesting this melon. If the stem just above the melon is not furry, then you're about to harvest some other type of disgusting, fetid plant matter. An old Alda-chur recipe involves mixing Mothan's Melon with frozen milk and then blending it for drinking on those hot fire season days.

#### Iron Bush (Fruticis Ferrum)

Also known as Dwarf Bane, Iron bushes are just what they are named to be. Other than being made of iron, they resemble Fruticis Arabilis, the common hedge bush, in all respects. Unscrupulous merchants and broos are know to harvest the metal of these bushes, melt them down, and sell them as regular iron. Of course, they are not. After a seemingly indeterminable period the iron explodes.<sup>†</sup> No manner of handling or working before this will set it off. The Iron Bush iron may even be mixed with other iron and it still eventually explodes. Mostali are know to refuse to purchase iron that they believe to originate anywhere near Snake Pipe Hollow.

† The explosion causes 1d6 damage per point of encumbrance of the iron involved. When the explosion occurs is completely random.

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### **Into Kagradus Fort**

After Kagradus Fort fell to the broos of Snake Pipe Hollow, the good goddess Kero Finn caused the Earth to rise up and envelop it. Due to her deed, the secrets of Orlanth and the Mostali have been largely preserved from the degradation of Chaos. Kagradus Fort now rests within a large cavern, bounded on all sides by earth and stone. The rift by which the players will enter opens over open ground, outside the walls of Kagradus Fort. One climb roll is necessary to scale the crack in the earth that leads down to the cavern that holds the fort.

Surprisingly, the Fort is largely intact. The three towers which once rose above the corners of the fort were all snapped off when the earth moved, and the rubble from their destruction lies over everything. The front gate into Kagradus Fort is also shattered, for that was how the Broo gained entrance to the fort when they overran it. In all other ways though, the Fortress is intact. The players may enter the fort through the front gate, or through the tower which is totally destroyed. The distance from the cavern walls to the fort walls varies from 10 to 20 meters.

#### Key to the Locations

#### 1. The Front Gate

Two great stone gates once stood at the entrance to Kagradus Fort, their plain, bare faces an imposing obstacle. Now, the shattered remnants of those gates lay strewn across the entire entryway. Numerous bones lie scattered about the front gate, although there are no entire skeletons. If they look closely, players will be able to find the remains of humans, dwarfs, broo and many creatures too terrible to contemplate. Through the front gate, the entryway is approximately 30 feet long, as it passes through first the outer wall, and then past the buildings that line the walls. Murder holes line the last half of that entryway on both sides. Broo bones are particularly numerous here.

#### 2. Destroyed Tower

The Northeast most tower of the fortress was totally destroyed when Kero Finn moved the Earth to encompass the tower. If the players wish, they may move through it, into the Temple of Skyriver Titan. However, the rubble from the tower is piled high, and much of it is very unstable. If players insist on crossing the dangerous terrain, they should make POW x 5 rolls to avoid taking 1d6 damage to a random leg as they move through the shifting and sliding rocks. Acid traps line the outside wall of this tower. There is nothing of value inside the tower.

#### Acid Traps (Laqueus Acidum)

Acid Traps are one of the most dangerous of the Laqueus genus of trapping plants. A large variety, it reaches heights of up to eight feet, with leaves extending up to four feet from the stalk. Each main branch ends in a standard trap, oozing a pleasantly sweet smelling odor to attract victims. What makes the Acid Trap particularly vicious is its traps are full of a potent acid. † The doom of many small animals seeking food, Acid Traps have also been known to maim or kill the unsuspecting traveler.

† Acid POT 3d6. The plant attacks those passing next to it with a success chance of 30% for each of the 1d4 traps biting. If an arm or head is engulfed the victim takes acid damage, otherwise the trap fails to close on the larger torso and legs causing no damage.

#### 3. Main Courtyard

The courtyard is the center of Kagradus Fort. Paved in very precise cobble stones, it should remind the players of the ruined city which they recently left behind them. These cobbles, however, are covered by all manner of bones, just like the main entryway leading up to them. All of the items of value have rusted away except for 10 small gold coins scattered about the courtyard. Numerous doors open onto the courtyard, two from each side, and one in each corner. In between the doors along the south east side of the courtyard is the main entrance to the Fort. Originally, the courtyard was used primarily for training, but all evidence of that away hundreds of years ago. There is still one artifact remaining of the original inhabitants of the fort though, and that is The Machine, which sits in the precise center of the courtyard.

The Machine is a tremendous, scary looking mess. It is roughly conical in shape, approximately 10 feet tall in the center, and 10 feet across at the base. At first glance, it seems to be a huge mesh of wires. Metals of all types form thin strands which meander all about in a chaotic manner. Under that mesh, however, the careful observer can make out large, moving metal structures, along with levers, gears and other more familiar mechanics.

Nestled in the top of The Machine is a globe the size of a man's head. Blue bolts of electricity constantly strike out from center of the globe downwards and to the southwest. These shimmering and moving bolts actually point towards the broo which is enclosed in ice in the mess, but this will probably not be immediately obvious to the players. On the Southeast side of the

machine (straight in front of the main entryway) is a gauge of some sort. A liquid is within the gauge, raised nearly 4/5 of the way to the top. To the right hand side are Mostali words. If any of the players are able to read Mostali, they will be able to make out the following words (from top to bottom): 'Chaos Free Zone; Minor Chaos Infestation; Moderate Chaos Infestation; Major Chaos Infestation; Call for Reinforcements; Call for Lots of Reinforcements; Destroy All Mostali Secrets'. The gauge is hovering just below the 'Call for Lots of Reinforcements' line.

The Machine is, of course, a Chaos Detector. The globe constantly points towards the largest concentration of Chaos in the area, while the gauge registers the level of threat. The entire contraption has a range of approximately 1/4 mile. Originally, the defenders of Kagradus Fort used it to ensure that the lands just around the Fort were clear of chaos infestation. Currently, the machine is fixated upon the iced broo in The Mess. It is having a very bad reaction to it primarily due to the creature's dangerous Chaos Mutation. If the broo was destroyed, The Machine would still detect the other chaos infestations in the fort, including the horse in the Stables and the plants in the Mostali Barracks.

The Machine is huge and unwieldy, and will take a combined STR of at least 40 to move. Hauling it up through the rift in the cavern ceiling should be even more difficult. The Machine is somewhat delicate, and sadistic Gamemasters may see fit to remind the players of this when they try and move it. The most enterprising players may attempt to mount The Machine in a wagon, or in some other way make it mobile, so that they can constantly detect chaos wherever they go. Although such plans are quite plausible, most dwarfs will react badly to humans carting about their technology, and will either try and take, steal or destroy it (and perhaps the players as well).

#### 4. Human Barracks

This was once the resting place to fifteen of the best warriors of the Orlanthi Liornvuli tribe. It is the last resting place of two of them, who died in their beds, never seeing the final battle. Their intact skeletons seem to leer at the players as they enter. All matter of rubble and debris lie scattered about the barracks. A ladder once led up, through a trap door in the ceiling, to the roof of the barracks. From there, the soldiers climbed across to the outer walls. That ladder is now long ago, although the trap door in the ceiling is still visible. Murder holes line the side of the barracks adjacent to the main entry way. Searching this room will find enough remnants to put together a ceremonial outfit for a Liornvuli warrior. One piece of this outfit, the belt, can summon a tribal ancestor that will be hostile to all but Liornvuli.

#### 5. Mostali Barracks

This was once the clean, crisp and austere resting place of eight iron Mostali. Now, it is covered mostly be debris. No iron Mostali died in their beds when the final assault came. Ivy and bushes are also present in this room, growing straight through the fort's floor. Mallia's Helper is especially prevalent, and if any players search the room, they will stumble into it unless they make a POW x 3 roll. Like the Human Barracks (4.) the Mostali Barracks have both a trap door leading to the roof and murder holes looking upon the main entrance.

### Malia's Helper (Auxilii Mallii)

The only variety of Rose native to the Hollow, Malia's Helper lives up to its name. Its flowers are unpatterned, with colors ranging from white to magenta. The odor is unremarkable. What makes Malia's Helper such a threat is that while the flowers are still buds they each develop a random infection spirit.† Once the petals have opened the infection spirit will leap off and cling to anything nearing the flower. This includes anyone smelling the flower or even just brushing up against it.

Worshippers of Malia are known to raise these plants in small garden plots. They cut off the flowers while budded and ship them off to unscrupulous middlemen. The unnamed rose is then sold in markets still budded so that the buyer receives an unpleasant surprise when the flower opens its lovely bloom. This activity is hard to trace back to the source, but it keeps the local healer's coffers full.

*† For a list of disease spirits and description of infection spirits see* Lords of Terror p.36-39.

#### 6. Infirmary

This room was once used as an infirmary for sick, wounded or chaos-infected humans. It never saw much use, and now only piles of rotted wood and mangled metal implements remain. A successful search roll will find a cache of 4 dried up healing potions. Adding water blessed by a priestess of Chalana Arroy to the small clay pots that held the potions will restore them to full potency (4 points of healing).

#### 7. Mess Hall

The room which humans and dwarfs alike once used to eat their rations is now as rubble, dust and debris covered as most of the Fort is. However, two artifacts still stand. In the Northwest corner of the room, flat against the wall, is a rectangular metal box, approximately 6 feet tall, 3 feet across and 1 foot deep. To the top right of the box is a small slot. It is about the right size for the point of a dagger... or a small coin. Three panels on the metallic box are colored, red, green and yellow respectively. These panels may be slightly depressed. A foot off the ground is a small cavity, circular in shape, and five inches across.

The box is a vending machine. The coin slot is quite small, and most Third Age coins will not fit unless the players take the time to shave them down. The First Age coins which may be found in the ruins happen to be just the perfect size. If a coin is deposited, and one of the panels depressed, a can of dwarven food will roll out of the cavity, either Alpha Red, Beta Green or Gamma Yellow, depending on which panel was depressed. Each can is clearly labeled (in Mostali) with the name of the food contained. If the players actually manage to get the cans open, they will find a colored, mealy substance within. It takes like dirt, but is quite nutritious, even after 1000 years.

The other attraction of the mess hall is a huge, irregular block of ice, nearly 8 feet tall, which rests up against the Southwest wall, straight across from the entry to the mess. The

ice is magical ice, taken from the Feldichi Ruins in Dorastor. It only melts when placed in water, and would probably be quite valuable if sold in the right place. In olden days, the block of ice was used by the humans of the Fort to keep spoilable foods cold.

Embedded within the magical ice is a fierce looking broo wielding an ancient bastard sword. The broo is still quite alive though he has been frozen within the ice for a millennium. If he is somehow freed from the ice, he will go berserk, attacking everything nearby. It can not be reasoned with, for he has forgotten how to talk since he was entombed within the ice.



Tea

CON 1 SIZ 1 INT 1 POW 1		00			attribute. Move: 3 Hit Poin Fatigue: Magic F DEX SF	ts: 13 29 oints: 1	0	
area		missile	ï	nelee		nor/hp		
r leg		01-04	· (	01-03	0/5	e.		•••••
lleg		05-08		04-06	0/5	i i		•••••
abdomer	1	09-11		07-10	0/5	5		
chest	•	12		11-15	0/6	5		
ram		13-15		16-17	0/4			
larm		16-18		18-19	0/4	1		
head		19-20		20	3/5	5		
weapon		sr	attk%	dama	ige	parr%	pts	
Bastard	Sw.	7	84	1d10	)+1+1d4	72	12	
Head Bu	utt	10	63	1d6-	-1d4	-	-	

Skills: Chaos Lore (38), Climb (57), Jump (48), Scan (58) Spirit Magic: None

Armor: None

Items: First Age Bastard Sword (worth 10x normal value to a collector)

Chaos Features: Invulnerable to Cold, Need Not Eat or Drink, Replicates (If Tea is killed, two identical, and totally healthy, copies of him will appear 1d6 minutes later, even if his body is destroyed. In order to stop Tea, the players must imprison him in some way, or banish him totally from the plane of Glorantha.) **Notes:** A Broo may Head Butt after already both attacking and defending in a round.

#### 8. Armory

Not only was this room was the dwarven equivalent to the human infirmary, but it was also used to construct armor and weapons. An anvil still stands in the middle of the room. Scrap metal lies all about it, approximately 20 pounds of raw bronze and half a pound of raw iron.

In the back of the room is the object that both Gondo and Isidilian have been seeking, an Iron Jolanti. It towers above room, made all the more menacing by the jagged stump that terminates its left arm a half foot below its shoulder. Players will probably wish to approach it very carefully, although they will ultimately be very pleased to find it inactive. Getting the Iron Jolanti out of this cavern will be no easy task, since it weighs nearly a ton. Very strong rope and clever manipulations will be needed to hoist it up into Snake Pipe Hollow. The dwarf miners will excel at a job such as this.

#### 9. The Stables

The defenders of Kagradus Fort once kept a half dozen horses here, which they used to send quick messages to Dwarf Mine. When the Fort was overrun, the horses were ignored, and they slowly starved to death. Neat piles of bones now mark where each of the horses fell to the ground and slowly died. These skeletons are all mostly intact. A detect magic spell will reveal that one of the bridles is magical -- it contains a mobility 1 matrix.

Straight across from the door is a skeleton which survived the ages, in a way. It was effected by the chaos of the Hollow, and now it is an animate and active skeleton. This horse will not be aggressive at all, but rather pathetically happy to see humans again, after so long. It is likely that the players will either mistake this affection for an attack, or Humakti will decide to make short work of the skeleton. In any of these cases, if the skeleton horse is attacked, it will defend itself.

#### Patches The Skeletal Warhorse attributes characteristics Move: 3 STR 31 Hit Points: 24 CON 13 DEX SR: 1 35 SIZ DEX 17 5 APP armor/hp melee missile area 0/6 01-02 01-02 rh leg 0/6 03-04 03-04 Ih leg 0/10 hind quarter 05-07 05-09 0/10 10-14 08-10 fore quarter 15-16 0/6 11-13 rf leg 0/6 17-18 . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 14-16 If leg 0/8 19-20 ..... 17-20 head

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weapon sr attk% damage pa	r% pts
Bite 5 67 1d8 -	
Kick 5 71 1d6+3d6 -	
Rear&Plunge 5 42 3d6+3d6 -	
Kick 5 82 6d6 vs. prone ta	rget

Skills: Jump (72), Sidle (93), Smell Intruder (51) Notes: A horse may attack once in a melee round.

#### 10. Temple to Orlanth

The largest temple within the fortress was once the temple to Orlanth, the Liornvuli's greatest deity. However, this temple is no longer sacred to Orlanth, for it was thoroughly desecrated by the Broo when the overran the fortress. Besides the normal rubble and dust, one thousand year old excrement is also spread all across the room. Fortunately, it lost both its smell and its diseases hundreds of years ago.

Beautiful mosaics showing Orlanth battling against the corrupt and decadent Emperor may be seen if the players clear the excrement from the wall. They tell of how Orlanth contested with the Emperor, invented the new music and finally slew him with Death (see *King of Sartar*, pg. 65-68). The players may be surprised to see that the Emperor is not depicted as a glowing figure of light, as he has been during the Second and Third Ages. This is because during the First Age, at the High Council, Orlanthi were just learning that Yelm and the Emperor were one and the same.

#### 11. Temple to Kero Fin

The first of the two secondary temples within the fortress was sacred to Kero Fin, the great Earth goddess of Dragon Pass. Unlike the Orlanthi Temple, this one was not defiled, and it is still sanctified to the ancient goddess. If players wished, they could sacrifice POW here to become initiates of Kero Fin. If this were to occur, the cult of Ernalda depicted in the *RuneQuest* deluxe edition may be used in place of the Cult of Kero Fin. For all intents and purposes, they are identical (and, in fact, the God Learners incorporated the Cult of Kero Fin into Ernalda in the Second Age).

Beautiful mosaics cover the walls of the temple. The earliest ones show Kero Fin, a mighty giant, settling in Dragon Pass. Later mosaics show Umath courting Kero Fin, and the birth of Orlanth.

#### 12. Temple to Sky River Titan

The final temple within the Fortress was to Sky River Titan, the mighty giant, whose blood helps to wash away the Chaos of the Hollow. Although the Temple was not desecrated, it is no longer sacred to the Titan. Perhaps it never was. Mosaics covering the wall tell the story of How the Creekstream River Was Made (see *King of Sartar* pg. 75-76). Above the altar is a full suit of Sky Armor -- it acts just as a suit of chain mail, but has exactly half the encumbrance. The armor is very ornate and worth a small fortune.

#### **13. Partially Standing Towers**

The final structures within the fortress are the towers at the Northwest and South Corners. The walls still stand as higher as the outer walls of the fortress, but are all broken off above that level. Much rubble lies throughout the towers, the remnants of those destroyed walls. Each tower once had two stair cases, which led up to the outer walls, but these have all fallen now as well. A successful search roll turns up 1-10 small silver coins.

#### 14. Outer Walls

The outer walls of Kagradus Fort are still intact and quite sturdy. They may be reached from the roofs of any of the inner buildings (which are about two feet below the walls). In old times, they were usually accessed by the twin stairways in the towers, or by the ladders within the barracks, but these have all fallen now.

#### Prophesies of Isidilian

#### The Great City: Isidilian - S.T. 412

From the emptiness of the wastes shall spring the immense wall of the eternal city. Inside, science and art will reach great heights, thriving amidst a draconic philosophy of being. Events will begin there that could start in no other place on earth. The walls will keep out the animals that roam the wild lands, and provide security for all sentient beings from the hated forces of approaching chaos.



#### The Dwarf Expedition

The gamemaster should have the dwarfs show up after the PCs have had a chance to fully explore the ruins. This might take several days and the party may get slightly nervous about their situation. The remainder of this section is presented in a timeline format. Random encounters can be interspersed as needed. No statistics are given for the dwarfs -- the GM is responsible for generating them. Descriptions of the dwarfs are found in the box opposite.

# Day 1 (Sea/Movement/Wildday 1622)

The dwarfs make their appearance towards the late evening. They are outlined on the horizon, made prominent by the giant Jolanti that is accompanying them. This should be presented as a potential attack by a giant (before the dwarfs are visible). Critical scan rolls or astute thinking (a giant coming from the west instead of the east). As the dwarfs get near, the party will recognize Ubauric and Fworfang, but the other 13 dwarfs are unknown. The Foreman greets the players and asks for an immediate status report.

Ubauric and Jobkan will confer with the party about the status of Fort Kagradus while Fworfang sets up camp and Asfist prepares defense with Gorbal. They will be very excited if the Iron Man has already been located. The dwarfs are incredibly efficient and waste no time in their preparations. There is some discussion of exploring the ruins this evening, but the PCs should dissuade the dwarfs until morning. After camp is set up, the dwarfs settle down for the night. Asfist will confer with the party to make sure that adequate watches are set.

#### Day 2 (Sea/Movement/Godday 1622)

The main object of this day is to map the ruins -- both above and below. Ubauric will ask the PCs to accompany Jobkan around the Cobbled ruins during the morning. The chief excavator makes frequent stops to takes notes and sketch parts of the ruins on a parchment roll. Two worker dwarfs carry all of the mapping equipment. At some point during the morning a patch of Iron Bush (see page 23) will be located. A random encounter with some small chaos creature is also suggested. The rest of the worker dwarfs spend the day gathering large stones and felling trees under the direction of Jobkan. Gorbal and the Jolanti are responsible for their safety.

The goal for the afternoon is to map the underground ruins. Ubauric and Asfist join the group for this section. This should go uninterrupted, especially if the PCs have done a good job in previous exploration. The dwarfs can explain the original purpose of the locations to curious and sage players. After Fort Kagradus is mapped, Jobkan spends the evening hours working out plans for mechanical devices to assist in removing the Iron Man. Around midnight a large ruckus and noise fills the camp as the worker dwarfs begin constructing lifts and winches as per the chief excavator's instructions. A random encounter should happen during one of the nightly watches.

#### The Dwarfs

**Ubauric Bright Metal, Foreman:** The crusty gold dwarf that the party had to deal with at the mine has been appointed foreman of the expedition by Isidilian. Ubauric is armed with two pistols. He expects his orders to be carried out without question.

Asfist Sword Dance, Iron Dwarf Guard: Asfist is very wary of any humans, and he makes it clear that he is in charge of defending the excavation. This iron dwarf never travels anywhere without his iron sword and musket. Asfist will not hesitate to give the PCs orders during an attack.

Gorbal Stone Giant, Controller of the Jolanti: This tin dwarf is unusually friendly and talkative for a dwarf. His unique responsibility of taking care of the Jolanti gives him a fair amount of free time. He has been commanding this Jolanti in combat for centuries and is very proficient at his job. Fworfang Goodtin, Quartermaster: This Quicksilver dwarf is in charge of the wagons and the expedition's supplies. The dwarfs brought everything that they think they will need, and are not very efficient at getting materials from the surrounding environment -- the PCs are here to fill those requests.

Jobkan Rock Cutter, Chief Excavator: Jobkan is in charge of the worker dwarfs and directs their actions. He is approaching diamond dwarf status and never makes mining errors. He will want a detailed description of everything the PCs have done since arriving at the ruins.

10 Worker Dwarfs: These worker dwarfs are fairly generic and should have little interaction with the PCs. They are very unhuman-like, being programmed only for limited functions (mostly mining). They tend to sit around camp and silently do nothing when not mining.

# Day 3 (Sea/Illusion /Freezeday 1622)

Work begins at dawn for the dwarfs. This might irritate an PCs who did not get a full night's sleep. A penalty of 1-6 FAT suggested. The dwarfs start moving the lifts and winches dow into the cavern below. By the noon break the first stage is set u inside Fort Kagradus. The afternoon is spent winching an sliding the Iron Man from its resting place, out through th courtyard, to the edge of the crack. The dwarfs work wi amazing efficiency, and need no help from the players. random encounter is suggested for the afternoon hours. Also ominous storm clouds gather during the early afternoon -appropriate lore roll recognizes them as the black thunderhead the Urain. The bad wind blows in a light rain for 1-10 minut The Urain does 1-6 points of acid damage for each full minute exposure. Astute PCs will quickly seek shelter.

Religious scholars or anyone who has had extensi experience with the Bagog cult (see *Lords of Terror* for complete write-up) will know that tonight is the high holy d This should be an item of alarm if realized in time. While th is no major scorpionman presence left in Snake Pipe Hollow, spirits of the dead come back on this night to revel to Bag These malevolent spirits reach the Cobbled Ruins just a midnight and attack all in sight.

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These spirits manifest themselves as spectral scorpionmen -glowing beings that float across the sky. They wildly attack all that they see, not yielding until destroyed. 10 to 20 of the horrors attack this night, howling guttural praises to Bagog. These specters can attack twice per round. First they attack with their tail, which delivers no physical damage but deals 1-6 points of psychic poison, which is subtracted from current MP. These scorpionmen also are immune to damage from normal weapons. Magic, rune metal or weapons with spells cast on them do full damage.

#### Spectral Scorpionmen

characteri POW		3d6+3(13-14)		<i>attributes</i> Move: 6 Hit Points: POW Magic Points: POW		
area	missile		melee	armor/hp		
rh leg	01	_ >	01 .	4/3		
Ih leg	02		02	4/3		
rc leg	03	(	03	4/3		
Ic leg	04		04	4/3		
rf leg	05-06	(	05	4/4		
If leg	07-08	(	06	4/4		
tail	09-10	(	70	4/5		
thorax	11-12	(	08-10	4/5		
chest	13-14	•	11-15	4/6		
r arm	15-16	•	16-17	4/3		
arm	17-18	-	8-19	4/3		
head	19-20	2	20	4/5		
weapon	sr	attk%	damage	parr%	pts	
Claw	8	60	1d4+1	500	6	
Tail	5	80		MP only	-	

#### Armor: 4 points

Notes: These creatures can attack with both a claw and their tail in the same round at no penalty. Also, these creatures may only be struck by magic, rune metal or enchanted weapons.

#### Day 4 (Sea/Illusion/Waterday 1622)

Daylight should bring sighs of relief to the beleaguered party. The specters are gone and the only trace of the scorpionmen is the wreckage of the camp following their destruction. The dwarfs quickly repair any damage done to the lifts by the scorpionmen. Just as things begin to settle down, Asfist raises the alarm -- he has spotted two giants heading towards camp from the Shade Table!

The first giant is a whopping 20 meters tall, but the second is only 5 meters. The two are coming to investigate the activity at the Cobbled Ruins. The dwarf leaders go into a quick conference along with the players. The dwarfs want to stay and fight -- they can't abandon this site so close to their goal. Quick plans suggest that the dwarfs and their Jolanti fight the larger giant while the PCs take on the smaller one. The party has four minutes to prepare before the giants arrive in camp.

The giants don't do much talking -- the large one, Alog, shouts 'food!' in his low rumbling voice as he reaches for one of

the worker dwarfs. The smaller giant, Hur, incessantly repeats his laugh 'hur hur hur!' as he swings his Irontree trunk. The Jolanti and Alog battle hand-to-hand for a while until the giant gains the upper hand by ripping one of the arms stone man and using it as a club. The giant then proceeds to bash off the Jolanti's other arm with the make-shift club. Things look bad until Fworfang and two of the worker dwarfs are able to get a Disorder Keg underneath Alog. It goes off, taking one of the giant's feet with it. The giant howls in pain and begins hopping towards the shade table. The dwarfs do not pursue the giant.

Hopefully the PCs have been fairing better against Hur. The giant will battle until Alog flees. This will take 16 melee rounds. Hur is not very smart, and just bashes away. Resourceful players might try to use the Cobbled Ruins to advantage, and the gamemaster is responsible for generating the setting as needed.

A quick head count after the giant's have been defeated or driven off finds that two of the worker dwarfs are no longer functional(dead). The dwarf leaders go into a private council to decide on how to proceed. They quickly come to the decision that they are too close to completing the mission must to abandon it. Gorbal and the Jolanti are dispatched for home as soon a harness can be rigged to allow the stone man to drag his arms. It is too dangerous to have the Jolanti around, potentially attracting foes without being able to fight. The dwarfs once again repair their lifts -- by midmorning tomorrow they will be ready to lift the Iron Man out of the earth.

#### Hur the Giant (5 meters)

characteristics           STR         44           CON         31           SIZ         43           INT         6           POW         10           DEX         12           APP         6			(o meters)	attributes Move: 5 Hit Points: 37 Fatigue: 75 Magic Points: DEX SR: 3 Dam Mod: +4	10	
area	- 6	missile	melee	armor/hp		
r leg		01-04	01-03	10/15	••••	
lleg		05-08	04-06	10/15		
abdome	en	09-11	07-10	10/15		
chest		12	11-15	10/17		
r arm		13-15	16-17	10/12		
l arm		16-18	18-19	10/12		
head		19-20	20	10/15		
weapon		sr	attk% damag	e parr%	pts	
Irontree	Mau	I 6	60 2d6+4		16	

Skills: Smell Blood(40)

Spirit Magic: None

Armor: 10 point skin

Items: Giant Club (120 lbs) made of Ironwood. This wood is excellent for enchanting and is worth 25 L. per pound.

Notes: Hur is on the dim side, even for a giant. He likes nothing better than smashing things with his club while incessantly repeating his own name.

#### Day 5 (Sea/Illusion/Clayday 1622)

Unbelievably, the night goes without incident. The dwarfs work through the night in shifts, using strange non-burning torches to illuminate the work area. By noon, excitement ripples through the ruins as Jobkan gives the okay to raise the Iron Man. A huge roar sweeps through the camp, emanating from the dwarfs wagon. This is the dwarf engine used to power the lift, but unwary PCs might suspect chaos. Jobkan directs the winch controls, and lifts the relic out of the chasm and sets it down in the camp. The usually dour dwarfs give shouts of '*hurrah*!' at the success. It is at this point that Gondo makes his attack in attempt to capture the Iron Man.

Gondo Holst's plans have finally reached fruition. The dwarfs sent by Isidilian have freed the Iron Man from it's grave below the Cobbled Ruins and it is now on the surface -- now he only has to gain possession of if and incarnate Cacodemon. Gondo has hired a notorious broo gang to assist him in this endeavor -- Jack's Broos lead by the hideous Jack-O-Broo. Every member of the gang has a beneficial chaotic feature. They whoop and holler and pose a frightening sight. The broos respond to limited battle commands from Jack, and can be formidable foes. Jack has a large ego, and will taunt opponents before finishing them off.

Gondo's forces launch their attack just as the dwarfs begin to pack up. They charge the camp from cover, forming a wedge with Jack in the center. The broos attack wantonly, only retreating if Jack or six of their members go down. Gondo is using this diversion to approach the Iron Man -- he is going to use his Divine Intervention rune magic to incarnate Cacodemon in the metal giant. If spotted, he will call out that he is here to help the players. Once the iron Jolanti is animated, it will begin to smash all around it. This incarnation of Cacodemon is vulnerable to spirit combat from anyone, not just shamans. The dwarfs will be horrified to see the Iron Man come alive. Just as things appear at the worst, help arrives.

Rolan and Greenbow, the travelers who met the PCs while crossing the hollow earlier, are members of the secret band of outlaws called Geo's Hidden Raiders. They've been magically spying on the dwarf excavation, and saw trouble on the way. They appear leading a group of five seasoned veterans on horseback. The raider engage foes as needed. If the PCs have been unable to put a dent in the Iron Man, Rolan suggests using disorder kegs while Greenbow suggests spirit combat. Statistics are not given for the Raiders -- the gamemaster needs to generated them if needed. Eventually, the forces of good should triumph. Gondo will try to escape if the Jolanti is destroyed.

### Gondo Holst<sup>†</sup>

Ogre Trader and Rune Priest of Cacodemon

charact	eristics	attributes	
STR	22	Move: 3	
CON	16	Hit Points: 17	
SIZ	17	Fatigue: 38	
INT	16	Magic Points: 21	
POW	21	DEX SR: 3	
DEX	11		

APP 15				e.			
area	missile	n	nelee	armor	/hp		
r leg	01-04		01-03	6/6			
lleg	05-08	0	04-06	6/6			
abdomen	09-11	C	07-10	12/6			
chest	12		11-15	12/8			
r arm	13-15		16-17	6/5			
larm	16-18	·	18-19	6/5			
head	19-20	2	20	6/7			
weapon	sr	attk%	damage	pa	rr%	pts	
Broad Swo	rd 7	90	1d8+1+10	16 70		12	
Med. Shiel				80		12	

Skills: Boat(25), Dodge(30), Ride(75), Fast Talk(60), Orate(90), Speak Sartarite(20), Speak Tarsh(15), Speak New Pelorian(20), Speak Balazaring(36), Speak Darktongue(20), Speak Beastspeach(20), Speak Esrolian(15), Speak Trade(45), R/W Trade(50), Evaluate(90), First Aid(25), Human Lore(30), World Lore(20), Conceal(65), Sleight(50), Disguise(100), Listen(80), Scan(55), Search(55), Track(50), Hide(90), Sneak(90)

Spirit Magic: Bladesharp 4, Healing 6, Befuddle(2), Detection Blank 2, Disruption(1), Detect Magic(1)

Rune Magic: Bind Ghost, Create Zombie, Multispell 2, Shield 1, Absorption 1, Divine Intervention 5, Worship Cacodemon

Chaos Features: Melts into acid when killed, Reincarnates if POW x 3 is rolled.

Armor: Chain under leather cloak, Enchanted breastplate Items: Cloak of Darkness(has darkwall 1 matrix), Iron Ring( has spirit screen 1 matrix), Thedstone (tainted crystal, 6 point storage, charger looses 1 point permanent POW per recharge), Scroll from Havar Ironfist proposing an alliance to Moirides of Tarsh)

Familiar: Irony (INT 11, POW 21)

Familiar's Spirit Magic: Countermagic 4, Invisibility(3), Spirit Screen 3, Mobility 1

Familiar's Rune Magic: Sever Spirit(one use), Armoring Enchantment, Heal Wound

Treasure: Emerald Necklace(3500L), 12 Wheels, 870 Lunars, 3 Gold Rings(80L each)

Notes: Gondo is a tough and crafty soul, dedicated to chaos. He has been troubled lately because he is approaching illumination. This is why Gondo has embarked on this elaborate scheme to summon Cacodemon.

+ Based on the original version which appeared in Griffin Mountain.

#### Jack-O-Broo

charact STR CON SIZ INT POW DEX APP	eristic 19 19 18 12 18 12 6	5		Move: 3 Hit Points: 19 Fatigue: 38 Magic Points: 18 DEX SR: 3		
<i>area</i> r leg l leg	-	missile 01-04 05-08	<i>melee</i> 01-03 04-06	armor/hp 5/7 5/7		

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abdomen	09-11	(	07-10	5/7		
chest	12		1-15	5/9		
r arm	13-15	1	6-17 5	5/6		
larm	16-18	1	8-19 5	5/6		
head	19-20	2	20 6	5/10		
weapon	sr	attk%	damage	parr%	pts	
Short Sword	† 7	90	1d6+1+1d6	90	10	
Harmonize	1	auto	Resist MP of	or be para	lyzec	
† Jack wields	two, usu	ally attac	king with one a	and parryir	g with	the other.

Skills: Chaos Lore(40), Dodge(50), Jump(60), Throw(40), Speak Sartarite(15), Scan(60), Hide(40), Sneak(60) Spirit Magic: Bladesharp 3, Fanaticism(1), Spirit Screen 3,

Detect Enemy(1) Rune Magic: Curse of Thed(1 use), Devour Spirit(1 use)

Armor: 6 point pumpkin head, hard leather and ring on rest.

**Chaotic Features:** Pumpkin Head, Harmonizing Gaze, Appearance Confusing, 20% to be hit, Reflects up to 4 point sprit spells and 1 point divine spells.

**Items:** Chaos Slime(one use, gives chaos feature), Genert's Left One(1 point spell strengthening crystal), Bronze Armband (with Endurance 1 matrix)

Treasure: Silver Collar(220L), 120 Lunars

Notes: Silver Collar(220L), 120 Lunars, 80 Wheels

#### Jack's Broos

characte STR CON SIZ INT POW DEX APP	eristic 13 16 16 13 11 11 7	5		attributes Move: 4 Hit Points: 16 Fatigue: 29 Magic Points: DEX SR: 3	  11
area		missile	melee	armor/hp	19 1. W.
r leg		01-04	01-03	2/6	
l leg		05-08	04-06	2/6	
abdom	en	09-11 <sup>4</sup>	07-10	2/6	
chest		12	11-15	2/8	
r arm		13-15	16-17	2/5	
larm		16-18	18-19	2/5	
head		19-20	20	3/6	

weapon	sr	attk%	damage	parr%	pts	
Head Butt†	9	76	1d6+1d4			
Club	6	61	1d10+1d4	48	10	
1-H Spear	6	61	1d8+1+1d4	48	10	
† a broo may a	attack	with both h	head butt and w	eapon in t	he sar	me round.

Skills: Climb(45), Jump(45)

Armor: 3 point head and scraps worth 2 points on rest.

Notes: Below are abilities specific to each broo. Spirit Magic; Chaotic Feature; Disease; and Items are listed in that order. Broo #1: Bladesharp 2, Disruption(1); Poisonous Horns, 3d6 POT; No Disease; 34 L.

**Broo #2:** Strength 4; Regenerates 1d6 Points per Round; Carries Brain Fever; Loincloth(with Protection 1 matrix), 15 L. **Broo #3:** Disruption(1), Heal 2; Absorbs up to 2 Point Spells; Carries Black Tongue; 8 Wheels, 15 L. Broo #4: Heal 3, Fanaticism(1); Enlarged Horns +1d6 Head Butt dam; No Disease; No Items

**Broo #5:** Protection 3; Appears Invincible; Carries White Eye; Iron Leg Band(worth 500 L.), 32 Clacks

**Broo #6:** Mobility 2; Explodes for 1d6 Damage at death; Carries Joint Rot; No Items

**Broo #7:** Fireblade(3); Reflects 3 Point Spells; No Disease; No items

Broo #8: Countermagic 3, Heal 1; Moves Silently; Carries Shakes; 55 L.

**Broo #9:** Bladesharp 2; Spits Gorp; Carries Blotches; Tattered Cape with gold thread(worth 20 L), 120 clacks

#### Iron Cacodemon

characteristics           STR         40           CON         18           SIZ         40           INT         15           POW         25           DEX         7			attributes Move: 5 Hit Points: 29 Fatigue: n/a Magic Points: 2 DEX SR: 4	 5	
area		missile	melee	armor/hp	
r leg		01-04	01-03	20/10	
l leg		05-08	04-06	20/10	•••••
abdome	n	09-11	07-10	20/10	•••••
chest		12	11-15	20/12	
r arm		13-15	- 16-17	20/8	
l arm		16-18	18-19	20/9	
head		19-20	. 20	20/10	

weapon	sr	attk%	damage	parr%	pts	
L Hand Smash†	8	80	1d6+5d6	40	20	
R Hand Smash†	9	40	1d6+5d6	20	20	
t can attack with be	oth in	same rou	nd			

#### Armor: 20 point iron skin

Notes: This incarnation of Cacodemon is especially weak in one area -- it is vulnerable to spirit attacks. Anyone can engage it in spirit combat by willing themselves to attack. If the spirit is defeated, the Jolanti will deactivate.

#### **VII.** Concluding the Adventure

The camp at the Cobbled Ruins is most likely a mess after the attack. Dead bodies will be piled into the wagons once repaired -- it is a bad omen to leave the dead in Snake Pipe Hollow. Geo's Raiders are friendly and will help with the clean up and repair. Rolan tells the PCs that if they're ever traveling the Elf's Walk, just mention his name and he'll get word.

The Iron Man (or its remains) still need to be transported to Dwarf Mine. There is still a four day journey ahead of the players and the surviving dwarfs, and the Gamemaster should add random encounters as appropriate. Back at the Mine, Isidilian will thank and reward the players, proclaiming them dwarf friends and rewarding them as the GM sees fit. Some minor dwarf technology is suggested as part of the reward.

The mystery of the Stinking Forest and Geo's Hidden Raiders await next issue!

# **Cult of the Dancing Snake**

The Spirit of the Snake Pipe Dancers



#### I. Mythos and History

Before Time began, Benesnakre Dintjaneo was a powerful earth spirit tied to southern Peloria. Born of Father Snake and Pelora, Benesnakre emphasized the union of serpents and the people of the earth. The earliest humans danced wildly into the night to praise the spirit. These worshippers settled in what was to become Snake Pipe Hollow in the years before the dawn and a shrine to Benesnakre was added to the great earth temple that already existed there. The cult's high priest, Mansnake the Dancer, sacrificed himself to his god and the Dancing Snake rewarded him by binding his spirit into the legendary Snake Pipe. This pipe soon became a central feature of the earth temple and the legend of the object gave the hollow its name.

After the chaos army led by Kajabor shattered the area, the earth worshippers that survived were forced to take up a nomadic life. Greatly weakened without the center of their cult power, the Snake Pipe Dancers were unable to remain in Dragon Pass and wandered into southern Peloria. Their travels spawned many of the local folk tales of snake wizards that are still told today in the area to frighten wayward youngsters. During this period, the Snake Pipe Dancers often danced in the courts of the EWF, and were in great vogue because of the perceived similarity between serpents and dragons.

After the Dragonkill war, the Snake Pipe Dancers were able

to bring the Cult of the Dancing Snake back to the pass. One of the first human groups to return, they found that Snake Pipe Hollow was still too dangerous and chaos-ridden for the cult to reestablish itself there. The Grand Dancer went before the Inhuman King and petitioned for permission to settle to the south of Snake Pipe Hollow. The dragonnewt agreed, but with one stipulation -- once every generation the humans must send their best dancer to the Dragon's Eye to be the Inhuman Kings slave for life.

Since this agreement, the Snake Pipe Dancers have been able to thrive in the hills between dragonnewt lands and the hollow. They founded the Dancing Snake Inn in the center of clan lands and reinstated cult

worship. There is a shrine to Benesnakre Dintjaneo in a cave below the inn, where the cult performs its secret dances to the spirit. The Grand Dancer oversees the cult from this secret cave and rarely are outsider allowed to visit it.

This cult has minor runic association with Earth and Beast. The cult language is an ancient derivative of Earthspeech and the seasonal holy days are on Wildday of Movement Week, with the High Holy Day in Earth Season.

### original occupants of Snakepipe Hollow. The Dancers are biologically one family, since their tribal law dictates that they

procreate only with their brothers, sisters, and cousins. For this reason, they eerily all look alike, with coarse brown hair, dry skin, yellow-green eyes and diamond-shaped faces. They ritually dust themselves with powdered moss, wear reptile skins on their bodies and drape snake fangs around their neck.

Snakepipe dancers (who refer to themselves as the Dintjanianes do benesnakre pipareo) have been dancing the sacred dances for generations, and they are descended from the

Legend has it that the reason they inbreed is because their ancestors had the magic of resisting the poisonous snake venom. Rather than allowing that magic to be diluted, they strictly forbade any sexual relations with those outside their family. Their children have a total immunity to poison (but not disease) which gradually weakens as they reach initiation age. Poisonous serpents are often put in cribs with infants to guard them. Those who have been tempted by outsiders become outsiders and are banished from area surrounding the Inn. Once sentenced to banishment, they are given a drug to blank their minds, *bhlegmensa*, to forget the magical dances.

## III. General Membership (Initiates)

Membership to the Cult of the Dancing Snake is automatic to all of the Snake Pipe Dancer clan upon reaching their majority and learning the ritual dances to a level that satisfies the elders.

Outsiders can join the cult, but there is a dangerous initiation ceremony that few are willing the risk. The candidate must first learn the appropriate dance skill to a level of 33%. Then the entire clan is assembled at the Dancing Snake Inn to witness the Dance-of-the-Deadly-Embrace. In this dance, the candidate must dance with Old Fang, a giant green snake with gold blotches on his back. At the high point of the dance, Old Fang bites the candidate and injects a POT 20 poison. If the poison in resisted, the candidate lapses into a coma and receives dreams from the Dancing Snake. If the resistance roll is failed, the candidate dies unworthy of being a Snake Pipe Dancer Outsider converts serve the important role o keeping enough variety in the gene pool t insure the clan survival.

Special Ability: All initiates of the Dancing Snake resist poiso as if they had a CON of 20.

Skills Taught: Short Sword Attack, Dagger Parry, Earthspeech Snake Lore, Sneak, Play Cult Instruments, Ceremony: Dance Spirit Magic: Coordination, Control Snake, Glamour, Shimmer Rune Magic: There is no rune magic available to initiates.



### II. The Cult in the World

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#### IV. Snake Lords (Priests)

To qualify as a priest of the Dancing Snake, a candidate must meet the following criteria -- have a POW of 18, Ceremony(Dance) at 90% and three of the following skill at 90% or more: Short Sword Attack, Dagger Parry, Earthspeech, Snake Lore or Play Cult Instrument.

The candidate must then go quest for one week and one day in Snake Pipe Hollow in attempt to recover the lost cult artifact. If the applicant survives, they are taught the inner cult mysteries by the elder dancers. The most accomplished Snake Lord is given the title of Grand Dancer and oversees cult affairs and is the cult's spiritual leader. The Grand Dancer can communicate directly to the Dancing Snake.

*Special Ability*: All priests of the Dancing Snake resist poison as if they had a CON of 25.

Skills Taught: Concoct Hallucinogenic

Spirit Magic: Harmonize Dance

*Divine Magic*: Become Snake, Command Serpent, Heal Wound, Spell Teaching, Summon Serpent, Worship Dancing Snake.

#### **Special Dancing Snake Skill**

Concoct Hallucinogenic

Knowledge (0%)

This cult skill allows the making of a special hallucinogenic drug from venom called Snake Powder by outsiders. Each 5% of skill adds one to the final potency of the drug (70% skill equals 14 POT). This drug is fast acting, and those who fail CON resistance rolls are driven to near madness by hallucinatory snakes crawling on their bodies. The cult forbids the gift of or using this drug on outsiders without the Grand Dancers approval.

#### **Special Dancing Snake Spirit Spell**

Harmonize Dance

ranged, temporal

Successfully casting this spell puts the target into a trance where they will mimic every movement of the caster. In order to cast this spell, a Ceremony(dance) roll must be made and then the victim's MPs. The victim will be harmonized as the caster can make a Ceremony(dance) roll at the beginning of a round.. The caster may perform no other actions while dancing.

#### **Special Dancing Snake Diving Spell**

self, temporal, non-stackable, one use

Become Snake

1 point

2 points

This spell transforms the caster bodily into a snake. Each Snake Lord has his own unique snake incarnation with SIZ equal to the casters SIZ + 1d6, poison POT equal to the caster's POW, and vivid coloration.

#### V. Miscellaneous

#### **The Snake Pipe**

The Snake Pipe Dancer's great relic is the *benesnakre pipareo*, or snake pipe, which has been lost over countless centuries, and this family has hoarded and hid much wealth somewhere to reward any who would return it to them. Those

dancers who have been banished spend their lifetime searching Glorantha for this relic for personal salvation, wealth, and regained acceptance from the family.

The return of the Snake Pipe to the cult will greatly increase the cult's magical abilities. Snake Lords will gain the Divination rune spell and the Become Snake rune spell will become reusable. Initiates will be allowed to sacrifice for reusable divine magic on a one-use basis. Initiates with a POW of 15 or more will be able to learn the Harmonize Dance from a cult spirit. It is the return of this legendary artifact allows the Snake Pipe Dancers to become the powerful magical unit that fights in the Hero Wars.

#### Sacred Dances

Before the dancing, they lie on pillows and smoke a strange mixture of hallucinatory weeds and snake powder, *dheroughos do benesnakrenos*(dreams of good snakes). Brothers, mothers, sisters, and fathers feel very erotically comfortable with each other. Their odd dances are lazy and seemingly loose, but very purposeful. A young dancer spends countless hours, days, weeks, and years practicing one part of the dance. The body positions itself in almost impossible contortions, curling around other bodies to a slow and sultry beat. The most robust of the dancers, *maja dintjana*, is surrounded in a circle of intertwined bodies, while he or she is dancing with a venomous snake with a painfully slow and erotic-way. The dancers have the strange power to entrance audiences like a snake does to its prey.

The dance of swords and fangs (*schwerfon dintjaneo*) is where the men use their swords to entice the audience members to fight, while the female dancers command the poisonous snakes to attack those who dare to fight the male dancers.

The dance of copulation (*erotos dintjaneo*) is an elaborate spectacle involving initiated family members and serpents, and is the delight of audiences at the Dancing Snake Inn whenever performed there.

#### **Cult Instruments**

The cult's instruments are rattles and snake skin drums, along with the *serpentar* (which resembles a modern day sitar). Another string instrument is the *Ahmlak*, which is a hollowed tree trunk with strings running down vertically on the outside. The *Ahmlak* is held between the players thighs and all strings around it can be stroked and plucked. It makes a richer, deeper sound than the *serpentar*. One wind instrument is the *snakreroosh*, a coiled and hollow branch dyed with green moss dust. This instrument is commonly known as the 'hissing flute'.

#### **Old Fang -- The Spirit of Reprisal**

Cult members who have strayed are visited by Old Fang, a giant 20' snake with yellow and black banding. Unless the errant immediately returns to the cult, Old Fangs engages in spirit combat. The spirit has a POW of 25. If Old Fang reduces its opponent to 3 or less POW, the spirit is able to rip all knowledge of the sacred dances from the former cultist's mind and breaks off combat. If Old Fang reduces its opponent's POW to 0, then the victim is permanently transformed into a snake.

# **SPH Encounter Table**

Far Point	Trader's Valley	Dwarf Run	<b>Snake Pipe Hollow</b>	ENCOUNTER
01-05	01-05	01-05	01-06	Adventurers
06-12	06-09	06-15	07-19	Animals/Plants
	10	16	-	Avirook
13-15	11-15	17-20	n - 19 m a chun dhur tha na hasanna balanaadabbi na ana ==	Bandits
16	16-17	21	20-30	Broos
17	18	22	31-33	Chaos Horror
18-20	19-20	23-25	34-37	Chaos Cultists
21		a san ang sa	38	Dark Trolls
22	21-26	26-30	39	Dinosaurs
23-25	27	31-32	40	Dragonnewts
	28		41-44	Dragon Snail
	29-30	33-52		Dwarfs
a i <del>g</del> irati si	31-35	1	45	Elves
26-39				Farmers
		53	46-48	Giant
40	36-39	54	49-52	Giant Insects
41	40-42	55-60	53-58	Gorp
42	43		59-60	Jack-O-Bear
dige <del>n</del> de an	44		61	Lamia
43	45-46	and the second	62	Lycanthropes
44-49	47-60	61-69		Merchants
50-51	61-62	70	63-65	Ogres
52-53	63-71	71-76	66	Rebel Outlaws
54	v			Shadow Cats
	72-73	77-79	67-73	Rubble Runner
55-56	74		74	Shaman (godi)
57-59	75-79	80-85	75-82	Snakes
60-65	80-88	86-89	83-90	Spirit
	, 89	90	91-94	Stoorworm
76-75		91		Townspeople
76-96	90-91	92-94	-	Tribesmen
97	93-97	95	95	Tusk Riders
98	98	96-98	96-97	Walktapus
attijoace " staalaat"e Doorsonaat is e	99	99	n sanang dan dag maak nis ing kanalagan pangang pangang pangang na pangang pangang pangang pangang pangang pang	Wyrm
00	00	00	97-00	Special

**FAR POINT**: Also known as Old Sartar, this hilly area is currently under the grip of Havar Ironfist, Prince of the Vantaros. He is trying to bring solar worship to Far Point and is courting relations with the king of Tarsh. This area is still fairly wild, and its closeness to Snake Pipe Hollow can lead to some dangerous encounters.

**TRADER'S VALLEY:** This area gets its name from the constant stream of traders traveling between Sartar and Tarsh. This valley is adjacent to both the Stinking Forest and Snake Pipe Hollow, and the denizens from both are known to frequent this area.

- **DWARF RUN:** Isidilian the Wise has been the protector of this area since before Time began, ever watching from the deep halls of Dwarf Mine. Most of the activity in this area revolves around the mine, either being dwarf patrols from there or humans seeking dwarf knowledge.
- SNAKE PIPE HOLLOW: The most chaotic region of Dragon Pass, this isolated valley is shunned by all but the most foolhardy or powerful. Chaos abounds here and the very rules of nature do not apply.

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#### Adventures are encountered all throughout Dragon Pass. These

are often tough bands in se	arch of plunder or treasure
01-30 Far Point Tribesmen	61-70 Tarshites
31-50 Other Sartarites	71-85 Tarsh Exiles
51-60 Grazelanders	86-00 Lunars

Animals & Plants are the everyday sort of creature that one

would encounter in the area, but with some useful purpose. Birds and jackrabbits are common animals while giant or unusual plants such as tarbushes or healing herbs can make up this encounter. Plants and animals in Snake Pipe Hollow are almost always mutated in some subtle form by the surrounding chaos..

Avirooks are giant birds that nest in the Eaglecock Hills. They

are semi-intelligent, but have a savage streak in them. **Randits** are often called the scum of the earth by traders, and

these human and non-human drifters wander throughout northern Sartar. .

Broos are the outcasts of all societies and will usually try to

destroy all they encounter. 10% of broo encounters will be with trained war bands on a mission of havoc.

C haos Horrors are the unique manifestations of chaos that Snake

Pipe Hollow has become infamous for. Some of them are unique variations of local life-forms while others are bizarre beyond comprehension. All are quite deadly.

C haos Cultists are those who have given their lives over to the

dark gods. This encounter can range from the townswoman who secretly worships Malia to dreaded Thanatari strike from their secret complex above Engoli's Fold.

 $\boldsymbol{D}$  ark  $\boldsymbol{T}$  rolls are from the Skyfall Lake area, and are unwelcome in

Far Point by the locals. They are always on some mission and tolerate no interference from outsiders.

Dinosaurs are found throughout Dragon Pass. They

occasionally go on a rampage and destroy crops.

Dragonnewts go about there own business and are avoided by

Sartarites whenever possible. They are mostly neutral, but can become hostile if attacked or their plinths are violated. They are often seen traveling the mystic roads throughout the pass.

Dragonsnails seep out of the chaos infected pools in the north

part of Snake Pipe Hollow to harass one and all. They occasionally have bizarre mutations. About 50% of dragonsnails are of the two-headed variety.

Dwarfs in this area of Dragon Pass are almost always from either

Dwarf Mine or the nearby town of Hannand. This encounter is most likely with a patrol.

Elves occasionally come out of the Stinking Forest to raid or

trade -- there is an equal chance of both. Rumor has it that there is a great leader called Lestus Creeping Ivy trying to unite all of the elves of the Stinking Forest.

Farmers are the majority of Sartarites, growing vegetables and

grains. Many also keep livestock.

Giants come regularly to the Shade Table in the hollow.

Giant Insects are a plague to all travelers in Sartar. They often swarm and harass parties of any size. Gorp is a general nuisance wherever it is found. See River of

Cradles for more information and new types of gorp.

Jack-O-Bears are denizens of Snake Pipe Hollow, a spot

where they are known to breed with an high fertility.

Lamias are strange creatures of chaos that often enthrall lesser

beings. They can be dangerous foes.

Lycanthropes such as Wolf Brothers and Bear Walkers are a well known legend of Dragon Pass and are occasionally encountered hiding in human populations.

Merchants travel throughout the area and many of them come

from Tarsh and the Empire. There are heavy taxes on caravans, and many try to smuggle items past the Lunar custom agents.

Ogres wander throughout Sartar, looking for living sacrifices to

their terrible god, Cacodemon. They have a notorious altar to it at the Ogrewood in Snake Pipe Hollow,

**Rebels** are Sartarites with Lunar bounties on their heads, fighting against the Empire.

Rubble Runners are viscous rodents that are more teeth than

anything else. They haunt out of the way places.

- Shadow Cats are rare in northern Sartar, but they are much sought out as familiars by Orlanthi.
- Shamans, called Godi by the Orlanthi, are strange and powerful

loners. They are sought out for their wisdom and their command of spirits.

Snakes are nest through the pass and are a general hazard.

 01-33
 Constrictors
 76-82
 Weapon Snake

 34-66
 Poisonous
 83-90
 Stake Snake

 67-75
 Spit Snake
 91-00
 Mixed

Spirits of all sorts can be encountered, both friendly and hostile.

The GM should design an appropriate background for any spirit encountered.

Stoorworms are wyrms that have been mutated by chaos. They

are a great menace to herders throughout Far Point.

Townspeople are the counterpart to the farmers of the hills.

They have professions and pastimes that reflect their more complex lifestyle.

Tribesmen are the less civilized Sartarites who still live off of

the land. All of the tribes in northern Sartar have united under Havar Ironfist of Alda-chur and are slowly converting to solar worship.

Tusk Riders are foul blood drinking mercenaries from the

Ivory Plinth. The came with the Lunar army and stayed beyond their welcome.

Walktapi are feared wherever they appear, and rarely do they congregate in any number.

Wyrms are large draconic beings, some known for their ancient dragon wisdom, though many are brutish.

Special encounters are those that legends are made of!

Possibilities include Dream Dragons, Lunar Magicians, Strange artifacts, the Urain, Ancient Ruins...

# ROADVENTURES The only fanzine dedicated to exploring the World of Glorantha through adventure



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