

Rhunn Gnoirid

Tribune of 9th Cohort (Bugbear) Kol's Legion and prospective Great School of Magic Student

AC 1014

By Michael Berry

'I have always known about men. I believe his wisdom must walk hand and hand with his idiocy.'

I. Appearance

Rhunn is an intimidating sight, especially for those not used to running into humanoids on the walkways or in the shops of jewelers or pubs of Glantri City. Standing one inch short of 9' tall and heavily muscled with little fat Rhunn takes great pleasure in the way he clears a path through crowds when out in Glantri City. He is typical of most Bugbears of the Broken Lands in that he has a bright red snout and long black braided hair. Where Rhunn is not typical is in his clothing. Instead of wearing skins as most bugbears Rhunn sports a finely tailed black tunic with a large red plume atop his steel helmet befitting his rank as a Tribune of Kol's Legion.

Gnoirid has long been quite fond of jewelry and due to his rank in Kol's Legion has been able to start to afford indulging his love of expensive jewelry and sports a heavy gold chain necklace with an emerald pendant. Rhunn has recently developed a new passion for perfume as he has learned, in his schooling in proper Glantrian etiquette at the Kol Mansion, that humans are rather turned off by the natural aroma of unwashed and unhygienic humanoids.

II. Personality & Quirks

The Bugbear traits of hot tempers and uncontrolled fits of rage common are nowhere to be found with Rhunn. He is a rare humanoid that is inclined to think before he acts. Rhunn exudes a quiet calm and has a commanding presence which is due only in part to his physical stature and is prone to speak slowly, softly even calmly in the heat of battle. Even though Kol's Legion is not officially a part of the Grand Army of Glantri Rhunn has met many high-ranking officers of the Army including Prince Jaggar and all have come away with positive impressions of the famed bugbear.

Rhunn himself has mixed views of humans and of Glantrians. Like his chief Ohr'r he has a healthy respect for the fighting abilities and the sheer magical power Glantrians possess, however his analytical mind also sees the weaknesses in their individualism and their focus on their individual ethnic rather than a collective national identities. Rhunn is very keen to prove himself worthy of the opportunity Prince Kol has offered him to attend the Great School of Magic and disprove the notion many humans have that humanoids are unintelligent brutes.

III. History & Background

Rhunn was born in 965 in lower Daask Nu and was the third child of Kuzoz the leader of the powerful Gnoirid clan and his mate Vrug. His first five years were spent in the caverns of Daask Nu, the lands known to humans colloquially as 'Bugburbia' raised by his mother as his father was away at war much of the time leading his clan horde in the wars of unification on the side of the Orc chieftain Thar. During his

early childhood learned how to survive the harsh and dangerous subterranean lands under the Broken Lands. When Rhunn turned ten in 975 the war of unification ended with Thar becoming overlord over the wastelands south of Glantri and his father returned home covered in honor as glory as one of Thar's leading battlefield commanders. Rhunn was rapt with attention at the stories of the exploits of his father and the Gnoirid Horde against the tough and well-disciplined kobold hordes in the last few years of the war. When his older brother soon left for Camp Udhgar to serve in the newly formed Legion of Thar young Rhunn's mind was filled of nothing but desire for the day when he came of age and when he could serve under his brother and bask in battlefield glory.

Peace in the Broken Lands did not last long as King Thar launched a campaign of strong raids against the elves of Erewan in 980. Rhunn was bitterly disappointed when his father refused to accept him into the Gnoirid Horde assembling for not quite being of age. He was instructed to act in his father's stead as clan leader and see to the safety of the women and children of the clan while Kuzoz was away at war. When he came of age in 981 Rhunn was formally acknowledged by the Bugbear chieftain Ohr'r as the head of clan Gnoirid while his father was away with Thar's army leading a Bugbear horde while refusing him permission to leave Daask Nu to join the fighting. Though the campaign ended with a great victory over the hated elves in AC 983 at the battle of Ak Shezag resulting in the death of the Prince of Erewan, Celedrin Erewan, it did not come without cost as many including Rhunn's older brother fell.

It was at the head of a very reduced Gnoirid war horde that Rhunn's father returned to his duties as clan chieftain losing nearly 25% of their force in the 3 year-long campaign against the elves. In addition to returning to his duties, Kuzoz set to educating his son to take the place of his dead eldest son as future clan head and leader of the Gnoirid war horde. During this time Rhunn's unusually high intelligence was noticed by the clan's wicca, Horrachk Elf-Slayer, and with his father's approval Rhunn became Horrachk's apprentice. During his apprenticeship Rhunn would often accompany his father on raids upon caravans traversing the Broken Lands between Glantri and Darokin. Due to the unique way humanoid wicca apprentice/gain levels Rhunn's apprenticeship was a long one and it wasn't until AC 988 that Rhunn accrued enough experience to become cast spells.

Feeling that his son and future clan leader would find the experience useful, Kuzoz told his son that he was to follow his older brothers footsteps and join Thar's Legion. Rhunn's time in Thar's Legion was time well spent as Rhunn proved to be an excellent legionnaire. Rhunn had his first non-combat contacts with humans, mercenary legionnaires employed by King Thar, which left Rhunn awed and impressed by humans. After two years in the Legion and after his unit's chief was killed on a raid into Rockhome, Rhunn who had killed single-handedly four Dwarves was promoted to unit chief and had his first direct meeting personally with King Thar. Thar, like many upon meeting Rhunn for the first time, came away as impressed by the bugbears intelligence as much as his talents and skills as a warrior.

Rhunn's time in Thar's Legion only lasted another year as word came to him from Ohr'r that his father had died, and he was needed to take his place as the new Chieftain of the Gnoirid clan at age 26. Rhunn proved to be an effective chieftain and his clan was always well supplied with booty from caravan raids and occasional raids into Glantri and his reputation grew not just amongst the Bugbears but among the other humanoids. Over the next decade Rhunn's clan grew in numbers and strength as a result of his often-effective raids and clan Gnoirid grew in numbers and many clan less or those from lesser clans became members of Rhunn's clan to bask in their battle glory and reap the benefits of looted good quality weapons and high-quality human foodstuffs. During these years Rhunn grew closer to his master, the Bugbear Chieftain Ohr'r, and gave intelligent and effective council to Ohr'r.

With the onset of the war between Glantri and Alphatia in AC 1004 raids into Glantri over the next year became more costly and often ended with little success due to the massive increase in the size of the Glantrian Army as its population mobilized. Instead, the attentions of many of the humanoids turned the south in AC 1005 as Darokin was invaded from the west which drew its experience legions guarding the border with the Broken Lands. Even though these were days the humanoids fondly called 'Da Happy Time' King Thar ordered a complete halt to raids into Darokin (and Glantri) in the spring of AC 1006. While the reasons for the order wouldn't be understood for many for some time, some found out quickly. Orders came to the Bugbear lands mere weeks after Thar's cease and desist order commanding Ohr'r and his major clan leaders, which included Rhunn, to come to Udhgar. Thar wasted no time in explained to the assembled humanoid leaders that he planned on invading Glantri next year and needed the various leaders to not just marshal their forces but send envoys into the surrounding lands to recruit more forces to join the great invasion. When Thar was questioned about the greatly increased size of the Glantrian army he replied he had excellent sources in Glantri, and though doubled in size the Glantrian Army was concentrated to the east, not the south, in defense of surprise no warning aerial Alphatian Skyship attacks carrying the divisions of their army over the Ethengarian steppes.

Rhuun was commanded by Ohr'r to see the training of Bugbears and responsible for the marshalling of supplies for the 1500 Bugbears that Ohr'r was expected by King Thar to contribute to the invasion. Rhunn spent the rest of AC 1006 seeing to tasks and was informed by Ohr'r that he would be in command of one of the 500 Bugbear strong Hordes that would be a part of King Thar's invasion force. In the spring of AC 1007 Thar unveiled his plans to the senior humanoid leaders and Rhunn found out he and the rest of the Bugbears, numbering some 2000 troops after nearly 500 Bugbears were recruited from outside the Broken Lands, would be under the command of the legendary Kobold general Zar and tasked with masking the main invasion forces by attacking Erewan and tying down Elven forces from reinforcing the otherwise weak Glantrian forces west of the Vesubian River between Glantri City and the Broken Lands.

The forces commanded by General Zar led off Thar's invasion by some 50,000 humanoids, by taking his force of nearly 9000 humanoids across into the forests of Erewan and raiding looting and pillaging all while avoiding major combat and fulfilling his mission to tie up Princess Carlolina's standing forces and any elves that might have been mobilized to hinder Thar's advance to Glantri City up the western Vesubian valley towards Glantri City. The fighting was brutal in the forests with elves and humanoids engaged in small unit actions and hit and run attacks. Though successful strategically in keeping Erewan out of the bigger battles upon which the success of Thar's invasion would hinge, they were not without cost. After the first two months nearly 1000 of the humanoids were killed as was the head of the combined Bugbear force of 4 hordes of 500 Bugbear. Rhunn was promoted on the spot by General Zar to take command of the Bugbears and Rhunn put his years spent in Thar's Legion to good use as he became feared by the elves for his ferocious attacks in the southern and middle regions of Erewan.

General Zar would not survive to enjoy the acclaim his tactics and leadership brought him in post war studies as he was killed in the spring of AC 1008 by an Elven archer with an arrow straight into his forehead during an Elven ambush. High Dodge Kol was recalled from the main body of the humanoid forces, at the time besieging Glantri City, to take command of the forces battling Erewan. Like many before him Kol took an immediate liking to Rhunn and especially noted his intelligence as Kol himself was a rare highly intelligent (even in human terms) humanoid. As Glantri finally lifted the siege of Glantri City in the fall of AC 1008 and began to push Thar's forces to the south; the fighting in the forests of Erewan wore down and were more spoiling actions and small raids to again keep the Elves busy and unable to cut off Thar's forces as they came back down the Vesubian River valley towards the western

Broken Lands from where the invasion started. Thar's main body of troops crossed the Red River and entered the hills to the south and west of Erewan Rhunn and the rest of Kol's much reduced but very veteran experienced force withdrew completely from Erewan and across the small Vartana River back into the Broken Lands. Of the approximately 8500 humanoids that entered the forests of Erewan the year previous, only 5000 returned but those that did were battle hardened tough warriors who could give as good as they got even to Elves in their natural environment, and among those were the approximately 1250 surviving Bugbears commanded by Rhunn. The Bugbears were commanded by Thar to cross back across the Vesubian and cover the Bugbear and Goblin lands south of Fort Monteleone from any Glantrian incursions into the Broken Lands.

The end of the invasion and the end of the Glantrian war with Alphatia allowed Glantri to concentrate substantial forces against any further humanoid attacks futile yet in AC 1010 King Thar kept trying to attack Glantri then Darokin and suffered devastating defeats which eroded much of the confidence many of the other humanoid leaders still had left in him. Later that same year civil war broke out for leadership of the humanoids between Thar and Kol. Rhunn was sought out by Chieftain Ohr'r and was asked to provide counsel on which side, if either, the Bugbears should support. Rhunn recommended Ohr'r side with Kol as he believed Thar had lost the confidence of many and Kol was not just very astute in military tactics, being human trained, and an excellent leader but also was extremely intelligent and was a very capable spell caster, also human trained, and was probably sure to win. Ohr'r smartly listened to the advice and sided with Kol and with Rhunn once again leading Bugbear forces in the field Thar was defeated quickly in a 6-week campaign and submitted to Kol. Kol eventually heard of Rhunn's counsel and thanked him privately with the gift of several magical items including a ring of Spell Turning. After Thar was deposed as the King of Humanoids a time of relative peace as well as change came to the Broken Lands. Thar, unable to stomach, being subordinate to Kol left the Broken Lands and took his orc hordes on an invasion of Rockhome along with the leaders and hordes of the Ogres and Yellow Orcs.

Very few ever returned to the Broken Lands. Thar and his surviving Orcs did not, and instead of returning to the Broken Lands they settled in the Makkres Mountains of Vestland, Kol took the opportunity to consolidate his position as King and claimed the fortress of Udhgar and lands of Orcus Rex as his own and moved his seat of power and his Kobolds there and Rhunn and the Bugbears gained a new neighbor. Chief Ohr'r designated Rhunn as the Bugbear representative to King Kol and Rhunn spent much of AC 1011 observing King Kol's political machinations as he kept a firm grasp on the remaining humanoids, especially Alebane the leader of the Ogres who chafed at restrictions upon raiding Glantri and Darokin. Rhunn and King Kol got along quite well but it was Kol's Thyatian magist Thurston Cattaneo, the very one who taught Kol advanced (human) spellcasting, that Rhunn really connected with and the two spent many an evening discussing magic. Cattaneo told Rhunn he had the potential to be like Kol, a real spellcaster, but unfortunately, he did not have the time to apprentice Rhunn as Kol and his continued magical education took all of his time. As well as Rhunn got along with one of Kol's Thyatian advisors he failed to with the other, the Black Eagle himself Ludwig von Hendricks. Rhunn found the man to be overbearing and condescending and had suspicions he would be a huge liability to King Kol no matter how useful he was proving now as an advisor. Finally at the end of AC 1011 Kol's plotting and politicking paid off and he became a Prince of Glantri and Glantri annexed the Broken Lands west of the Vesubian River.

Rhunn was recalled back to the Bugbear lands on the east bank of the Vesubian river the next year as reports came to Ohr'r of Dwaven intrusions into the far eastern parts of the Broken Lands. Those incursions soon turned into all out war, a 4way conflict between Dwarf, Shadow Elf, Oenkmarian, and humanoid of the Broken Lands. The Bugbears refused the entreaties of Alebane the new self-proclaimed

King of the Broken Lands and stayed out the battles for the fabled underground city of Oenkmar. Yet the Bugbears eventually became a target of the victorious Shadow Elves after they conquered Oenkmar/Aengmor. Once again Rhunn led Bugbear forces on the field of battle as the Bugbears gallantly fought off waves of Shadow Elf attackers, but Ohr'r came to the realization that the Bugbears were doomed if they did not flee so Ohr'r followed the same path as their Goblin kin, and former neighbors and the Bugbears fled their long-held lands and with Prince Kol's permission settled in the humanoid Principality of New Kolland. Rhunn was immediately dispatched to Skoldar (the renamed fortress of Udhgar) to again be the Bugbear representative to Kol.

Rhunn was immediately given a task by the new Prince of Glantri. Kol explained to Rhunn, that the Prince intended that Rhunn and any other suitable humanoids with the ability to use magic were someday going to study at the Great School of Magic. Rhunn spent much of AC 1012 of identifying all known humanoid wicca. Those identified were screened by Kol and Cattaneo with the most promising, Rhunn included, selected to begin training for their eventual enrollment at the Great School of Magic. After Prince Kol formalized the structure of the humanoid standing army, Kol's Legion, Rhunn was offered the position of Tribune commanding the Cohort of Bugbear soldiers. Rhunn gladly accepted the offer even though it meant he would have far more contact with Ludwig von Hendricks than he cared to have. Finally at the end of AC 1013 Rhunn along with 42 other humanoids were moved to Kol's palatial mansion in Glantri City, taking up residence and were tutored in both basic magic, in preparation for the entrance exam for the Great School, and in proper Glantrian etiquette and customs. It was Kol's hope that the students will be ready next year for the rigors of an education at the Great School of Magic and his hope that once ready that they will even be accepted and admitted to the School.

Rhunn has taken well to his lessons since moving to Kol's Manor and mastered the lessons his tutors have taught in learning how to speak Thyatian Common which is a prerequisite to enrolling at the Great School, and also learning proper Glantrian (human) etiquette and customs. In addition, Rhunn received instruction from Master Cattaneo in basic magic concepts as well as receiving instruction in basic education concepts such as mathematics and reading and writing. Unfortunately, many of the humanoids that had been selected for potential admission to the Great School were not up to the task, either unable to grasp a new language or inability to adjust to human (civilized) life in an urban city. By the end of AC 1014 fewer than half of the original group of humanoids remain at Prince Kol's mansion receiving instruction with those that didn't pan out being sent back to New Kolland. Rhunn though a serious student came to enjoy his trips into the city, especially the Entertainment Quarter.

At first Rhunn, and the rest of the humanoid students, were objects of fear and obviously stood out in any crowd or any establishment they entered. Over that first year spent in Glantri City the novelty slowly started to wear off and the humanoids started to find places in the city where they were accepted and could relax and fit in. Rhunn enjoyed going to the Undead Ed Bar and Grill in the Entertainment Quarter where humanoids were not just tolerated but were welcomed and encouraged to patronize. Here Rhunn had his first substantive interactions with the open minded humans that came to the tavern. In particular Rhunn enjoyed the company of two the regulars at Undead Ed's, the infamous writer Micky the Mage and the owner of the Emporium de la Mort Aozy Markov and the two often would informally continue Rhunn's lessons in adapting to living in Glantri City and adapting to human customs. As both are graduates of the Great School both have written letters of recommendation for Rhunn. Rhunn counts those two his closest human friends but is considered by many as having the most potential to succeed at the Great School of Magic, that is if they are allowed to enroll.

IV. Web of Intrigue

Rhunn is very well connected to the important humanoid leaders of Glantri and is especially well thought of by Prince Kol himself. It is expected by many to be the successor to Ohr'r and become the next bugbear clan head when Ohr'r, whose has no surviving children and is well advanced in years, passes away. He has no desire to rush Ohr'r into the grave and challenge him for leadership secure in his belief that he will eventually succeed Ohr'r though he keeps a wary eye on the great Bugbear warrior Brudath for signs he has interest in leading the Bugbears. Rhunn also has impressed the Goblin clan head, Doth, with not just his prowess as a warrior and military commander but with his regal, almost noble, bearing. While Rhunn has a good working relationship with his fellow tribunes in Kol's Legion his relationship with his human commander, Ludwig von Hendricks, is very strained as Rhunn takes exception to the arrogance and superior tone the human takes towards humanoids when Prince Kol is not around.

V. Statistics & Style of Magic

Statistics: Bugbear Fighter 14 / Wicca 6
Str 18, Int 16, Wis 9, Dex 11, Con 12, Cha 15; AL – Neutral

Languages: Goblin, Orc, Thyatian (common)

Weapon Proficiencies: Battle Axe (expert), Two-Hand Sword (basic), Mace (basic)

Skills: Military Tactics (I), Leadership (Cha), Intimidate (S), Wrestling (S), Knowledge of Glantri City (I), Knowledge of Glantrian Society and Nobility (I), Alternative Magics (I)

Rhunn has little need to sport weapons or armor while living in Glantri City and preparing to enroll in the Great School of Magic. In combat Rhunn is an extremely formidable opponent as tough and experienced Bugbear warrior with (presently) enough magic to give him an edge over most opponents he might meet upon a battlefield. Rhunn carried a bugbear sized magic Battle Axe +2 that was enchanted by Prince Kol himself and wears chain armor. He has a Cape of Protection +3 that he took off of a dead Glantrian elf during Thar's invasion that is his most prized possession. His current known spells are mostly combat related and consist of spells to help him defensively and offensively in battle.

"What did I think of Rhunn Gnoirid? To be honest Mick.. I have no clue what to think of him other than I'd have him on my side in any fight"

(Banner Captain Tuen Mulder to Micky the Mage over a mug of Thunder Grog at The Undead Ed Bar and Grill)