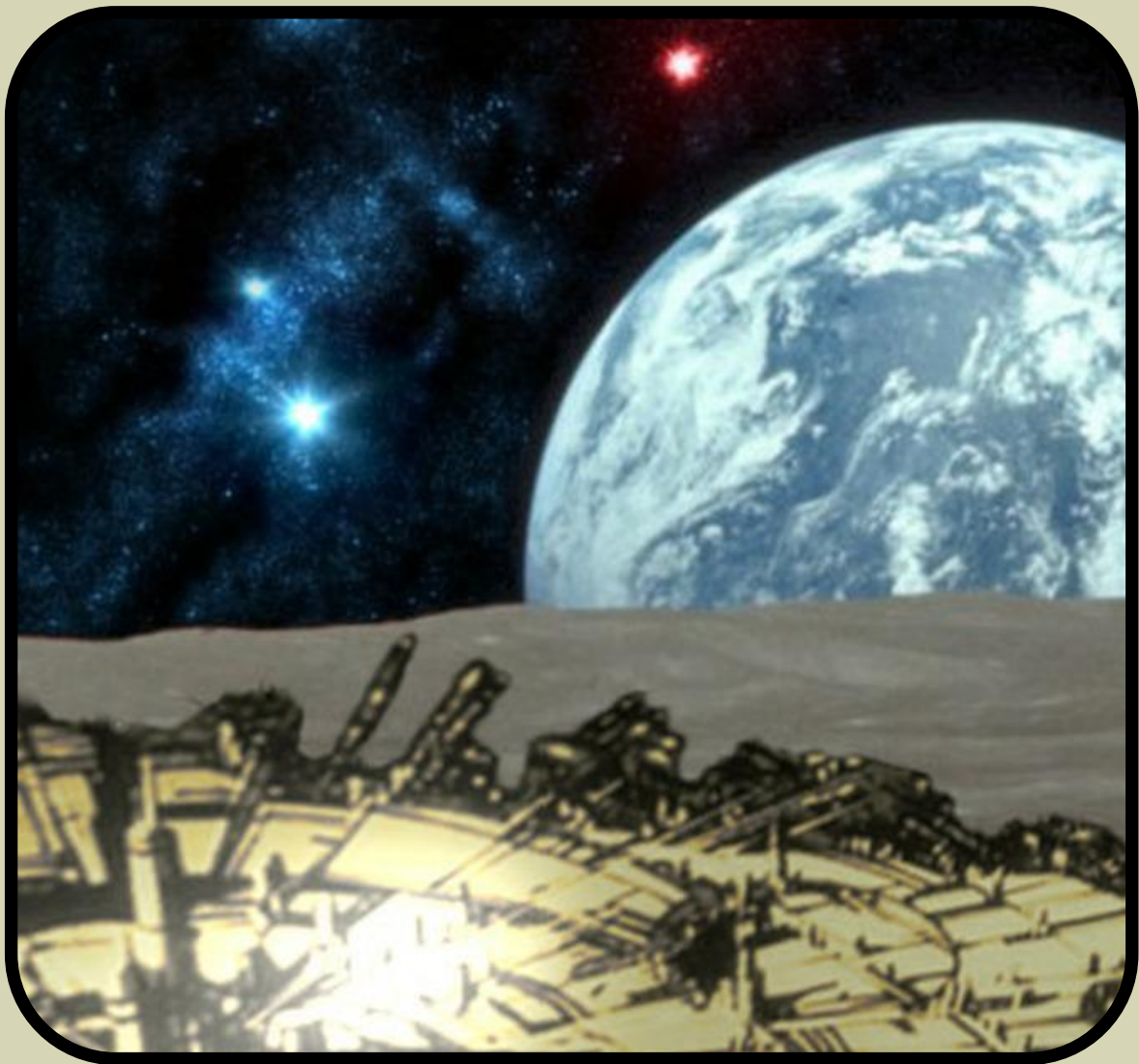


THRESHOLD

The Mystara Magazine

Vaults of Pandius



The second issue of Mystara's premiere magazine, featuring articles culled from the Vaults of Pandius! The Thyatian Senate, lupins, a glimpse into Mystara's past, and much more!

A free download from

Vaults of Pandius
The Official Mystara Homepage

pandius.com

MYSTARA

THE PIAZZA
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thepiazza.org.uk





THRESHOLD

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All issues of **Threshold** are available for **FREE download** from the [Vaults of Pandius](#) website

From the Vaults...

Almost 20 years ago, the Mystara campaign setting was discontinued by TSR. The last published products for the setting would appear under the 2E AD&D banner and rules. Not long after that, TSR, Inc. folded its doors and was sold to Wizards of the Coast. Mystara ceased to exist as a published setting.

Around the same time, the internet – as we now know it – was just beginning to reach wide levels of use and accessibility. The “world wide web” was being born, and for the first time, allowing audiences around the globe to communicate more quickly, more directly with one another. In places like Usenet, people could now share their common interests with no thought to the geographic distances between themselves.

Prior to its sale, TSR had ventured into this territory, with message boards dedicated to its various product lines, and it was there, on the Mystara AOL boards that many of the seminal members of our community first met and interacted. A mailing list – set up by Leroy van Camp III – was set up as another place for fans to interact. Even creators, such as Bruce Heard, Frank Mentzer, Ann Dupuis, stopped in and joined in the chatting.

Where TSR eventually folded, the mailing list continued on. And continued to grow. And other sites appeared as well; our Italian friends overseas developed a notably large Mystara community. Even Wizards of the Coast eventually created a dedicated forum for discussion for Mystarans, and reached out to our community, promoting the discussions. A contest for an “official logo” was even held.

Mystara lived on, despite there being no new products published and sold for it. It might even be said that it prospered more than ever. Fans from around the globe met, discussed, collaborated, and created new content, new stories; explored and mapped new areas never before seen. Shared stories from their own creations and campaigns.

This new wealth of information virtually cried out for a place to go, to exist in perpetuity. The Vaults of Pandius website was created for that purpose – to serve as a storehouse for as much of this content as one man could possibly collect and put into place, without regard for who created it, whether it fit together; it was just a wealth of all this collective input the Mystara community could cobble together, to continue to perpetuate the campaign world that had come to mean so much to us all.

That’s what this issue is here to commemorate. Not the Vaults of Pandius as a place, so much as a symbol. A symbol of a fully global community of people united by our shared interest.

We’re happy to bring you this issue featuring articles that are expanded or reimaged articles housed at the Vaults of Pandius, or are inspired by articles there. In honor of the Vaults as a treasure trove of our community creativity, some of these even feature brand new material, to take their place with the rest.

This issue is for all of us. We hope you enjoy it.

Andrew Theisen (Cthulbudrew)
Editor-in-chief, *Threshold* Issue 2

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Thanks To: The Mystara Community, for your support, hard work, and dedication to Mystara.

The aims of *Threshold* magazine:

- to provide a venue for community members to present material
- to promote the Vaults of Pandius and the material there
- to increase the exposure of existing and new articles
- to encourage authors to revisit and revitalise existing articles
- to motivate interest in Mystara in general



Issue #1 of THRESHOLD - the Mystara Magazine, is available for download from the [Vaults of Pandius website](#).

Also available at the same location are higher resolution versions of the maps that were included in the issue's PDF, allowing greater detail to be viewed.

This Issue's Contributors

Geoff Gander has been heavily involved in the Mystaran community for longer than he cares to remember. He has since been published by Solstice Publishing, Metahuman Press, AE SciFi, and Expeditious Retreat Press. He primarily writes horror and dark fantasy, but is willing to give anything a whirl. When he isn't writing or toiling on a cube farm, Geoff spends his time reading, entertaining his two boys, watching British comedies, playing roleplaying games, and travelling. Not at the same time.

Jesper Andersen (a.k.a. *Spellweaver*) has been a fan of the Known World and Mystara since his first D&D game in 1991. He enjoys creating new adventures, stories, characters and monsters, much of which can be found at the [Vault of Pandius](#). His latest personal adventure, however, is the launch of his own RPG publishing company called [Blood Brethren Games](#).

In his house at The Piazza, *Ctbulbudrew* (a.k.a. **Andrew Theisen**) waits, dreaming. "That campaign world is not dead, which can eternal lie; and with strange aeons, Mystara shall once again rise."

Giampaolo Agosta (a.k.a. *Agathokles*) agrees with Schiller that man "is only completely a man when he plays". Therefore, he makes a point of taking gaming seriously, and real life casually. Besides Mystara, his gaming interests include (among others) Dark Sun, Planescape, Ravenloft, Birthright, Call of Cthulhu, and Witchcraft RPG.

I. "Meandrathe" **Calvin** enjoys drawing fantasy, and animals that can kill. Namely wolves, dragons, horses, and most large felines. Human animal hybrids are not excluded either; she often draws human versions of her favorite animals. She does, however, despise drawing things that are unbearably cute. It's a pretty awful thing to do.

John Calvin has been fascinated by the world of Mystara since he first opened the Red Box. The thing he is enamored most with is the tremendous amount of fan created material for the setting - the foremost among those being the Hollow Moon material developed by Sharon Dornhoff - which is where he spends most of his time lately.

Shawn Stanley is the webmaster of the Vaults of Pandius, <http://pandius.com>, the official website for the Dungeons and Dragons setting of Mystara. The representation of the Vaults underneath Pandius in this issue should not be taken as a conscious or subconscious view of his work on the website.

Matthew Fleet lives in the United Kingdom, and has been playing RP games since 1984, when he got the D&D red boxed set for Christmas. His favourite RP systems include D&D and Warhammer. He is an active member of the Piazza Mystara community, and posts there under the name of Carillion. In his spare time, he enjoys cartography, reading about the classical world, studying economics, and avoiding Twitter.

This Issue's Contributors

Adam Ferreira (a.k.a. *Mystic Kind*) started out with the AD&D starters kit too many years ago to tell you now. That original set went a long way to creating a small village campaign until one magical christmas, he was given over a hundred dollars. He held that money for nearly two weeks... a true feat for any child that young, until he went into his local KB Toys at the mall. There, wall to wall... shelf to shelf... there were clearances where "everything must go". Upon a shelf... there sat boxes of this strange D&D campaign box set with a giant ornate M upon it. Glantri, Red Steel, Karameikos, Wrath of Immortals, Mark of Amber, and many others. A hundred dollars later and a giant trashbag from the back the attendant had to use to put it all in... our hero walked out on what would become a 15+ year adventure into the greatest gaming world ever written... and the adventure continues today.

Despite not being the first setting played by **Átila Pires dos Santos** (a.k.a. *Wilhelm*), Mystara is one of his favorites. He feels that Mystara is one of the most democratic settings ever, not only because of how much its fan base can change its destiny, but also because of those many RW cultures that have their Mystaran version.

Demos Sachlas was a founding member of the Mystara Mailing List and has had various contributions archived in the Vaults of Pandius. He has followed the evolution of gaming with interest, and has long wrestled with knotty problems such as the geographic location of Thunderdelve mountain.

Even though *Sturm* (a.k.a. **Francesco Defferrari**) loves any alternate world, he believes Mystara is incomparably the best for its vibrant community endlessly delving into ethnography, linguistics and history just to make a little sense of it. Something like the real world, but with dragons.

Giulio Caroletti started playing in Mystara with the old red box in 1992, and hasn't stopped since. He went "internet" on the MML as Captain Iulius Sergius Scaevola in 1999, and has since written mostly about Thyatis and Dwarves. When not busy pretending to be a Thyatian officer, he lives a boring life as an atmosphere physicist from Rome, Italy. His main interests are light-eyed girls, soccer (he's an AS Roma fan) and rock music (especially 70s progressive rock).

YOUR OPINIONS?

The Editorial Team welcomes your feedback on this issue of *THRESHOLD* are welcomed. Please post your comments either by posting in [The Piazza Forums](#)

Or by email to the Editorial address:

Threshold.Mystara@gmail.com

Please begin the subject line with the tag "[LETTER]"

MYSTARA

IN THE NEWS

The 30th anniversary of the Red Box, from which the Mystara setting draws its origins, was celebrated last November at the largest Italian game fair, Lucca Comics & Games, with the appearance of Bruce Heard as guest of honour as well as an exhibit titled “**Bruce Heard: Around the World in 36 Levels**”.



Around the World in 36 Levels: a look at the Mystara setting through its publishing history (photo V. Luongo)

Exhibit curator Fabrizio Paoli, was kind enough to dedicate a section label, titled "Mystara after TSR", to the history of the fan community, starting with the Mystara Mailing List and going on through the Mystara "Net" Almanacs, the Vaults of Pandius, Thorf's website, and The Piazza.

To quote the label, “Last to come is the massive pdf magazine, Threshold, the first issue of which [...] is devoted to Karameikos and includes an interview with Bruce Heard”.



Threshold Issue 1 and many other fan materials were also on show at the Lucca exhibit (photo G. Agosta)

The staff at Threshold magazine would like to thank Fabrizio - a long time Mystara contributor - for his dedication and support of the Mystara fan community!

References:

Lucca Games Exhibition -

[“Bruce Heard: around the world in 36 levels”](#)

[YouTube video](#) of Bruce’s appearance

Fabrizio Paoli's [contributor page](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

Mystaranomicon



» » » Exploring the Books of Mystara

by Jesper Andersen (Spellweaver)

At one time or another, most Dungeon Masters have had their group of player characters enter a library, a sage's office, a wizard school or a noble's study and heard the dreaded question: "So, what are all these books about?"

Mystaranomicon is a new regular column that provides Dungeon Masters with books ready to be inserted into any game with a moment's notice. Use them simply as colourful fluff or to provide clues and books to adventures!

"EXODUS OF THE FLAEMS"

Author: Unknown – but obviously a Flaemish wizard and Follower of Fire

Rarity: Collectible

Year: Believed to be around 400 AC

Language: Flaemish

Contents:

This massive tome is bound in thin sheets of bronze covered in ancient, arcane runes and its pages are made from the skin of some unknown creature from the elemental plane of fire. It is the most sacred book of the Flaemish people, detailing their 1400-year long journey across the Plane of Fire from old

Alphatia (which perished) to Mystara. Inside this book are powerful secrets of fire magic, lore about planar travel, an account of the war against the Followers of Air (from the perspective of the Followers of Fire) and details of the deceit of Alphaks.

The Flaems guard the secrets of their exodus fanatically and will kill any non-Flaem who is thought to be in possession of the book without hesitation. The original book is currently in the possession of Prince Vanserie Vlaardoen of Glantri and another is safely hidden on the Plane of Fire guarded by terrible monsters and magic. At least three other copies of the tome are presently unaccounted for and the Flaemish wizards use all of their magical powers to locate and recover them. If the Flaems suspect someone of having even glanced at the secrets of the book, they will try to kidnap and then interrogate said person, using all of their magic and wealth to do so, before silencing the poor reader permanently.

Legality: Illegal in all Flaemish territories in Glantri, legal elsewhere (but dangerous to possess!)

Number of pages: 300

“THE PRINCE – A GUIDE TO GLANTRIAN POLITICS AND RULERSHIP”

Author: Griweth of Braastar, honorary member of the Hall of Magistrates
Rarity: Common in Glantri, Rare elsewhere
Year: 937 AC
Language: Originally Glantrian, but translated into most of the local dialects and languages in Glantri

Contents:

This book is an introduction to the rules of the council regulating the distribution of dominions and ranks of nobility in Glantri. It briefly covers how the nation was set up in 828 AC and further reformed in 858 AC, but mostly it covers the voting system in the Glantrian parliament; listing the various ranks and titles and the voting power associated with them. The book also contains a very flattering description of the current princely houses and a brief account of their history in Glantri. Finally, the book also outlines ‘the Order of Radiance’ – the old legend of how power emanates from Glantri City and therefore



dictates the proximity within which nobles are allowed to establish their dominions.

The book does not cover legal issues or the law in Glantri. It is a common gift given to young students of politics in Glantri – both noble wizards and members of the Hall of Magistrates and the Guild of Spokesmen – upon their graduation.

At the DM’s discretion, the book could grant a bonus to Diplomacy/Charisma checks for player characters presenting their case before a Glantrian noble.

Legality: Legal

Number of pages: 75

“HANGMAN TREES AND OTHER HORRORS OF NATURE”

Author: Kirk Shortblade
Rarity: Uncommon
Year: 983 AC
Language: Thyatian

Contents:

This book was written by an adventurer and wilderness guide named Kirk Shortblade and describes some of the plant horrors of the wild that he has encountered during his 20-year career. It is a popular book with anyone travelling in the wilderness and can be found in many well-stocked libraries in Darokin, the Five Shires, Alfheim, Thyatis and Karameikos.

Legality: Legal

Number of pages: 100

“SOLVING PROBLEMS WITH OOZE CROSSBREEDING”

Author: Agamon
Rarity: Collectible
Year: 989 AC
Language: Glantrian

Contents:

Agamon was an entrepreneurial man who sought to solve the garbage problems of all major cities in the Known World by perfecting the breeding of a type of ooze that could dispose of the waste. He wanted to produce a breed of pudding or slime less dangerous than the black pudding but more powerful than the gelatinous cube, which could not dissolve metal trash.

So Agamon started experimenting in secret in the sewers underneath Glantri City, crossbreeding various ooze, slimes and puddings - with varying degrees of success. Unfortunately for Agamon, other mages in Glantri tend to dump unauthorised failed experiments in the sewers. Part of an experiment gone wrong found its way into Agamon's lab and infected his latest "batch" of slimes. The result was nothing short of horrific and gave birth to a new type of monster - the Nightmare Slime - which escaped Agamon's lab and slid into the sewer system.

After a while, the city authorities realised that something was horribly wrong in the sewer system and teams of adventurers as well as instructors from the Great School of Magic were sent in to investigate. After a number of tragic deaths, the majority, if not all, of the Nightmare Slimes were destroyed, and Agamon's secret lab discovered. Agamon ended his days in the Tower of Sighs and his

journal was confiscated and placed in the "Restricted Section" of the library of the Great School of Magic.

However, one of Agamon's apprentices escaped with his own notes secretly copied from his master and he may very well try to duplicate and improve the breeding program one day.

Legality: Illegal

Number of pages: 250

BOOK RARITY REFERENCE TABLE

Unique:

Only the original copy of this work has ever been known to exist

Collectible:

Less than 20 copies of this work are known or rumoured to exist

Very Rare:

Less than 200 copies of this work are known or rumoured to exist

Rare:

Enough copies of this work exist that it may show up in private collections and very large libraries across the world. Only rarely is one sold, rather copies are preserved and passed on.

Uncommon:

This book is difficult to come by but not impossible. If you can afford it, libraries or sages will probably allow you to have a copy made from theirs.

Common:

This book is readily available in most major cities. Books are often common if they are reproduced for teaching purposes.

“I SEE DEAD PEOPLE - THE POWER OF SCIOMANCY”

Author: Darghan the Initiated

Rarity: Collectible

Year: 794 AC

Language: Darokin

Contents:

Darghan the Initiated was a powerful wizard with an astonishing talent for both divination and necromancy. It is believed he could speak with the dead, even though he was not officially a priest of any known Immortal. Darghan mastered sciomancy - the art of divining the future by reading signs in shadows and communicating with ghosts. In time, a cult of followers grew up around him, all dedicated to a dark, mysterious practice of magic. Darghan's book explains some of the basic principles of sciomancy and his theories on afterlife, souls and death. The book also contains useful information about protecting oneself from ghosts. Much of the book is very difficult to read, however, as it reflects a fractured mind.

Legality: Semi-legal

Number of pages: 200

“MAGNIFYING CONVOCATION SPELLS WITH LION URINE”

Author: Caedfred

Rarity: Very Rare

Year: 954 AC

Language: Glantrian

Contents: Caedfred was an instructor at the Great School of Magic in Glantri, who was very

interested in convocation magic and multi-casting rituals. He was constantly experimenting with ways to improve the rituals for greater effect and in 954 AC he published his unorthodox theories. The result was widespread experiments by eager students all over the school, until the Grand Master and several professors finally declared Caedfred's works “a stinking lie” and expressly forbade its use. Caedfred was forced to leave the Great School of Magic in disgrace.

Legality: Legal (but unpopular)

Number of pages: 75

“PRINCIPIA MAGICA”

Author: Archmage Dakrith Kost, servant of emperor Zendrolion I of Thyatis and founder of Collegium Arcanum

Rarity: Common in Thyatis, Karameikos, Darokin and Minrothad Guilds. Uncommon elsewhere.

Year: 34 AC

Language: Thyatian

Contents:

This massive tome has become a world-wide best seller, an indispensable source of knowledge for starting and experienced wizards alike. It deals with the fundamental principles of magic; how to understand and detect magical energies and how to manipulate them, using basic spells such as cantrips. Principia Magica outlines the basic known schools of magic (transmutation, enchantment, abjuration, necromancy, etc.) and their primary uses and differences. It also lists a number of the most common spell components and items used in spell research.

Copies of Principia Magica are expensive but generally not hard to come by. However, because the book covers such a wide range of fundamental knowledge it remains useful even for experienced wizards and is certainly required by most who dream of doing any original spell research on their own. Therefore, even experienced mages do not sell their used copies to new apprentices in order to get money for other books.

The archmage Dakrith Kost, who penned the original Principia Magica, was a powerful Thyatian wizard in the service of Emperor Zendrolion I, and the founder of the Collegium Arcanum in Thyatis City. He disappeared later in life, but a large statue of him stands in the grand hall of the collegium, and all students there know his name.

Magic-users in Alphatia and Glantri know of this book, of course, but generally produce their own similar works.

Legality: Legal

Number of pages: 400

“ETERNITY: THE AUTHORITATIVE LORE”

Author: Alfric Oderbry, holy representative of the Church of Karameikos

Rarity: Common in Karameikos. Rare elsewhere.

Year: 997 AC

Language: Thyatian

Contents:

This book, written by none other than Alfric Oderbry himself, is the official dogma of the Church of Karameikos on the afterlife. It explains how the soul is stained by sin and -

if not purified by the good graces of the Church - will be forever stuck in hellish Limbo when the person dies. The book emphasizes the importance of strict observance of church rules, reverence, obedience and respect for the authority of the Church of Karameikos. It is a book that leaves no room for error or doubt, no tolerance for keeping an open mind.

Legality: Legal

Number of pages: 200

“DUST, BLOOD AND HEAT - 10 YEARS IN THE COLOSSEUM”

Author: Penned by Fervyn Erthurson
Rarity: Very Rare. Almost all copies will be found within the Empire of Thyatis

Year: 998 AC

Language: Thyatian

Contents:

This book is the official biography of the famous gladiator champion Decimus Vassus, who retired a few years ago after a decade in the arena. He is now a wealthy citizen living in a villa outside the city and only appears at parties and parades, which never fails to delight his many female admirers. The book is a load of self-aggrandizing tripe.

Legality: Legal

Number of pages: 100



FROM
THE VAULTS
OF PANDIUS

Return to the Hollow Moon

by John Calvin (Chimpman)

Art by I. Calvin & John Calvin

FOREWORD BY THE AUTHOR:

The bizarre and beautiful setting of the Hollow Moon has intrigued me since it was first envisioned by Sharon Dornhoff in June of 1998. My intention over the next several issues of *Threshold*, is to re-introduce fellow Mystarans to this exquisite alien world, and to grow and expand upon the information initially bequeathed to us by Sharon.

LUNAR PROPERTIES (GETTING RE-ACQUAINTED)

Everything you know about the moon is wrong... well most everything. Matera, the visible moon orbiting Mystara, looks to be a lifeless chunk of rock floating in space. Nothing could be farther from the truth. It is neither lifeless, nor solid - in fact it is more akin to a hollow crystalline sphere, the interior of which is teeming with life.

LUNAR REGIONS

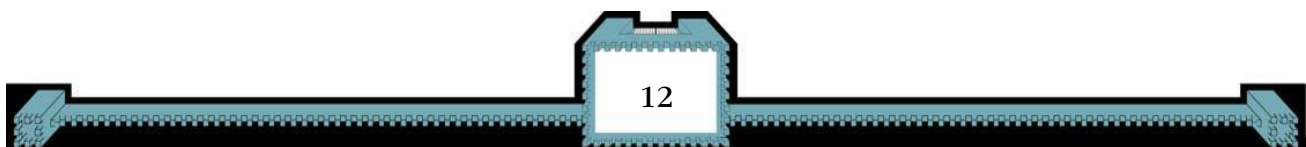
The outer surface of the moon is just as it appears from space - a cold, barren, wasteland, devoid of all life (save for the hidden Immortal city of Pandius). Those who have seen the interior of the moon, know differently. Though composed mostly of deadly crystal, there are havens in the interior of Matera that harbor an abundance of life.

Crystal bedrock

The crystal bedrock that forms Matera's shell is nearly indestructible (only immortal magic has any effect on it). The crystal is cold to the touch and prolonged exposure will lead to hypothermia and death.

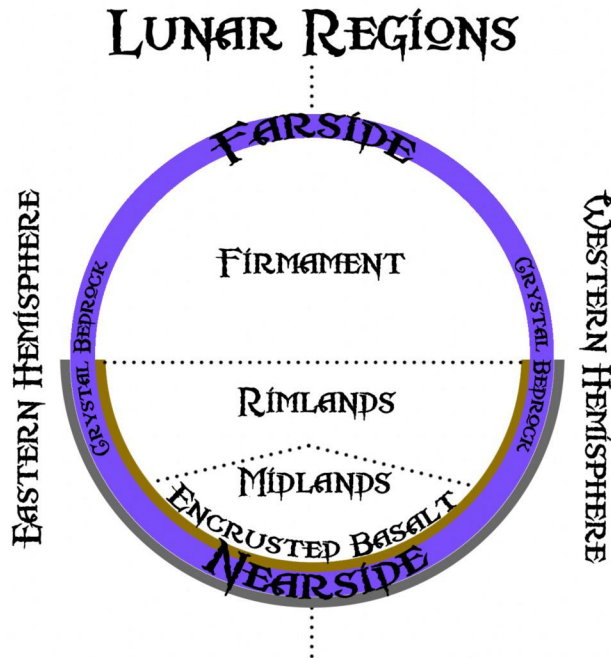
Firmament

Also referred to as the Farside, the crystal Firmament comprises the hemisphere of the moon that faces away from Mystara. Fully 80% of the Firmament is exposed crystal



bedrock, with very few encrusted basalt islands to support life.

Spindrift Sea, and many of the nations on or surrounding it.



Rimlands

Regions abutting the Firmament are referred to as the rimlands. This portion of Nearside circles the entire inner sphere, bordering on the Firmament.

Cardinal Directions

The terms east and west are reversed inside of the Hollow Moon, since like in the Hollow World, the inhabitants are on the inside of the moon's shell. Likewise the directions north and south hold little meaning for Materans, who are more concerned about how close or how far one is from the center of the Nearside.

Nearside

The hemisphere of the moon that faces toward Mystara, the Nearside of Matera (both inner and outer) is covered in a layer of encrusted basalt, out of which volcanoes, mountains, hills, and plains are formed. It is only on the Nearside of Matera that life can be supported.

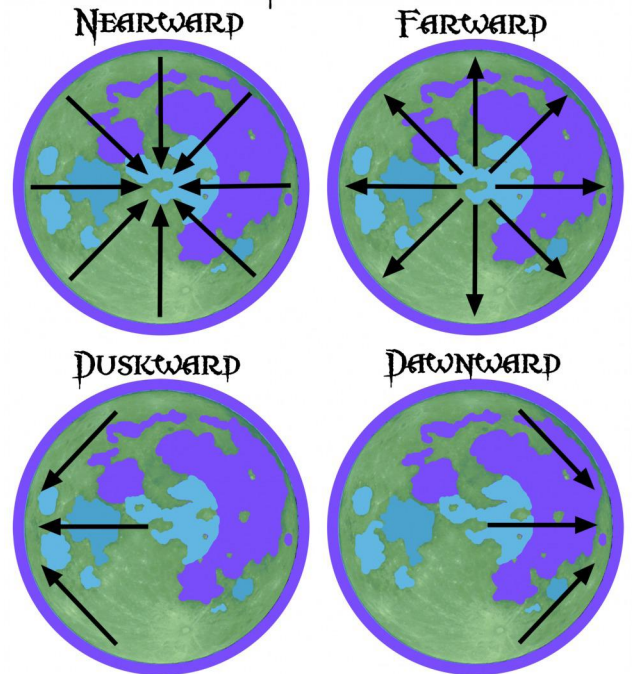
Crystalbarrens

Not all of the Nearside is covered in basalt. Those portions that remain exposed crystal bedrock are called the Crystalbarrens. Most of the oceans in the Hollow Moon cover such areas, but some remain completely exposed, including Mare Procellarum (the largest such area).

Midlands

The midlands encompass territory at the very center of the Nearside. This includes the Great

LUNAR DIRECTIONS



Nearward

This describes the direction one would take to travel toward the center of of the midlands. This is sometimes also referred to as **Spinward** - as the Great Spindrift Sea lies at the center of this region.

Farward

This is the direction one would travel when heading toward the rimlands and the Firmament.

Dawnward

This is the direction toward the location of the rising sun in the Materan west, over Mare Procellarum.

Duskward

This is the direction toward the location of the setting sun in the Materan east, over the rimlands past Mare Fecunditatis.

Lighting Inside the Hollow Moon

Life inside the Hollow Moon is dark, which is just the way the nocturnal inhabitants like it, though it is not entirely lightless. Some rays from the sun do make their way, albeit filtered, through the crystalline shell that composes Matora's bedrock. Reds, yellows, and oranges are all filtered out by the crystal, leaving only light in the blue and green wavelengths to pass through.

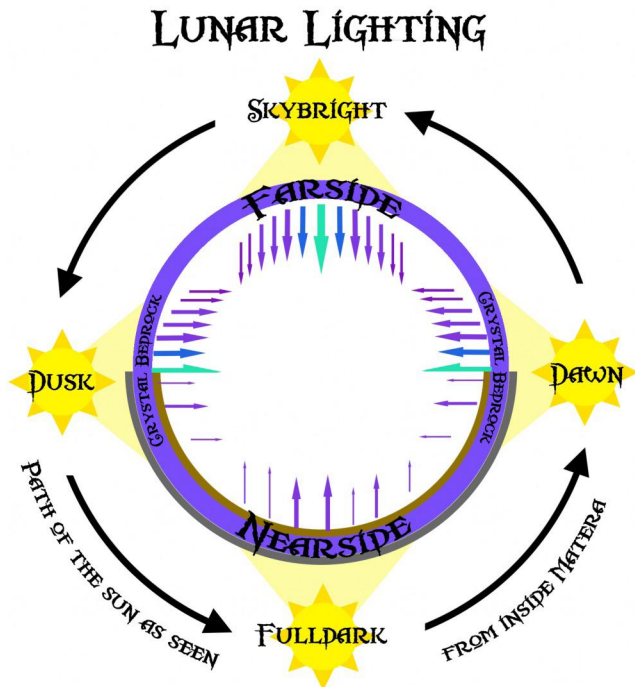
Lunar day

A lunar day, from one fulldark to the next, lasts 28 Mystaran days. During the first 14 days light increases, until finally reaching its height at skybright. During the last 14 days, light

begins to diminish until the sun sets at dusk and eventually returns to fulldark.

Skybright

Midway between dawn and dusk is the brightest period of the lunar day, which Materans call skybright. The sun shines through the very center of the Firmament, producing a bluish green lighting equivalent in brightness to twilight on Mystara. This is the time of a New Moon.



Fulldark

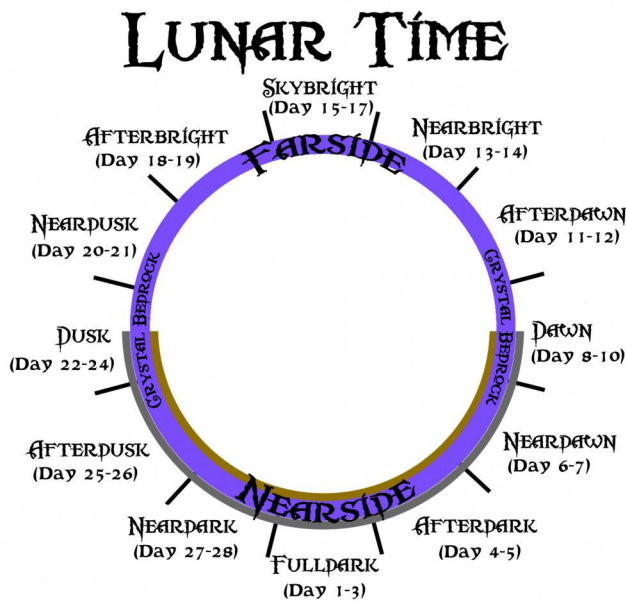
Midway between dusk and the new dawn is fulldark. This is the darkest period of the lunar day (although still not completely lightless), during which time light shines upward through the Crystalbarrens and most of the Hollow Moon's seas, which lay directly upon the crystal bedrock. This is the time of a Full Moon.

Colors

The crystal bedrock of the moon filters sunlight, removing most colors in the red - orange - yellow range. Thus, most colors seen in the natural light of the moon are restricted to blues and greens.

Weather and Timekeeping

The Hollow Moon year is 18 months long, and is governed by Patera's orbit around Mystara and its proximity with Matera. One lunar day (28 Mystaran days long) looks much like another, and Materans would be hard pressed to keep track of time on a larger scale if it wasn't for the tides. Tidal cycles, which shift from north to south during lunar night and south to north during lunar day, mark the Materan year.



Storm Time

Weather patterns form in conjunction with the tides, as temperatures fluctuate throughout the lunar day. These storms range from mild to severe, but occur on a predictable schedule.

Storms that form during dark periods tend to bring snow, while those that form during light periods bring rain, sleet, or ice storms. See Table A: The Materan Calendar for a complete listing of Storm Times.

Fire Time

Several times per year, Patera passes close enough to Matera to induce periods of intense geothermal activity. These are referred to as Fire Times by Materans, and cause volcanic eruptions throughout the Hollow Moon. Not every volcano erupts during each Fire Time. The regularity and intensity of each volcano will vary across the Hollow Moon. Some may erupt each year, while others operate on a much longer cycle (from 4 to 100 years or so).

Circle tides

These are three-and-a-half day tidal phenomenons in which all tides, winds, and cloud formations circulate around Nearside in the same spiralling pattern. During the month of Itiukkin the tides spin counterclockwise, and during Itinissatu they spin clockwise.

Doom Times

One event in the Hollow Moon can never be predicted, and scares most Materans to death - a lunar eclipse. On those rare occasions when Mystara fully eclipses the moon, volcanic activity (and the utter destruction caused by it) reaches its zenith.

The Materan Calendar

The Materan Calendar (as shown in Table A) was developed by philosophers from Adhuza circa BC 1800 shortly after their transportation to the Hollow Moon. Each

Table A: The Materan Calendar

Month & Weather Events	
1	Itidili (First Month) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire Time (severe) at Fulldark • Storm Time (moderate) at Skybright
2	Itikajjanu (Month of Rest) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storm Time (moderate) at Neardusk
3	Itiapsu (Month of Fountains) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire Time (moderate) at Neardawn • Storm Time (severe) at Neardusk
4	Itibelu (Masters' Month) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storm Time (mild) at Dusk
5	Itiukkin (Month of Assembly) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storm Time (mild) at Dawn • Circle tide (counterclockwise) from Nearbright to Afterbright • Fire Time (mild) at Dusk
6	Itiabura (Month of Waves) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storm Time (mild) at Dawn
7	Itiisatu (Fiery Month) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storm Time (severe) at Nearbright • Fire Time (moderate) at Neardark
8	Itiakalu (Month of Feasts) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storm Time (moderate) at Nearbright
9	Itinasahu (Month of Travel) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storm Time (moderate) at Skybright

Month & Weather Events	
10	Itiememu (Month of Heat) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire Time (severe) at Fulldark • Storm Time (moderate) at Skybright
11	Itisadu (Month of the Mountain) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storm Time (moderate) at Neardusk
12	Itibabbar (Shining Month) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire Time (moderate) at Neardawn • Storm Time (severe) at Neardusk
13	Itiwardu (Slaves' Month) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storm Time (mild) at Dusk
14	Itinissatu (Month of Misery) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire Time (mild) at Dawn • Circle tide (clockwise) from Nearbright to Afterbright • Storm Time (mild) at Dusk
15	Itizeu (Month of Seeds) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storm Time (mild) at Dawn
16	Itisamu (Month of the Firmament) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storm Time (severe) at Nearbright • Fire Time (moderate) at Neardark
17	Itisattu (Month of Harvest) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storm Time (moderate) at Nearbright
18	Itiqatu (End Month) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storm Time (moderate) at Nearbright

Materan month corresponds to a single lunar day, and there are 18 such months in a Materan year.

IMMORTALS AND THE SPELL OF REMEMBRANCE

Just like the Hollow World, the Hollow Moon is intended to be a cultural museum and is shepherded by a council of Immortals. Undiscovered until a massive asteroid impacted Matora's surface creating Mare Orientale and shattering the moon's crystal bedrock, the Hollow Moon was once a dry, frigid, wasteland. Since then it has been molded by its immortal guardians (Ka, Ordana, Korotiku, and Seshay-Selene) into a dark but vibrant world capable of supporting a multitude of life.

As a cultural sink, the Hollow Moon's purpose is to preserve those Mystaran cultures which have met with an untimely end on that planet's surface. Unlike the Hollow World, the Hollow Moon has been designed to cater to nocturnal cultures - and because of the presence of two Time immortals on its council (Ordana and Seshay-Selene) - Hollow Moon cultures are given more leeway to grow and change over time.

The **Spell of Remembrance** insures that the members of a culture never forget their heritage. This won't prevent them from being conquered by their neighbors, nor will it prevent them from using new technologies, however their culture - at its core - will not change. For example a conquered culture would always remember its roots, and given the opportunity they would rebel against their conquerors (even if treated justly) at their first chance. Stone age cultures wouldn't balk at using bronze or iron weapons, but might reject

new clothing fashions that go against their cultural grain.

The unique properties of the Spell of Remembrance give it a cyclical nature. A primitive culture may be placed in the Hollow Moon, be conquered by its neighbors, overthrow them and have a meteoric rise to power, only to be toppled by another neighbor and sink back to its primitive state. The Spell of Remembrance doesn't prevent cultures from growing or changing over time... but it does insure that cultures will never lose those aspects which make them unique.

MYSTARAN TRAVELLERS

There are several ways in which a Mystaran native can reach the interior of the Hollow Moon. Discovering its existence in the first place, may prove the harder task. Most information about Matora's interior was kept by the Nithians (and more specifically the Nepthisian sect which eventually fled to the moon) and it may be possible to tease this out of ancient scrolls and texts still hidden away in Ylaruam or Thothia.

Voidships

Voidships can traverse the vacuum of space that separates Mystara from its orbiting moon, but actually getting inside of Matora is fairly tricky. The moon's crystal bedrock is impenetrable, but enterprising explorers may be able to enter through a naturally occurring crack in **Mare Orientale**, where the prehistoric asteroid impact nearly shattered the moon.

Although indestructible (at least through mortal means) magic can be used to open temporary **crystal passages** through the

TIMELINE

Prehistory: The Desert Ghosts discover the Hollow Moon through portals to the Plane of Earth.

BC 14000: Six Ur-Carnifex tribes transported to the Hollow Moon.

BC 12500: Pteryx city of Attyx transported to the Hollow Moon. They soon colonize the Apennines.

BC 12500: Shovelface trogs placed in Marsh of Putrescence.

BC 5000: Shark-kin living along the coast of Davania placed in Mare Humororum after their culture is decimated by the kopru.

BC 7000: Longlegs trogs placed in Marsh of Putrescence.

BC 6500: Using an artifact stolen long ago from carnifex priesthood on Mystara, Demogorgon curses her people (the pteryx) to see all non-telepathic races as animals.

BC 6400: Saurolunarian Conflict begins - the pteryx begin a program of "purging" to keep the ur-carnifex population from encroaching upon pteryx civilization.

BC 5150: Cryions migrate to Matera and become extinct on Mystara

BC 5100: The pteryx perform the largest ur-carnifex culling in history, nearly destroying the race. Ur-Carnifex transplanted to the Jura Peninsula by Seshay-Selene, hoping to remove them from pteryx concerns. Saurolunarian Conflict ends.

BC 5000: Pisachas moved to the Hollow Moon.

BC 4950: Spell of Remembrance cast by Seshay-Selene and the other immortals of the Hollow Moon council.

BC 3000: Hsiao placed in southern outlands forests.

BC 2850: Margasta tribes placed in the trifold isthmus between Tranquillitatis, Foecunditatis and Nectaris after being decimated in the wars between the Azcans and Oltecs.

BC 2200: Aardovai placed in the Rilles area.

BC 2000: Aran placed on Altai Scarp just before the founding of Herath.

Quarikka moved to the Hollow Moon.

BC 1800 to BC 900: Adhuzan Dominions placed in the southern Spindrifft Sea and nearby mountain ranges (all containing underground thermal springs). Additions to Adhuza are made throughout the following centuries (as Adhuza rises and falls several times on Mystara).

BC 1800 - present: Goblinoids placed in southern outlands forests during the collapse of Urzud. There have been numerous placements of various goblinoid cultures into the Outlands Forests over the eons since then.

BC 1650: Devil fish placed in Sinus Medii and Mare Vaporum, as their society is overrun by a strain of Taymoran vampirism.

BC 1600: Modrigswerg placed in the Caucasus Mountains.

BC 1400: Schattenalfen transported to the Vesperlands

BC 800: Shaergarde hin are placed in the Hollow Moon after the fall of Shaerdon.

BC 800: Maskelyne placed in the Hollow Moon

BC 691: Albheldri colony established on Haemus Isles by Nephthisian and Albarendi immigrants.

BC 500: Nimmurian manscorpions moved to Sohktar shortly after being cursed by Ixion.

BC 500: Wallara moved to the Hollow Moon after being cursed by the Herathians. Before placing them inside Matera, the immortals do their best to restore their cultural memories.

BC 400: Pre-Imperial Pateran rakastas are placed on Fra Mauro.

BC 250: Cacklogallinia trade cities placed on the S-T Strait.

AC 311: Cynidiceans are transported to the Hollow Moon.

AC 42: Serraine gnomes travel to Hollow Moon on a rocket ship and settle the Taurus Mountains.

AC 100: Shark-kin living along the coast of Brun placed in Mare Crysium after their populations are hunted to near extinction by surface dwellers.

AC 451: Humans and bhuts from Sind are transported to the Hollow Moon and form the nation of Vedal

AC 550: Ostegos placed in Stygia region.

AC 800: Traladarans transported to Hollow Moon near Deslandres and found Toroldorsk.

AC 805: Latest pteryx culling (against the cryions) resulted in 20,000 lives lost.

AC 920: Graakhalian gnolls transported to Jansen savannas.

moon's shell. Such magic was known to the Nephthisians who fled Mystara in 691 BC, as well as to their cryion allies. These passages can only be opened on the Farside's crystal Firmament or over one of the Nearside's Maria.

Well of the Moon

Located deep in the crevices of the Black Mountains lies the wondrous artifact known as the Well of the Moon. Although most known for its healing powers, the Well of the Moon can also be used for other means. On nights of the full moon, the Well creates a ladder of moonbeams between itself and Matera. The ladder can be scaled in a single night, and will deposit those climbing it on the edge of Mount Copernicus in the Spindrift Sea.

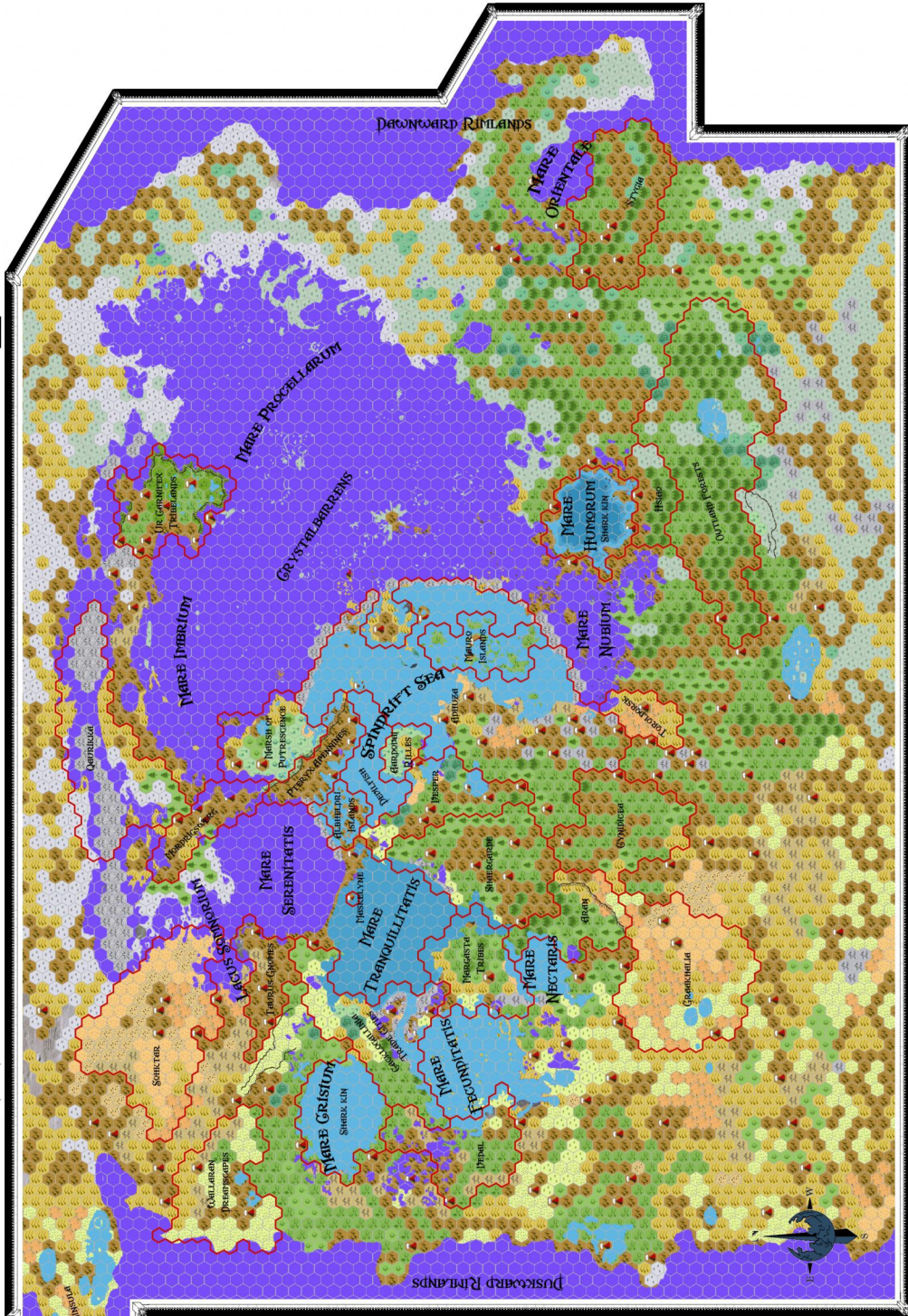
The Well creates a crystal passage through Mare Imbrium (along with a portion of the Spindrift Sea covering it). Individuals traversing the moonbeam ladder are not aware they are passing through the crystal bedrock of the moon, nor through the inner sea. Falling from the ladder, before reaching its destination, may be catastrophic and can deposit travelers on an outer plane (the Ethereal, Astral, or another plane of the DMs creation) or back at the Well of the Moon on Mystara where they started from (at the DM's discretion).

Needle

The phase spiders of Chak maintain a small trading post on the surface of Matera. This trading post can be reached by using a magical obelisk (the Needle) located deep in the heart of the Davanian jungle. On nights of a full moon a magical doorway opens at the base of the Needle. Anyone

MATARA - THE HOLLOW MOON
by JOHN GARDIN

SPECIAL THANKS TO SIMON DUNNORTH FOR PARTICIPATING THIS AWESOME SETTING AND TO THUNDERLUT FOR PROVIDING US WITH THESE EXCELLENT GRAPHICS



NATIONS

- SPINDRIFT SEA
- AKHROKHAI ISLES
- AKHROZA DOMINION
- ALABHELE ISLANDS
- DEATHFISH
- HOUSE OF PORTRESSENCE
- NEURO ISLANDS
- PIREXX APENNINES
- DESFER

DUSKWARD RIMLANDS

- GAELLOCALINIA
- GRISLUM SHARCKUN
- REARLANDS PENINSULA
- DEBIL
- COALLERAN DISBANSCAPES

NORTHLANDS

- PIERIGSBOURG
- QORULICKA
- SOHUKRAT
- TEURUS GNOMES
- USGEMRITEX TALARLANDS

SOUTHLANDS

- HISAO
- HUMORUM SHARCKUN
- OUTLAND GOBLINDS
- TOROLDORSK
- STYGHAT

MIDLANDS

- ARAN
- GYNIDICER
- GRADACHULLA
- MAGESTAR THULES
- MESSELVINE
- SHIBERGARPE

stepping through is transported to the underground realm of the Chak on Matera's surface.

In addition to the portal to Davania (and perhaps to other locations in the Mystaran solar system), the Chak base also harbors a crystal passage that leads to the aranea realm of Aran on the moon's interior. PCs who can earn the Chak's trust may be allowed to use this portal to journey into the Hollow Moon.

NATIONS

The following 4 nations/cultures are some of the older species moved to the Hollow Moon, and many span across the entirety of the Nearside (and in the case of the desert ghosts, the Farside as well).

Crystalbarrens of the Cryions

Arrival Date

5150 BC. The cryions migrated to Matera's interior on their own, and have since sent colonizing expeditions back to Mystara.

On the Outer World

Cryions once lived in the frozen north of Mystara, but were nearly driven to extinction by encroaching beastmen. Followers of Seshay-Selene, they were given instructions by their immortal patroness to build voidships and journey to the moon. For a long time there were no cryions on Mystara, until the Stormspume-mandated diaspora when Seshay-Selene once again sent a portion of her followers into space, this time to meet the Nephthisian exodus. There the cryions and Nephthisians switched ships, with the cryions

returning to Mystara and the Nephthisians fleeing to the interior of Matera.

In the Hollow Moon

Cryions make their homes on the freezing crystalbarrens of Mare Procellarum, constantly moving their herds of thick hooved bovines from one of the small, moss covered, basalt islands that dot its surface to the next. Their nomadic roamings bring them into contact with all of the cultures of the Spindrift Sea and the Dawnward Rimside.

Culture

Having fled to the Hollow Moon from Mystara long before the rise of Blackmoor, the cryions



Cryion shaman (by I. Calvin)

are one of the few races that realize they are living inside of Matera. Mnelds, small communal groups of the bat people, traverse the open crystalbarrens in double keeled outriggers designed to slide upon its surface. Few islands on the crystalbarrens are large enough to support such bands and their bovine herds for long, so the mnelds must move constantly in search of fertile grazing lands.

Mount Copernicus is sacred to the cryions - it is their belief that Tchirichee the Great Stormspume (their name for the immortal Seshay-Selene), dwells here. Once every Materan year, all cryion mnelds gather at the foot of the now dead volcano in order to listen for her song. Upon arriving at Copernicus the cryion's mnelds are dissolved and their shamans inscribe the names of births and deaths in the sacred caves. Trade is conducted, marriages are performed, and feasts and celebrations continue non-stop. This religious frenzy lasts for nearly the entire month of Itiukkin, culminating during that month's Fire Time when new mnelds form and once again set out across the freezing crystal.

Although herding is the cryion's primary profession, it is not the only activity they perform. Many mnelds conduct trade with their neighbors as well as performing the occasional raid against them. Because the makeup of a cryion mneld changes from year to year, their behavior can appear erratic to outsiders. The mneld traversing a particular territory may be friendly and open to trade in one year, and hostile and prone to raiding during the next, all because of its changing membership.

Fire Times

Fire Times are rarely impactful on the crystalbarrens, where there are few truly active volcanoes. Some mnelds use the chaos brought on during the Fire Times to raid neighboring

nations of the Nearside, especially the troglodytes of the Marsh of Putrescence, and the folk of Adhuza.

Adventure Ideas

- Embedded in the ice rimmed edge between the Great Spindrift Sea and Mare Procellarum, lies an ancient cryion outrigger dating back to the Nephthisian exodus. Bones of the Nephthisian priestesses lay where they fell, slain by an incorporeal Nithian undead that managed to sneak on board. It maintains a constant vigil over the treasures within, waiting to slay any who dare explore the ship.
- A particularly war-like cryion mneld has formed and begun attacking settlements bordering the crystalbarrens of northern Procellarum, focusing especially on the troglodyte villages in the Marsh of Putrescence. Cryions and outsiders alike all fear that the savagery of this new mneld will catch the attention of the pteryx, and usher forth another culling even more brutal than the last.
- Desert ghost attacks have increased along the Carpathian Archipelago, spurred in part due to the overabundance of electrical activity during the last several Storm Times. Hidden in one of the archipelago's long dormant volcanoes, a crazed mordrigswerg dwarf has found an ancient artifact giving her mastery over the weather. She has been using this power to direct and bolster the attacks of the local bands of desert ghosts, swooping in to reap the rewards of their plunder once the storms die down.

Crystalbarrens of the Desert Ghosts

Arrival Date

The desert ghosts are natives of the Hollow Moon

On the Outer World

Since time immemorial, the Desert Ghosts have traveled to the Hollow Moon through planar gates to the Elemental Plane of Earth. When the Firmament shattered and the Immortals created the Spell of Remembrance, those portals were sealed. The Desert Ghosts have remained trapped inside the Hollow Moon ever since.

In the Hollow Moon

Desert ghosts have roamed the interior of Matera since time immemorial. The great meteor that crashed into Mare Orientale, shattering the Firmament, changed their world forever. With the crash came increased geological activity, as kinetic energy from the impact infused the moon's crystalline bedrock. So too came heat, and storms... and deadly liquid water. Uncounted millions of desert ghosts perished during that initial impact, and over the course of the eons to come, because of Matera's renewed life. Still, they roam Oceanus Procellarum and the trackless, untouched, wastelands of the Firmament's cracked dome, though their vulnerability and hatred of water has made them ever vigilant.

Culture

Desert ghosts undergo two major phases during their lifecycle. Immature ghosts are little more than electrostatic balls of dust and debris. They float around the inner surface of Matera, consuming any electrical energy they can find. During this phase of their life, the



Desert ghost (by I. Calvin)

desert ghosts are little more than feral creatures - their animal-like instincts driving them to feed and grow with little recognition of events unfolding around them. Nursery grounds for immature ghosts are common across the interior of Mare Procellarum and the Firmament (where liquid water is scarce), but increased numbers of the creatures can always be found on the edges of most electrical storms that rage across the crystalbarrens.

Mature desert ghosts are another matter entirely, as they exhibit at the very least a rudimentary intelligence, and possibly a shared racial memory of the disaster that befell them in Matera's ancient past. Mature ghosts hate liquid water and worked iron, and despise all creatures that make use of these items. They will attack most biological

life that intrudes upon their crystalbarrens out of fear and hatred, sometimes executing intricate plots to weaken their enemies before engaging them. Cryions are one of their most hated foes, and the two races have a long history of antagonism between them.

Fire Times

Fire Times are rare upon the crystalbarrens of Procellarum, and rarer still in the freezing wastes of the Firmament. Storm Times, with the precipitation that they bring, are much more devastating to the desert ghosts, who find liquid water deadly in all of its forms. During these times the desert ghosts seek shelter wherever they can - in old volcanic tubes, rocky caves, cliffside bowles, and even abandoned shelters of the cryions and other Nearside dwellers. Most that can however, flee to furthest corners of the Farside, where weather patterns rarely form.

Adventure Ideas

- Three mysterious obelisks have appeared on the open crystal barrens in the center of cryion territory. Electrical bolts arc between them, causing ion storms and drawing an inordinate number of immature desert ghosts into the area. Feeding and growing at an increased rate, the desert ghosts threaten to overrun the local cryions unless something can be done to shut down or destroy the obelisks.
- Tales abound of travellers near Sinus Somniorum encountering ominous bands of desert ghosts who glare at folk from shadows at the periphery of their camps. Strangely none of these encounters has ended in violence, but traders and merchants of the area fear the worst. In fact a small band of desert ghosts has decided to make peaceful contact with the

creatures of the Nearside, but have thus far been unsuccessful in their attempts to communicate.

- Desert ghost attacks along the Rimlands have been increasing steadily, as nations all along the Firmament brace themselves for an impending war with the elemental creatures. Deep in the Farside, an ancient evil has awoken - a gigantic elemental horror composed of dust and lightning - and has been pursuing the desert ghosts across the Firmament, consuming them when it can and driving them from their homes to the dangers of the water filled Nearside. Only once this ancient evil has been dealt with, will life along the Rimlands return to normal.

Pisachas

Arrival Date

5000 BC. Pisachas are one of the few cultures transported to the Hollow Moon before the activation of the Spell of Remembrance.

On the Outer World

Long ago the pisachas lived in a small mountainous kingdom in the area that would later become Sind. Their need to sustain themselves on the corpses of the dead incurred them the wrath of Thanatos, who spent centuries plotting their downfall. The last vestiges of pisacha culture were moved to the Hollow Moon after their kingdom was decimated by an army of ghouls from under the mountains.

In the Hollow Moon

Pisacha culture is spread across the Hollow Moon, except in a few key areas - the

Albheldri Islands, the Margasta Peninsula, and the nation of Vedal - all of which contain cultures that are fanatical about the preservation of their dead.

Culture

Although not a unified culture as such, the pisachas (or “bone people” as they are sometimes called) are spread throughout most of the livable terrain in the Hollow Moon. Despite the general revulsion felt for pisachas, they do serve an important function in the Hollow Moon - a world drenched in near constant darkness. Pisachas eat the dead, and hence have a tendency to reduce the overall number of corporeal undead inside of Matera.

Most cultures in the Hollow Moon turn a blind eye to local pisacha activities, while a few actually integrate the creatures into their funerary customs. While pisachas must survive on carrion, they are neither bestial nor savage, and will either return the bones of the deceased back to their families for burial or inter them themselves (depending on the particular Hollow Moon culture they share territory with). Amongst themselves, the pisachas maintain a network of communication from group to group, and are always well versed in the comings and goings of folk beyond their own personal boundaries.

Despite the grudging tolerance of their behavior, pisachas are still treated as pariahs - untouchables beneath the contempt of most societies. They live hidden on the outskirts of settlements or in isolated pockets of wilderness nearby, and actively try to avoid contact with the local inhabitants of their area. Graveyards and catacombs are their domain, and they will descend on a field of

PISACHAS

Pisachas are a race of bestial creatures that feed on the flesh of corpses, imported into the Hollow Moon from Indian mythology by Sharon Dornhoff. Their main purpose in the setting is to oppose the machinations of Thanatos and to keep the populations of corporeal undead in check (in a world without sunlight). Though despised by many, the pisachas of the Hollow Moon differ from their real world counterparts in that they are not a wholly evil race.

battle within hours of its completion, picking the field clean of corpses. Indeed, anywhere there are sick or dying individuals, the pisachas won't be far behind.

Fire Times

Since they are distributed across the Nearside, pisachas follow the local customs with regard to Storm and Fire times. As societal outcasts, their populations remain separate from the local populace, but most follow parallel policies where safety is concerned.

Adventure Ideas

- Pisachas are being found dead in the dark corners of town - sprawled out in alleyways for all to see. Though the creatures themselves would never ask for it, they are in dire need of help. A powerful band of corporeal undead has managed to take

hold in the area and they are systematically hunting the pisachas down.

- With the onslaught of a particularly violent Fire Times looming on the horizon, the townsfolk realize that the only thing that can save their settlement is an artifact once wielded by a local hero. The PCs will have to befriend the pisachas in the area, and convince them to reveal the hero's final resting place, so that they can return to the town with the artifact before it is destroyed.
- Fleeing the scene of a crime, a local thief sought refuge amongst the town's population of pisacha. The PCs are tasked with bringing the thief to justice so that he might answer for his crimes. Unfortunately, the hapless criminal is mortally wounded, and the pisachas are simply waiting for him to die before serving him on a platter.

Pteryx

Arrival Date

12,500 BC On the Outer World

Contemporaries of the ur-carnifex, the pteryx were at one time the preeminent species on Mystara. By the time the carnifex came on the scene, their culture was already highly advanced, both in magic and technology. Unfortunately for the pteryx, their supremacy would not last. The aggressive carnifex society quickly outpaced them, and once that happened their fate was sealed. After centuries of war, their last city, Attyx, set high in the Brasol Range of Davania, was plucked from its perch and deposited in the Hollow Moon mere hours before its impending destruction.

In the Hollow Moon

When Attyx was placed in a dormant volcano in the Pteryx Apennines, the pteryx were only the second culture to be deposited in the Hollow Moon by the immortals. Since that time their population has grown to encompass several cities throughout the Apennines, and the pteryx have become the undisputed masters of Matera. Their very name is synonymous with the word for "terror" in most other cultures in the Hollow Moon, and no one willingly travels near their sphere of influence save for their troglodyte servants.

Culture

Descended from sentient rhamphorhynchoid pterosaurs, the advancements of pteryx culture rivaled those of Blackmoor at its height, 7,500 years before Blackmoor was even founded. Just as their last city on the outer world was about to fall to the carnifex, they were transported to the Hollow Moon, falsely believing that their enemies trapped them in a small pocket universe. Since then the pteryx have become slightly paranoid and are determined to prevent similar tragedies from befalling them in the future.

A telepathic species, the pteryx prefer to spend their time in esoteric pursuits of art, literature, and scholarly studies. Unfortunately for most other races in the Hollow Moon, the pteryx have a very narrow definition for sentience (thanks in part to a curse placed upon them by Demogorgon before the Spell of Remembrance was cast), only considering other telepathic species to be sentient (which in Matera includes the Hsiao, kopru, and - thanks to their ability to communicate nonverbally through smell - the troglodytes). All other species are considered to be no more than animals. It is because of

this attitude, and a deep seated fear that no other species on the planet - sentient or not - should ever threaten the pteryx as the carnifex once did, that the pteryx undergo periodic culling operations. This happens rarely (about once every 800 years or so), but when it does, the results are devastating.



Young pteryx scion (by I. Calvin)

Pteryx cities are artificially crafted stalactites hung from the ceilings of volcanic caverns. The only way to attain access is by fight. Many such cities also have amenities built in for the pteryx's bipedal servants - the troglodytes - who have been serving the pteryx since before being transported to the Hollow Moon.

Fire Times

Fire times in the Pteryx Apennines are quite mild, as over the millenia, the pteryx have learned how to harness and divert the

PTERYX

The Pteryx are one of the few Hollow Moon cultures originally detailed by Sharon Dornhoff, and as such, there is a plethora of information that can be found on the nation already in the Vaults of Pandius.

geothermal energy in the region. Some rumors persist that if attacked, the pteryx could even direct the raw volcanic power in the area as a weapon - dousing their enemies in molten rock. None in the Hollow Moon have yet been insane enough to put this rumor to the test.

Adventure Ideas

- PCs stumble upon a wounded pteryx and must decide whether or not to help the creature. The accident was staged by Demogorgon (or one of her servants) to precipitate another pteryx culling. Should the PCs fail to help the wounded pteryx, or should they be blamed for its condition, the nearby races of the Hollow Moon may pay the ultimate price.
- Folks have been disappearing recently and the populace blames a mysterious shadowy figure often seen in the vicinity. In fact a pteryx scientist has been swooping down from the sky to collect "samples" for study. The PCs will have to discover its layer and release any captives before the creature decides to return to the Apennines and its captives are lost forever.

- The pteryx are growing restless again, and several of the nearby Hollow Moon races have banded together in the hopes of finding a way to prevent another culling. The PCs must set out on an epic quest to find the ancient carnifex artifact that

Demogorgon used to curse her people. Once the artifact is destroyed, and the curse is broken, the pteryx may finally come to realize that their neighbors are more than mere animalis.

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[Hollow Moon Cultures](#) (by Sharon Dornhoff)

[Hollow Moon\] Ruminations Over a Blue Moon](#) (thread on The Piazza)

[Background on Hollow Moon Magic](#) (by Sharon Dornhoff)

[Materan Spells](#) (by Sharon Dornhoff)

[Hollow Moon Planetology: Blue Moon - Animal Life](#) (by Sharon Dornhoff)

[Hollow Moon Cultures: Pteryx of the Apennines](#) (by Sharon Dornhoff)



FROM THE VAULTS OF PANDIUS

A number of features in this issue of Threshold carry a “*From the Vaults of Pandius*” tagline. As one of our stated aims is “to promote the Vaults of Pandius and the material there”, we hope you will enjoy these revised or extended treasures from that [website](#).

COMMUNITY INTERVIEW

Shawn Stanley

The “Community Interviews” column aims at providing insight on the Mystara community, by interviewing authors and community members.

This issue, we take a moment to talk to Shawn Stanley, the founder and lorekeeper of the Vaults of Pandius website. In addition to archiving and maintaining the Vaults, Shawn has also authored a number of Mystara articles himself, including “Return to the Ice Wall” from issue 1 of Threshold magazine, as well as “Vaults of Pandius” in this very issue.



THRESHOLD Magazine: Can you tell us a little bit about how you first got into roleplaying in general, and the world of Mystara specifically?

Shawn Stanley: I first got into role-playing in 1984 after changing school and making a new group of friends. They were into gaming, including both Dungeons and Dragons and Advanced Dungeon and Dragons and we played in both. We didn't run campaigns as such, but just rolled up new sets of characters and ran them through various adventures. I remember in particular playing adventures like The Lost City, Horror on the Hill and Temple

of Elemental Evil. I think that there were a lot of elements which made me prefer Dungeons and Dragons over its Advanced counterpart, but not least of which was the sense of setting which even an early adventure list The Lost City evoked. I got the Basic boxed set for Christmas that year and The Veiled Society shortly thereafter, although I think that it was when I got the Expert boxed set, and then Castle Amber, and then Quagmire! that I was fully hooked on the Known World.

You have been a member of the Mystara online community as far back as I can recall. How did you first become aware of the Mystara online community, and what degree of involvement did you have prior to the creation of the Vaults of Pandius?

I've been involved with the Mystara online community since the early days of the Mystara Mailing List. This was the time when I was first getting access to the Internet and so I naturally sought out sites related to couple of my greater interests: in particular the Known World and Doctor Who. I was a reader, and sometimes commenter at that stage on the Mystara Mailing List. But I felt like I didn't have as much to say as some of the other people putting out new stuff.

One of the things you are most well known in the community for, and one of the biggest things to happen to the

community, is the establishment of the Vaults of Pandius, the compository of Mystara resources on the web. What prompted you to begin this massive project?

I wanted to do something on the Internet, but at that time there was already a lot of good Doctor Who websites, whereas there was only a few Mystara websites which were not doing exactly what I thought the Mystaran community needed. There were discussions going on in the Mailing List creating new and interesting stuff, but it wasn't being sifted through thoroughly - there were digests of discussions being archived, and there were, if I remember correctly, 3 websites where the extraction of some of the materials from the Mailing List was being conducted. It was apparent, however, that these websites weren't being as thorough as I thought that a repository of information needed to be. Also, it was apparent that there was some sort of AOL Message Boards in existence (only open to people with AOL accounts - which apparently you had to be American to have, back in the day, grumble grumble) and likewise these were, apart from being not accessible, were apparently creating stuff which wasn't going anywhere. So, seeing the need, I decided to try and doing something to fill it. My first website, which ultimately led to the Vaults today was provided by my friend who had access through his father to part of the public website where his dad worked. His dad worked at the Parliament House of Australia. The very first iteration of the website was little more than a set of links to other webpages.

What are some of the highlights and pitfalls you've encountered with the Vaults of Pandius since its creation? Some of your

most favorite contributions by the community that you've added to it?

The highlights are the encouraging and helpful comments that are received and the usage that the Vaults gets. Even during the hiatus from 2010-2012, the access of the Vaults did not diminish, and oddly only seemed to grow. That continued growth of usage, and my own niggles with regard to what I was not doing were part of the impetus for renewed effort on the Vaults this year. Part of that, and one of the clear highlights, was the tenth anniversary, and the outpouring of support which happened at that time. One of the pitfalls of course is the amount of time which it takes to maintain the Vaults, let alone the frustrations with not being able to improve the Vaults. I have an idea of where it should be, but the path to that point is not as clear and easy as I would like.

One of my ideas with the creation of the Vaults was to not play favourites with anybody's work ... not even anything which I might happen to do. So I think I'll remain silent on this point, but yes clearly there are some very creative and talented people out there.

What role do you think the Vaults of Pandius play in the Mystara community, past, present, and future?

I hope that the Vaults is a repository of information and can be used as a source to assist peoples campaigns and imaginations. Of course, if at some future time, the fact of the Vaults, if not necessarily the Vaults themselves, could be used to re-launch the Known World then that would be ideal. Obviously through everybody's work, and the fora in which we all do it, the

Mystaran community is healthy and vibrant, whatever small part of that which the Vaults can be is all to the good.

In addition to creating the Vaults, you have also written and contributed to various Mystara articles and projects as well. Can you name some of your favorite personal works or particular memories associated with those projects?

As now you, as editor of this issue, and Giampaolo, as editor of the first issue of Threshold, can probably attest, it's my lateness in submitting stuff is probably the first memory which comes to mind. More significantly, being part of larger projects, such as the Almanacs, was great because you had the chance to be a part of the formulation of ideas - to feel that you can comment on work at an early stage of its formulation, instead of just being a reader at the final stage. The large projects which have happened show what we can achieve together as a community.

On to some more personal questions- you are originally from Australia, but moved to the United States several years ago for work. Has that been a difficult transition? Are there aspects of American society that puzzle you? Amuse you? Any surprising things that are very similar to back home?

There are many things about American society which amuse and confuse me. You might think that Australian and American culture are generally-speaking quite similar, what with them both having British roots ... and yes, there are similarities, but there are countless differences too. There's a lot of little things of course: the lack of switches on wall sockets,

calling the main course the entree, and the entree the appetizer; the lack of sound on intersection crossings so that the visually impaired can know when it's safe to cross; but there's also bigger things: like the lack of international travel which Americans in my peer group do. I am still constantly shocked that in a country which has land borders that people are less internationally travelled than in Australia where you have to hop on a boat or plane to get to another country. And let's not even get onto hot topics like gun control or health care... Surprising similarities are a little harder to come by as it's the differences which are much more apparent, it's the similarities between Australia and the UK, or Australia and Canada which have been much more surprising in that regard.

You currently work for the United Nations. Can you tell us all a little bit more about what you do there? Do your experiences with the diverse and multi-cultural Mystara community bear any similarity to the work you do for the multi-cultural U.N.?

I saw something that Neil Gaiman once said: if you can't explain what you do to a 10 year old, you might not know yourself. Basically I make maps, although that being said a real cartographer would say that I've never actually made a map. The office I work in deals with everything legal to do with the oceans, my work in that regard mostly covers boundaries and maritime zones, in particular the continental shelf. So, the job is primarily helping the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf examine and give recommendations on the continental shelf, through creating maps, 3D models, et cetera; helping States build capacity to work out their maritime boundaries; and providing advice

to other bodies with regard to maritime boundaries.

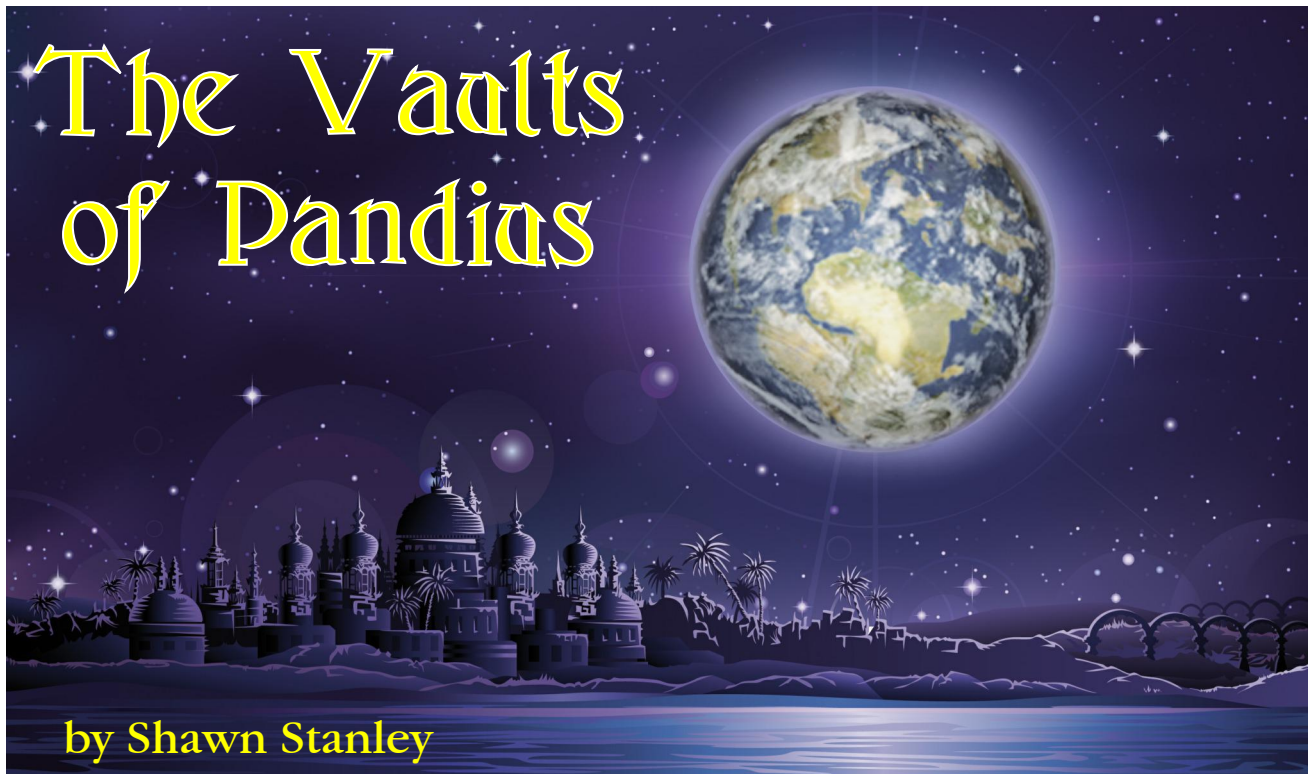
With regard to multiculturalism, I would say that it goes even further back than that. Australia is an ethnically diverse country, I myself am half Maltese, half Australian, and on that side, it's only a couple of generations going back before you get to England. Growing up however, I had friends and neighbours from around the world, and this was mirrored in the society at large around me, and then when I went to university and started working it was continued. Being involved in an online community only mirrors what I am already used to, and then working at the UN continues that. If anything, working at the UN, I was almost a little disappointed at how it was not an order of magnitude more diverse than my previous work environment. Yes, the mixture of ethnicities is different here, but it doesn't feel like it is considerably more diverse than anything else I've been used to. But in all of these environments it proves the point that a multi-cultural community, or workplace, can produce a better, more enduring product than a less diverse one.

You have done quite a bit of traveling in your life. Any particular favorite places that you've visited? Fond memories? Harrowing experiences?

I have always enjoyed travelling and the idea of travelling. I did it first through looking through atlases and reading about countries. And then I did it through the Known World. And soon as I became able I did it for real. I enjoy going to new places, but there are some places which I've been back to a couple of times because of making friends there, or just enjoying the place. That's the difficult

thing however, although I have some places which I would enjoy going to again, I also enjoy discovering new places too. Now, working in the US the need, and desire, to go back home every so often is also quite strong and it makes the decision of where to go to difficult. Thankfully my current job has also involved an element of travel, including to places where I might not have otherwise gone. Some of the favourite places, so far, include Germany, in particular Berlin and Dresden; the UK, in particular Edinburgh and London; Turkey, in particular Cappadocia and Istanbul; and the deserts of Namibia; too many to mention. One of the most harrowing experiences: freezing my arse off in Gallipoli waiting for the dawn service because I was under-dressed for sitting around in late-April for a couple-of-hour stretch, but then having a New Zealander next to me share her doona to help keep me warm makes that a fond memory. Or going the other way: a fond memory of my first afternoon of my first time overseas by myself, and entering the backpacker hostel in Paris but then instantly making a connection with a fellow tourist from England who had also just arrived. We went out for dinner together and had an enjoyable evening, except for my just picking something at random of the menu and getting steak tartare ... not what I was hoping for, so that became a bit harrowing. But if those are the most harrowing experiences then life is not too bad. I can only implore other people, if able, to travel - travelling through our imagination in a role-playing game is great, but the real thing is also pretty special.

The Threshold Editorial team extends its thanks to Shawn for taking the time to answer the questions and indulge us with this interview, as well as for taking care of the Vaults for us all!



On the visible Mystaran moon of Matera, in one of the larger craters facing towards the planet, is a node which leads to a spherical pocket dimension little more than a mile across. Situated therein is the city of Pandius: the City of the Immortals. From inside, the City appears to sit on the surface of the moon, fitting neatly into its crater, looking out over the world below. Within the confines of the City none of the five spheres has dominance, or pre-eminence. A large golden dome commands the centre of the city, a neutral area within which Immortals of any sphere can meet, and surrounding it each sphere has a smaller dome, within which matters of importance to that sphere can be conducted. The outskirts of the city contain many small estates from some of the great and powerful Immortals, as well as some of the minor Immortals who have a more scholarly bent, can stay. What is not immediately apparent

from within the city is that the pocket dimension continues underground, filling an area larger than the City above, within which is contained the Vaults of Pandius.

The Vaults of Pandius contain a wealth of information on the world of Mystara, its inhabitants, and history, as well as of the multiverse at large, for the use of any of the Immortals, titans and lesser fiends who pass through the city. Monsters and favoured mortals who may be in the city itself, however, are generally not informed about the Vaults for fear that the temptation to misuse the information contained therein would be too great. The work of the Vaults of Pandius is overseen by a group of Immortals comprised, as of AC 1000, of one member from each sphere: Rad for the Sphere of Energy, Masauwu for the Sphere of Entropy, Ka the Preserver for the Sphere

of Matter, Ssu-Ma for the Sphere of Thought, and al-Kalim for the Sphere of Time. This group of immortals, the Council of the Vaults, does not concern itself with the finer details of the running of the Vaults, they see such activity as beneath them – they are merely pleased that the Vaults are being run. For the finer details necessary to ensure the running of the Vaults the Council decided to use dreaming mortals.

Immortals often prefer interacting with their followers whilst those followers are dreaming; they find that their followers are more open to their guidance and suggestions, and that there are less likely to be unforeseen complications - especially if they are there to chastise their followers. Through such exchanges Immortals noticed that the dreaming minds of mortals could often access, process and make connections between complicated and apparently unrelated information in ways that waking mortals were less able, or less willing to do. When this was discussed within the Council of the Vaults an experiment was conducted to see if actual mortal subjects who were asleep and dreaming could be used to help collate and manage the massive amounts of data and information in the Vaults.

Now, the main task of the Council of the Vaults is to choose mortals whose dreaming forms are co-opted into working in the Vaults of Pandius. Each member of the Council chooses a group of 10 mortals who can be used over the period of a month as they become available - that is whilst they are actually asleep and dreaming - to work in the Vaults. While these decisions are usually done randomly, especially to ensure sufficient staff within the Vaults at all times during the day, some Immortals have identified favoured mortals

who they keep on reusing because of their efficiency of working in the Vaults, or for some other reason. Some of these mortals have developed specialised tasks for themselves and a hierarchy of activity within the Vaults.

THE DREAMERS



Lucius Rutilius: Lucius is a Thyatian man from Kerendas who is a painter in his waking life. He is a tall, thin, 48-year-old who is well-tanned from his predilection for painting urban landscapes and the citizens of Kerendas in their everyday lives. He was first randomly chosen by Ssu-Ma in AC 973 and instantly proved to be a perfect organiser and administrator. Over time Ssu-Ma began to select Lucius more often, and during that time Lucius rose to act as the chief librarian in the



Vaults, a role which his dreaming self now takes an element of pride in. Now Lucius is an almost permanent feature in the Vaults, consistently being re-chosen to work in the Vaults, and over time Lucius has also tended to sleep, and dream, more often - although the waking Lucius is aware that he is sleeping more often he is not conscious that this is actually a decision of his subconscious. Other dreamers now recognise Lucius and his role in the Vaults, and any new dreamers are brought up to speed. In recent years, the art which Lucius creates in his waking life has started to exhibit elements from his time in the Vaults; some of the portraiture which Lucius paints are not the Kerendan citizens which he observes but are actually other dreamers working in the Vaults, or users of the Vaults, and some of the landscapes are pictures of buildings, or vistas which Lucius has observed whilst in the Vaults. Without comprehending their significance or hidden meaning, Lucius has these paintings available in his studio, where they may be purchased - these paintings could be an ideal hook to any

dark, forbidden knowledge; or even give insights into the possible plans and plots which Immortals who are in the Vaults might be working on.

Cabelle Windstreak: Cabelle is a tall, unusually dark-feathered male faenare from the city of Aulrun in the Kingdom of Aeryl. Cabelle was first chosen by Masauwu in AC 995 and has been constantly re-chosen since to work in the Vaults, although none of the other dreamers are particularly sure why; Cabelle is not active in the work of the Vaults, and when noticed he is seen in the company of entropic immortals and lesser fiends apparently helping them with their studies. What is unknown to others is that Cabelle, who has been nicknamed Illwind by many of his fellow dreamers, has been a constant feature in the Vaults, appearing there at all times. The Council is also unaware of this, although al-Kalim and Ssu-Ma do suspect, correctly, that the mortal form of Cabelle is actually deceased.

Jack: The individual known as Jack is one of the most unusual dreamers who has been chosen to work in the Vaults. Jack is a Greaterkin Black Jack , [[World In Flames: Black Jacks](#) (by Bruce Heard)] who grew from other discarded Black Jacks created in Glantri.



The waking-life Jack now subsists on the outskirts of Glenmoorloch finding his place in the world, and trying not to unduly scare the locals. Jack was first chosen by Ka the Preserver in Eirmont of AC 999, and although he did not prove to be a particular insightful collator of data and information in the Vaults he instantly took on a caretaker role within the Vaults. Although Ka did not re-choose Jack during the month of Kaldmont he is interested in getting him to be a more permanent feature within the Vaults.

Count Urmahid Krinagar: Urmahid is the Count of Skullhorn Pass in Glantri. He was randomly chosen by Ka the Preserver in AC 998 and while he did not know exactly where he was he knew instantly that he was dreaming and that he was somewhere significant. Being an Illusionist/Dream Master of the fourth circle, Urmahid ensured that he returned to the Vaults over the course of the month as often as possible, however Rad, who was

conducting research in the Vaults at the time recognised his fellow Glantrian noble and called an extraordinary meeting of the Council. Without divulging any secrets of the Radiance, Rad was able to impress on his fellow council members the danger of continuing the candidature of Urmahid - so the Council took the unprecedented decision of revoking his candidature as a dreamer in the Vaults before the end of the month. Urmahid did not know what had happened, he just realised that one day, regardless of his night-time attempts, that he did not return to the Vaults. Since then Urmahid has been conducting research and experiments to try and find out more about where he was, and how he can get back there. He still does not know the full details of where he was, but he knows that it was a great repository of information, and that it was frequented by beings of great power while he was there ... and what magic-user wouldn't want to return to such a place?



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Håvard originally suggested I revise my [Dark Glantri](#) idea from the Vaults of Pandius for this issue, something I'd always wanted to go back and do more with. The original article was a suggestion of how to bring elements of horror into existing Glantri campaigns and NPCs. During development, the revision took quite a different turn; I hope you enjoy.

***Wicked children beware
Lest the bandy-legged men in their
ebon ships
Whisk ye away to a land of night
Where volcanoes spew pus in the
poison sky
Where the Black Flaem command
their demon hordes
In the land of Dark Glantri***

-Glantrian fairy tale

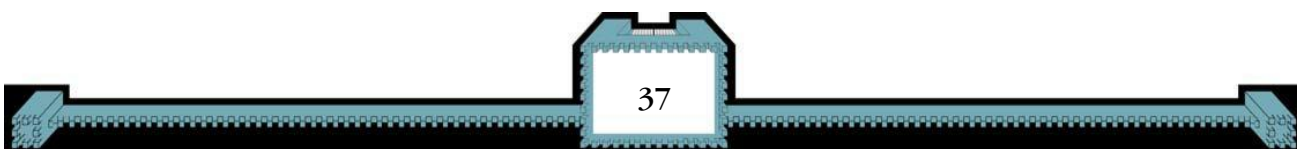
Dark Glantri is a very real place, though its inhabitants do not call it that. Most have never even heard the name Glantri, in fact.

Its history begins millennia ago, when the distant world of Alphatia was destroyed in a conflict between the Followers of Fire and the Followers of Air. The latter, the so-called victors, fled to Mystara in their great skyships, settling a sparsely inhabited continent they named after their homeworld. The Followers of Fire, too, would eventually reach Mystara, though only after centuries of wanderings through the many planes of existence.

Through countless leagues and centuries, the ranks of the Flaem (for such did the Followers of Fire name themselves) gradually diminished due to deaths, exhaustion, and dissension. One such split occurred when a wizard named Cipraien, claiming to have seen a heavenly new homeworld in his dreams, acquired a sizeable following. He led them through myriad, strange planes, until they could go no further- for their interplanar spells suddenly failed them.

Finding themselves on a cold, alien planet beneath the shadows cast by a black sun, they turned on Cipraien. The wizard had finally descended into madness from the horrible voices in his head, and he was dispatched by those he had betrayed with false visions of paradise. The Flaem then turned their attentions to their new home, which seemed like something from a bad dream. Such was precisely where they now were- the Realm of Nightmare itself.

The creatures that lived there were horrific, and deadly poisonous. The natural laws of Nightmare were wholly different from those



they once knew. They found most of their magics diminished in strength; some- such as their fire magic- ceased to function at all. Never a terribly martial race, the Flaem nonetheless found some small solace in their weaponry, which proved as effective against the Nightmarish creatures as those creatures were against the Flaem.

The Flaem seemed doomed, but then a powerful wizard among their number sensed a strange energy signature in the land nearby. Investigating, he discovered to his surprise that the nearer he got to the source, the more effective his magic became. Leading his people to the very heart of its source, they founded a capitol, which they named after their savior, Malijn.

The Flaem transformed their environment as best they could, and found that they could even affect those most immune to their otherworldly magics within the boundaries of "Normal" magic. They enslaved the peaceful natives, the diaboli, and rebuilt their empire. Though they could not expand without limit, due to the magical restrictions upon them, they nevertheless began to transform and dominate their immediate vicinity, and the Magocracy of Malijn was established.

Not long after the founding of their city, the Flaem were visited by men from a distant realm they called Leng, and who brought with them human slaves to trade for the Flaem's diaboli servants. With this new source of breeding stock, the Flaemish were able to begin replenishing their ranks.

A little more than a century ago, there was another major influx of humans to Malijn when a castle and its surrounding village suddenly appeared in the miasma shrouded eastern valley. The rulers of the village- the d'Ambreville clan- would spend most of their time locked within their castle (for it seemed to retard their aging process), but their servitors and descendants proved very fruitful and established several settlements in and around Malijn. Though the Chateau d'Ambreville disappeared a few short years

METAPHYSICS OF NIGHTMARE

Whether using the Mentzer cosmology, wherein Nightmare is a part of the Prime Plane, just dimensionally shifted, or using other cosmologies, where Nightmare is its own plane or demiplane, one thing that should remain the same is to keep its nature bizarre and utterly alien to the PCs. To that end, this article makes some assumptions based on Mystara "fanon" lore- to wit, that it has its own distinct elemental planes. The author has also made some extrapolations based on canon sources as to how Nightmare might affect so-called "Normal" magic.

The elemental planes which make up Nightmare are Blackflame, Vischor (sometimes called Bitterflow), Terro (sometimes known as Fallowrock), and Miasma (aka Reekwind). Blackflame, of course, should be familiar to Mystara fans as the clan relic of halflings. The others are the Nightmare equivalent of Water, Earth, and Air. A full accounting of the differences is beyond the scope of this article, but among said changes, Miasma is poisonous to non-Nightmare adapted creatures, and Terro is organic matter as opposed to the non-organic matter of Earth.

Within the boundaries of Nightmare, Normal magic is strangely affected. In some cases, as with the diaboli, Normal magic has no effect on Nightmare creatures; other Nightmare creatures (such as Malferas) have greater resistance to such magic.

This article assumes a greater effect on Normal magic cast within Nightmare. In general, spells of 4th level and below function normally, while higher level spells are unpredictable. Sometimes they do not function as intended, and other times they do not function at all. Spells that affect the standard elements (Air, Fire, Water, Earth) are among the latter. Spells that allow contact with or travel to other planes (*gate, travel, commune, contact outer plane*) only reach the Nightmare equivalent of those planes, and do not allow travel back to Normal space.

In any event, whether you use these rules or your own, the main objective with a Nightmare campaign is, again, to play up the alien-ness of the realm.

ago, the d'Ambrevilles had long since established a sizable presence in the realm.

The most significant event in Malijn's recent history occurred about 30 years ago, when a diaboli revolt led to the establishment of civil rights for that race, and the creation of a new satrapy, under the control of the diaboli clan that brokered the peace between the revolutionary diaboli and their human masters. Tensions still simmer between the two groups to this day.

The ball of light flickered as it hovered before him, fed by the mysterious energies he channeled into it. There! Angus McGregor thought, something manifests! The shadows at the edge of the chamber seemed to move of their own accord. A vague shape took form; human-like, with massive claws and tentacles bursting forth from its breast. The child-wizard drew more rads from his focus crystal, pouring them into the spell. The shadowy figure gained more substance as it wavered, frozen, stuck between realities in the corner. Satisfied with the experiment, Angus broke the spell, casting the room in darkness and dismissing the shadowy form. Did his fellow Brethren know of this side-effect of the Radiance? He wondered. And would he tell them if they did not?

The source of the nation's power is, of course, the Nucleus of the Spheres beneath Glantri on the Prime Plane. The same engines that once allowed the ship to travel immense distances by warping space and time now serve- after its magical transformation- to allow it to warp the space between planes itself, and provide a region of Nightmare in which magic works the same way it does on the Prime. The closer one is to the

center of the Nucleus' power, the more strongly that magic works.

Subsequently, Flaemish society evolved along similar lines to that of their cousins in Glantri; the most powerful magic-users have their domains located closest to the Source, while the least are on the outermost fringes of its radius. Within 120 miles of the capital of Malijn, spells of 5th level and lower function the same as they would in Normal space. Within 100 miles, spells of 6th level and below function normally; within 80 miles, 7th level, 8th level spells within 60 miles, and spells of 9th level function within 40 miles of the capital. (See Metaphysics of Nightmare sidebar).

The magocracy is led by a council of 5 magi, the most powerful rulers in the land. Beneath them are the destards, nemads, vaders, and satraps (in order of most to least important). The City of Malijn is located in the heart of the magocracy, and is considered neutral ground, with the domains of the Five spaced directly around it.

Of the current ruling Five, Magus Leskin (wizard 32) is the most powerful, having mastered command of both Fire and Blackflame; he is the only member who can still directly trace his ancestry to the founder of the nation. Leskin has agents active in Glantri seeking to learn more about the Radiance.

Maga Hephzibah (wizard 28), the lich-queen, is rumored to keep the still-beating hearts of her former lovers in her own unliving breast. Her domain is one of the most lively and colorful, as she constantly imports creatures from the Prime to populate it; her vampire rose garden is a beautiful - if deadly- sight to see. Hephzibah's chief opponent is the parasitic Maga Aechte (wizard dream-vampire 26).



Magus Leskin (by Andrew Theisen)

Aechte's domain is bleak and more nocturnally active than others; a large ghost population resides there. Magus Fernaguut (wizard were-hellpig 25) and his lycanthropic clan rule the eastern reaches. The most recent magus, Magus Jherek Virayana (wizard 27) oversees his realm from a floating palace. The other magi acknowledged Virayana's defeat of the previous ruler, and regard him with respect (and great suspicion).

Notables among the lesser rulers include such personalities as Vader Euraud d'Ambreville (wizard 12). A harrowing encounter with a kyton in his youth permanently afflicted him with severe body dysmorphia. His appearance is never the same twice, as he constantly alters his appearance cosmetically and surgically in search of the perfect beauty. Most of the body parts he has replaced did not come from willing donors. Satrap Clyphart (diaboli wiz 8) has the newest and most distant domain in the realm, forming an uneasy border with

HORROR AND DARK GLANTRI

The realm of Nightmare is, quite literally, the stuff that bad dreams are made of. Whether PCs are traveling to Malijn, or merely being forced to entertain visitors from that frightening realm, Nightmare is a great way to introduce elements of horror into your Mystara campaign. Though PCs face off against monstrous creatures on a daily basis, the very nature of Nightmare creatures and the Burrowers can give even the most experienced of adventurers pause- and possibly cause them to lose their minds altogether.

There are several ways to deal with horror and sanity in-game, regardless of which system you are playing in. Both D&D 3.5 and Pathfinder have OGL sanity mechanics that are available online, and Geoff Gander wrote an article on the Vaults of Pandius that covers

the same in BECMI games. Any of these systems should be fairly easy to use, regardless of what rules system you play with.

[Sanity for BECMI games](#)

[Sanity for 3.5/d20 games](#)

[Sanity for Pathfinder games:](#)

Of course, any horror games are best supplanted with inspirational material. This article introduces many concepts from the Cthulhu Mythos of H.P. Lovecraft and his contemporaries, notably *The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath*. Clark Ashton Smith, another Mythos writer, has long had a hand in Mystara canon as the land of Averogne, home of the eccentric d'Ambrevilles, was his creation. His *Zotbique Cycle* would be a great source for Nightmarish inspiration. Among other sources of inspiration to the author of this article: the *Hellraiser* movies of Clive Barker, the artistry of H. R. Giger, and the Wonderland of C. S. Lewis.

the nomadic diaboli clans to the west. Nemo Gheenkin (wiz 11) has close ties to Maga Hephzibah; he is also well known for his cultivation of highly addictive substances, both Normal and Nightmare. The representative of the Leng slavers in Malijn, Hetman N'Skendh, enjoys an unprecedented amount of power in the city.

In the centuries since their arrival, the outermost boundaries of the Radiance's effective range have grown slightly, allowing Malijn to expand its territory across the land. There are only a few wizards in Malijn who know that the source of magic lay on another planet in another plane of existence. Few in number, too, are the Glantrians who realize

that the increasing influx of Nightmare denizens to their land are connected to the Radiance. As more and more power is drawn from the Nucleus of the Spheres, the closer the two worlds are drawn together. This is a situation that could have more dire consequences than any realize.

The voices were always loudest at night.

They were never as bad as in that other place, Gaston d'Ambreville thought with a shudder, but they were getting worse. He hadn't told the rest of his family; they'd only send him back to the sanitorium. He

would simply endure his mania. That was his curse- his art was NEVER quite so powerful, so emotive, as when his head was filled with sussurations.

And so he painted. As the voices filled his dreams.

Tekeli-li! Tekeli-li!

The Magocracy of Malijn is populated by mixed groups of humans and diaboli. Among the former, the most prominent are the original Alpathian settlers. The strangeness of Nightmare has not left them unmarked; their coppery skin tone has taken on a metallic sheen, and their irises are white while their scleras express a wide range of colors. The d'Ambrevilles and their relations are the next largest human ethnic group; it is conjectured that pacts the d'Ambrevilles made long ago with a certain alien entity on their original homeworld of Laterre is what has helped them to thrive in Nightmare, but has expressed itself physically as a result. Their features tend to wide eyes, small ears, and grayish skin. Humans from other Prime cultures exist in Malijn as well, though they have not yet bred true enough or in large enough numbers to form distinct ethnic groups.

Among the diaboli, there are the natives who still live free and peaceful nomadic lifestyles outside the borders of Malijn, and those who have embraced the alien society of the magocracy, and seek to be a part of it. Such creatures are considered traitors at best and unnatural abominations at worst by normal diaboli. Those sentiments are closer to the mark than many suspect; the largest family of diaboli in Malijn, and the chief instruments of the liberation movement, the Fendqr family,

has long interbred with the foul devils of the Nightmare Outer Planes. They seek to impose their unnatural order on the rest of diaboli society with the help of the humans. The Fendqr are noted for having a more reddish skin tone than other diaboli clans.

Other denizens of Malijn include the mysterious Denizens of Leng, who bear a similar sort of appearance to the diaboli. The lands of the d'Ambrevilles suffer periodic gremlin plagues- they breed like rabbits in Nightmare, and even express a wider range of sub-species than are encountered on the Prime. Nightgaunts and Malferas are uncommon but greatly feared; bakhtaks and alps roam the lands, as do ghouls and ghastrs (who are more intelligent and civilized than their Prime counterparts). Then, too, are the were-hellpigs and parasitic dream vampires. Attacks by the linnorms, powerful dragons of Nightmare, are rare but devastating.

Perhaps the most deadly threat in Nightmare comes from beings who don't even have a physical presence there. The Burrowers, alien intelligences of immense power, were locked into stasis beneath Mystara's crust millenia ago by their Immortal opponents. Yet though their bodies remain useless, they still dream. On the Prime, their dreams can only reach the minds of rare individuals- artists, poets, madmen. In the realm of Nightmare, they know no such boundaries, and can communicate more directly with the realm's inhabitants, tempting them with thoughts of power and dominion. One such creature, calling itself Hu'dhakrtana, is particularly active in Malijn, and his cultists, led by the diaboli Syg (cleric 9) seek opportunities to travel to the Prime and gain more information about the Radiance. Sometimes alien minds

from even more distant lands can reach through Nightmare to the inhabitants of Malijn.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Adventures in Dark Glantri are best suited to higher level campaigns (9+), given the nature of the opponents and the plane traveling involved. DMs wishing to involve their Players of lower levels might be advised to start by having slight incursions of lower level nightmare creatures into the Prime as a way of foreshadowing later adventures.

Some plot hooks for getting PCs started in a Dark Glantri campaign:

The PCs are hired to investigate the disappearance of an NPC (perhaps one with personal ties). The trail leads to a group of denizens of Leng on a slave trading mission in a nearby settlement. The PCs must get aboard the slavers black ship (either through force or infiltration- perhaps posing as slaves themselves) in order to cross over to the realm of Nightmare. There, they must scour the streets of Malijn to find their missing person.

The PCs are approached by a Glantrian wizard who is studying the increasing appearances of Nightmare creatures in the land. He wants to send them through a portal he's created to figure out the cause. Their investigations will take them to the heart of Malijn and back again to Glantri, as they learn that the Nucleus of the Spheres itself is to blame.



Two werehellpigs fight for territory

NEW MONSTER

Dream Vampire* (Traumpyr)

Armor Class:	5
Hit Dice:	7**- 9** (M)
Move:	120' (40')
Flying:	180' (60')
Attacks:	1 touch or special
Damage:	1d8
	+ Wisdom drain or special
No. Appearing:	1 (1)
Save As:	MU7-MU9
Morale:	10
Treasure Type:	F
Intelligence:	15
Alignment:	Chaotic
XP Value:	1,250 - 2,300

Monster Type: Undead, Enchanted (Very Rare)

A form of undead unique to Nightmare, traumpyrs are parasites who roam the night, feeding on the dreams of the living. In their natural form, they are gaunt, pallid creatures with faces twisted in haunted expression, but they are rarely seen this way, as they prefer to cloak themselves in a myriad of different forms.

Abilities of Traumpyrs

Like vampires, traumpyrs are immune to *sleep*, *charm*, and *hold* spells, and can only be hit by magical weapons. They are more powerful shapeshifters than vampires, with the ability to use polymorph self at will, once per round. They also possess a permanent *ESP* effect that they use to examine the minds of their prey, often taking the forms of those things most desired or feared by their victims.

Traumpyrs regenerate 2 hit points per round. They do not take gaseous form like a vampire if they reach 0 hit points, but they will often

take a form that will allow them to flee combat if they are in danger of reaching that point.

The touch of a traumpyr drains 2 points of Wisdom in addition to regular damage. Like a vampire, the gaze of a traumpyr can *charm*; any victim meeting its gaze must save vs. spells at a -2 penalty to avoid being charmed.

Creatures slain by the traumpyr will return as traumpyrs under the control of the slayer within 3 nights.

The oldest and most powerful traumpyrs can move between the Nightmare and Normal dimensions at will, 1/day.

Weaknesses of Traumpyrs

Traumpyrs are halted by the sight of a holy symbol, but in Nightmare such things are rare. Mirrors have a much stronger effect, paralyzing the creature for 1d4 rounds as it is confronted with the reflection of its true nature. Traumpyrs are not hindered by sunlight (or the Nightmare equivalent of daytime) and may go abroad as normal, but they are stuck in the form they last took prior to sunrise, and cannot use their *ESP* again until nighttime.

REFERENCES

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[Nightmare Megalith](#) (by Travis Henry)

Hope In the Midst of Cosmic Darkness: My Mystara

My Mystara is a column outlining the community's changes to the D&D Known World. In each installment, a different take on Mystara will be explored by a different member of the community.

by Geoff Gander
(Seer of Yhog)

First outlined by David Cook in the 1981 Expert Set and adventure module *X1: Isle of Dread*, the **Known World** was expanded by Frank Mentzer in the 1984 Expert Set's revision. Bruce Heard became the setting's shepherd throughout the late 80s and 90s, overseeing development (and writing a couple) of the **Gazetteer** line, giving readers in-depth view of countries of the Known World. These were followed by the *Dawn of the Emperors* and *Hollow World* boxed sets, expanding from a single continent to the entire planet, inside and out. Bruce also developed Mystara through the *Voyage of the Princess Ark* and *Known World Grimoire* articles published in *Dragon Magazine* between 1990 and 1993. Much of that work was compiled into 1993's *Champions of Mystara* boxed set. The setting was further revised and brought over to AD&D 2nd Edition as the "Mystara" line in 1994. Official TSR support in-print of the setting ended in 1995.

For those who know me, and my writings over the years, it should come as no surprise that my version of Mystara is a lot grittier, and more dangerous, than the "default" campaign. I'll outline the major themes later on, but I will summarise the main difference in two words: Outer. Beings.

I have long been a fan of the works of H.P. Lovecraft and his contemporaries (August Derleth, Clark Ashton Smith, and Robert E. Howard – as well as Edgar Rice Burroughs), and the stories they wrote contained a number of themes that appealed to me on a fundamental level. They often pitted doomed (or at least seriously outmatched) heroes against incomprehensible cosmic forces or unspeakable monsters, against a backdrop of worlds that were incredibly ancient, or so alien that they forced my imagination to work overtime just to conceive of them. At the same time many of these stories – and especially Lovecraft's – conveyed the vastness of the cosmos and the utter insignificance of mortals. However valiant the heroes might be, however significant their victory that day

might have been, the wheel of time would still roll on. These notions were such a departure from other stories I had read, and resonated with me on a fundamental level.

Mystara, being rooted in the Original D&D, has a lot of these influences there. It can be seen in some of the nightmarish monsters, in the cosmology of the Immortals and the mysterious Old Ones, and even in some of the specific world-related materials (*GAZ 2: The Emirates of Ylaruam*, specifically mentions an ancient nation of lizard men that is obviously an homage to the Snake Men of Valusia in the Conan series).

CYCLES OF CIVILIZATION

The official, documented timeline starts with the rise of the first civilizations of prehistory, to the rise of Thonia and Blackmoor and their destruction in the Great Rain of Fire, and then afterwards a long dark age broken by the time of Nithia, more chaos, and then the eventual beginnings of the modern campaign setting. It is presented as a complete civilization cycle, preceded by nothing of note.

My own literary inspirations and personal leanings, however, led me to reject that interpretation entirely. Inspired by a number of favorite authors (Burroughs and Howard feature prominently), I built a notion of Mystara being a world on which powerful civilizations have risen and fallen many times – some so far back in ancient history that virtually no record remains of their having existed. This approach has provided me with no shortage of inspiration when fleshing out the setting, while allowing me to parallel Mystara's evolution with that of our own world. My version of the setting literally has tens of thousands of years of history that I can

mine. For example, the current setting, which is dominated by mammalian races, was preceded by an epoch where most of the dominant cultures were reptilian, and this in turn was preceded by a period where most of the races were amphibious, and so on. For all practical purposes this makes little difference to most characters, but it does add weight to the theme of the Outer Beings and cosmic horror.

THE OUTER BEINGS & COSMIC HORROR

The most significant modification I made to Mystara is probably the addition of the Outer Beings, and the associated theme of cosmic horror. As I wrote above, I was so enthralled by the notions put forth by Lovecraft and others that I imported many of them into my own campaign, and wrote about them over the past ten or so years. But when I did so, I made sure that it was not a simple copy-and-paste job. The Outer Beings are strongly reminiscent of the Great Old Ones, but I designed them explicitly *for* Mystara, and nowhere else. Thus, there is no Mystaran equivalent of Cthulhu sleeping in R'lyeh, nor is there a "blind, idiot god" like Azathoth looming in the centre of the cosmos. Each of the seven major Outer Beings (see [Frisland: The County of Orzafeth](#)) has a distinct personality and role, is linked to a grand apocalyptic prophecy, and has fanatical cults and monstrous servitor races to support them, but the similarity to the Cthulhu Mythos ends there.

In the cosmology I developed, the Outer Beings have existed since the dawn of time – perhaps even earlier, some might say. Seeking to impose their vision of reality on the

multiverse, they are locked in an eternal battle against the Immortals and the Old Ones. At various periods the Outer Beings have been dominant, and during those times they were revered as the primary deities on Mystara and other worlds. However, those periods of dominance were not long enough to allow them to reshape the cosmos as they saw fit. In the modern (AC 1000) era the Outer Beings are imprisoned in other dimensions, but work through their worshipers (human and otherwise) to free themselves and sweep away the current reality and replace it with their own. In my Mystara, mortal knowledge of the Outer Beings is largely limited to dedicated cults, as well as scholars whose interests have led them towards the awful truth, but who realize that only mindless panic would ensue if they warned everyone of the danger. Adventurers in my campaigns can come across obscure



hints that lead them to discover the existence of the Outer Beings, but the sheer cosmic scale of the conflict ensures that their role in the campaign itself is largely an occasional background element – at least for low- to mid-level characters.

To my mind, the Outer Beings fill a gap in Mystara's cosmology perfectly. In a multiverse that includes mortals, Exalted, Immortals, and Old Ones, I have often wondered: "Where does

'it' (i.e., the multiverse and everything in it) come from? Why does something exist rather than nothing at all? Is there something even bigger? Is there an opposite of creation that goes beyond destruction?" The Outer Beings are not like the Immortals, the Old Ones, or like anything else in the Mystaran cosmology. They are outside the space/time continuum that mortals and Immortals can interact with

or understand. Including the Outer Beings in Mystaran cosmology creates a dark source of fear and paranoia for those that discover them, that all of reality hangs by a thread and is menaced by things that are completely alien. Although classified as "chaotic" because they are inimical to reality, the Outer Beings are actually beyond the good/evil-law/chaos axis, and threaten the fabric of reality that allows good and evil to make sense. They function well as a cosmological

counterbalance to the rules-bound planar geography that all player characters and their Immortals call home. In effect, the Outer Beings are my way of saying: "Here be Monsters".

What I did imitate – shamelessly, perhaps – from Lovecraft is his conception of cosmic horror that I alluded to above: The very notion that, heroic and mighty as you might be, the powers against which you are fighting

are far greater and can easily snuff you out without a second thought. More than likely, however, they will ignore you because in their view *you don't matter* in the grand scheme of things. However, the battle *does* matter to you because your life and your world are at stake. So you fight against forces you barely understand, running the risk of being driven mad by the implications of what the mere existence of the Outer Beings and their minions means for what you perceive as "reality", knowing full well how unevenly the odds are stacked against you. But you fight anyway, because doing otherwise would be unthinkable, and the horrors you face along the way will force you to question your values, your morals, and your own perception of who you are and how you relate to this "reality" that you took for granted. A campaign set in my Mystara can easily become an exercise in self-exploration, and in fact in my own campaign I sometimes deliberately throw my players into situations that force them to re-think their assumptions. This reflects my personal view that roleplaying can be both an entertaining pastime and a powerful tool for personal growth.

One aspect of the cosmic horror theme that overlaps with many of the others in my take on Mystara is the role of intelligent alien life

forms – specifically the Zhochal, a highly-advanced race that I have modeled on Lovecraft's Mi-Go, also known as the Fungi from Yuggoth. Unlike the Mi-Go, the Zhochal are not an inherently evil race, but their society, philosophy, and physiology are so utterly alien that many native Mystarans who encounter them find it difficult to see them as anything but monstrous. Although many



Zhochal are under the influence of the Outer Beings and are infiltrating a number of nations (and thus serve as useful villains), some are neutral and could possibly forge ties with Mystarans.

And this is where they act as a bridge with many other themes in my Mystara. the Zhochal civilization is based on bio-engineered technology that is so advanced that it functions as magic. They literally grow their buildings, weapons and consumable goods; their culture is alive in almost every sense.

Mystaran natives would certainly find a use for many of their inventions – and in my campaign, they have. There is a small, but lively, black market in living Zhochal weapons, for example, and governments that are aware of these creatures quietly finance expeditions to known strongholds to secure Zhochal hardware for research purposes (both to combat the creatures with their own weapons, and to give them a strategic

advantage over Mystaran rivals). Such expeditions are understandably very dangerous, and sometimes a “recovered” item or two ends up on the black market. Although this cultural connection is sporadic at best it has the potential to be very far-reaching, possibly depending on what the player characters do.

A DYNAMIC, LIVING WORLD

My Mystara is on the cusp of a great renaissance. After centuries of upheaval following the destruction of Blackmoor in the Great Rain of Fire, as well as the subsequent downfalls of Mogreth and Taymora, the Known World, at least, has begun to stabilize. Political systems are maturing, enduring alliances are being forged, and most importantly an increasingly educated and mobile middle class is beginning to appear in the more advanced nations. These developments are fueling greater social dynamism and mobility, more innovation, as well as the first stirrings of an appetite for more political change. Socially, then, much of the Known World would be equivalent to the mid-to-late 17th, and in some regions the early 18th, centuries. Larger cities have banks, printing presses, the beginnings of paper money and stock markets, as well as nascent political movements. Enterprising people with sufficient funds in these enlightened regions are finding opportunities to build companies, invent things, and explore new ideas: Gunpowder, once commonly used before the fall of Blackmoor, has been rediscovered, and revolutionary thinkers are beginning to ponder theories of magnetism, gravity, and the more modern sciences of biology and chemistry.

While true nation-states and national identities are beginning to form and economic life picks up, cultural traditions do not always keep pace. People are finding their traditions being disrupted, and the first signs of industrialization are beginning to put people out of work – or at least promise radical changes to how things get done. New social divides are beginning to fuel radicalism, while the increased movements of people stoke the fires of xenophobia. It is an exciting, uncertain time in a campaign world that is very much alive, where new ideas (and re-discoveries of ones that have been lost) happen all the time.

The challenge for characters in my Mystara is how they can get by when they are caught up in a tide of historical change that threatens to alter the world in ways that no one can foresee, and how they can protect what is important to them. Characters in my campaign regularly wrestle with the responsibility for taking actions that build a future that no one can be sure will be better than the past. Defeating evil and safeguarding the good that exists now isn't enough – for better or for worse, heroes must fight for and defend a future that will not resemble the past, and which no one can yet envision.

A MORE PROMINENT ROLE FOR LIZARD MEN

I like reptiles. This probably stems from the obligatory childhood fascination with dinosaurs, combined with my ongoing interest in “living fossils” (prehistoric flora and fauna that, miraculously, have survived into the present day – horseshoe crabs, coelacanths, sharks, and ginkgo trees are good examples of this). So, living in a

mammalian world, I can't help but admire the reptiles for hanging on.

In much of fantasy literature, lizard men are either portrayed as savages, or the last remnant of an evil, decadent culture that was long ago displaced by humanity (the latter is very evident in the Conan the Barbarian stories). I saw interesting story potential in the latter interpretation, but modified it to match the other themes in my campaign. In my Mystara, most lizard men are the descendants of a nation that wielded magical and political power unknown to most human nations in the modern (AC 1000) period. This nation, Mogreth, was one of the few nations to weather the Great Rain of Fire reasonably intact, and in the power vacuum that was created following that event, built an empire that dominated large sections of what is now the Known World. While the sorcerer-kings of Mogreth were powerful, their rivalries, paranoia, and their allegiance to the Outer Beings ultimately led to their downfall. Modern lizard men are descended from the survivors, and while some did revert to savagery, others preserved what knowledge they could and retreated to build refuges for themselves. As a result, lizard men in my Mystara have a unique perspective on history – they understand better than most the nature of power and how it can corrupt, and their own experiences have led many to adopt a more spiritual philosophy towards life in order to seek balance. At the same time, there is an undercurrent of bitterness directed towards the modern nations, many of which are occupying lands that once belonged to them.

This added background gives lizard men the cultural depth to make them stand as one of the major races in my campaign, and as a result I include them as a fully playable player character race of fighters and shamans.

THE ART OF GETTING ALONG

Mystara is a world of incredible racial and cultural richness, and my take on the setting takes it to another level with the formal incorporation of lizard men, rakasta, and other races. In my campaigns, I strongly encourage players to think extensively about their characters' backgrounds, and how those backgrounds have shaped who they are right now. As a result, much of the in-character roleplaying in a typical session focuses on how and why a diverse group of characters can get along as an adventuring party. Much character development in our game is built around our characters learning to trust, bond, respect, and joke with their companions, while often challenging their own preconceptions of what makes a person (regardless of race) "good", "trustworthy", "civilized", or even "likeable". Through this constant process of negotiation and relationship-building, our game illuminates the challenges of integrating people with vastly different individual and group identities into a unit that works together – if not always cohesively. This focus on interpersonal relationships, overlaid by epic storylines, has led more than one person in our group to liken my take on Mystara to be, "D&D meets the Buffyverse".

FIREARMS: NOT THE ULTIMATE WEAPON

Firearms exist in my Mystara, and they work just as they do in real life – with gunpowder, not smokepowder. I thought long about introducing this into my campaign, and the solution I arrived at to prevent the widespread proliferation of firearms works more on the basis of science and economics than fantasy metaphysics.

In my Mystara, firearms are a recently rediscovered technology (except to the dwarves – who have had them for centuries but have been extremely careful about not letting them fall into the hands of outsiders). The techniques for making firearms vary among arms-makers, which means that quality is highly variable (250 gp in the Dark Dungeons rulebook, for example, will get you a basic pistol in my campaign – a *good* pistol that has less chance of misfiring will cost far more). Given the skill required to make them, and the lack of mass-production at this time, firearms (and ammunition) are available in only the largest cities. Good luck if you run out of ammunition in the middle of rural Karameikos (which is most of the country). Congratulations, you've just acquired a very expensive blackjack. Repairs are also prohibitively expensive.

As stated above, firearms are prone to jam and have dangerous misfires because the design kinks have not been worked out. In my

campaign, a natural roll of “1” means that the round explodes in the gun – utterly destroying it and wounding the wielder (with a 50% chance that the explosion will set off all the other rounds being carried). A “2” or “3” means that the weapon is jammed – the wielder must make a halved Dexterity roll to clear it in order to fire it again. Failure means either the weapon is damaged and must be repaired, or the round explodes as above (50/50 chance). Complicating matters further is the fact that gunpowder must be stored carefully. If it gets wet it is ruined, and as stated above it can be set off by any spark. Most people would be wary of going into battle next to a fusilier.

I also modified the mechanics of shooting to make early firearms less convenient. After shooting a rifle or pistol, a person must spend an entire round (10 seconds) pouring powder down the barrel, tamping it down, inserting a musket ball, tamping it again, and preparing the fuse to shoot the next round. The only way to get around this is to package a ball and powder together in a paper cartridge beforehand, and insert it into the barrel (doing so allows a person to shoot at the end of each round). Preparing shot like this takes time, and storage can be an issue.

Hardly surprising, then, that a noble would be more likely to hire a band of magic-using adventurers than a squad of fusiliers – magic, at least, is tried and tested!

GEOFF GANDER'S MYSTARA LINKOLOGY:

[Geoff Gander's Blog](#)

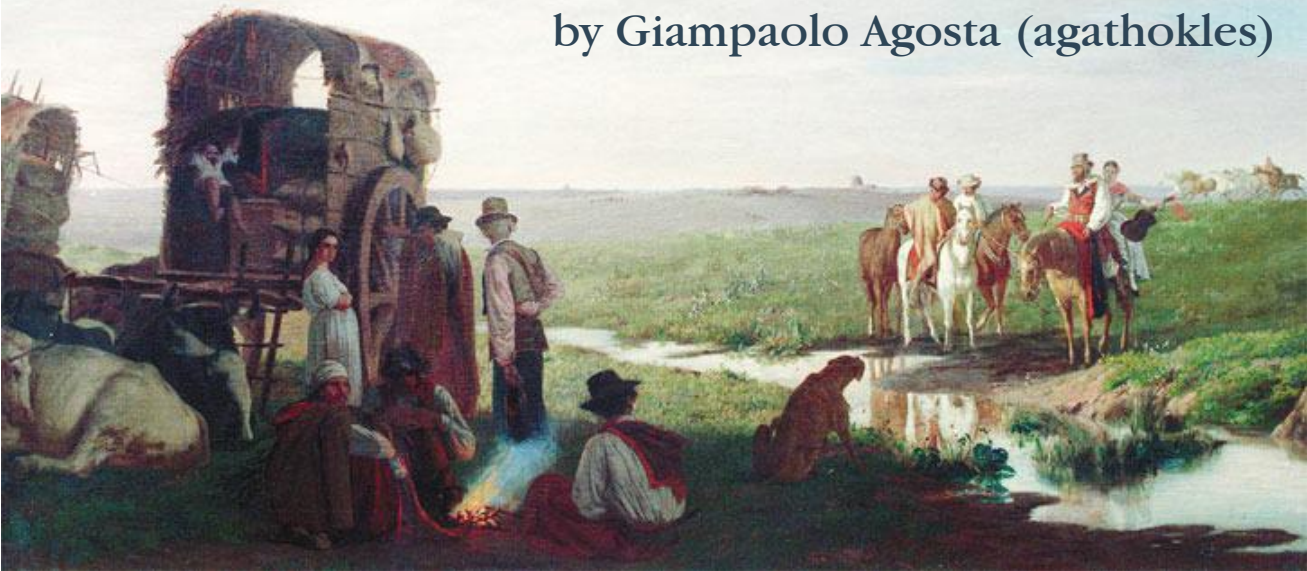
[Vaults of Pandius](#) articles by Geoff Gander

[The Zochal](#)

[Mogreth: Empire of the Lizard Kings](#)

Pursuit in the Carrascal

by Giampaolo Agosta (agathokles)



This short adventure is suitable for a group of four or five adventurers approaching name level. It is set in the Grande Carrascal, east of Guadalante.

INTRODUCTION

The marriage of Dona Catalina, the daughter of Baron Hugo de Narvaez, to the dashing gaucho, the Baron of Guadalante, has been a bone of contention between the two countries for years. Don Hugo refuses to acknowledge the marriage, and claims Dona Catalina has been kidnapped by the Guadalantans.

Now the military strength of Narvaez has grown to the point where Hugo thinks he can claim his daughter back. Thus, he has tasked a pair of disgraced Narvaezan noblemen with “liberating” his daughter and escorting her

back to Puerto Morillos -- a task which amounts to nothing less than kidnapping Dona Catalina de Bigotillos y Narvaez, the Baroness of Guadalante! In case of failure, he can put the blame on the two noblemen by (not incorrectly) claiming them to be destitute men trying desperate measures to gain quick money.

SYNOPSIS

This adventure starts off in Guadalante, after Dona Catalina has been kidnapped. At least one of the characters should be a Guadalantan, ideally a Gaucho, Noble Honorbound or Local Hero. The Baron of Guadalante, don Cristobal, asks the characters to help in the pursuit of the kidnappers.

Through luck or skill, the party happens to find the tracks of the Narvaezans. In order to escape the pursuit of the Gauchos, the kidnapers fled towards the Grande Carrascal. They also enlisted the help of the Chiriqui Gnolls to delay the pursuit. The PCs must overcome this obstacle, reach the Narvaezan party and deal with an unexpected opponent before being able to free Dona Catalina and return to Guadalante.

The Narvaezan Party

The kidnapers are a group of Narvaezans with different motivations. The leaders are don Diego Gonzales de Quimeras, a nobleman who has squandered his fortune, and Padre Moreno, a priest of Ixion who has been demoted from his position as dean of Los Peregrinos for his cowardice in the war against the southern baronies, which allowed don Cristobal de Bigotillos y Copetez to sack the village.

Gonzales and Moreno are bent on getting back their station, and have gathered a group of fighters and infiltrators to kidnap don Cristobal's wife. Jaime de Aguilar and Hernan Mello are mercenaries out of work – they are willing to take some risks for profit, and are reasonably loyal to their employers – Don Diego and Padre Moreno have paid them with their last money, and promised them more money when the work is done.

The same promises have been made to the last two members of the group, an unsavory Narvaezan Maremma named Pedro Estiarte, and a Vilaverdan spy, Luis Felipe da Silva. These two, however, are less likely to keep to their word, especially the Vilaverdan, who is an unpredictable scoundrel.

Don Diego Gonzalez de Quimeras:

Human (Espa)
Noble Fighter 7, NE.
Weapon
proficiencies: saber
(specialized),
stiletto, lance. Non-
weapon
proficiencies: Horse
Riding, Etiquette,
Hunting, Heraldry,
Panache.



Don Diego Gonzalez de Quimeras

Padre Miguel Moreno:

Human (Espa) War Priest of Ixion 7, LE.
Weapon proficiencies: long sword, mace.
Non-weapon proficiencies: Religion, Horse
Riding, Alchemy, Healing.

Padre Moreno casts spells as a 6th level priest, and cannot use his other powers because he has fallen from Ixion's graces.

Jaime de Aguilar:

Elf Myrmidon
Fighter 6, LN.
Weapon
proficiencies: long
sword
(specialized), long
bow (specialized),
dagger. Non-
weapon
proficiencies: Fire-
building, Horse
Riding, Tracking,
Military Tactics.



Jaime de Aguilar

Pedro Estiarte: Lupin (Narvaezan Maremma) Spy Ranger 6, TN. Weapon proficiencies: hand axe, dagger, short sword, short bow. Non-weapon proficiencies: Tracking, Hunting, Survival (Plains), Disguise, Modern Language (Chiriqui). Legacy: Armor.

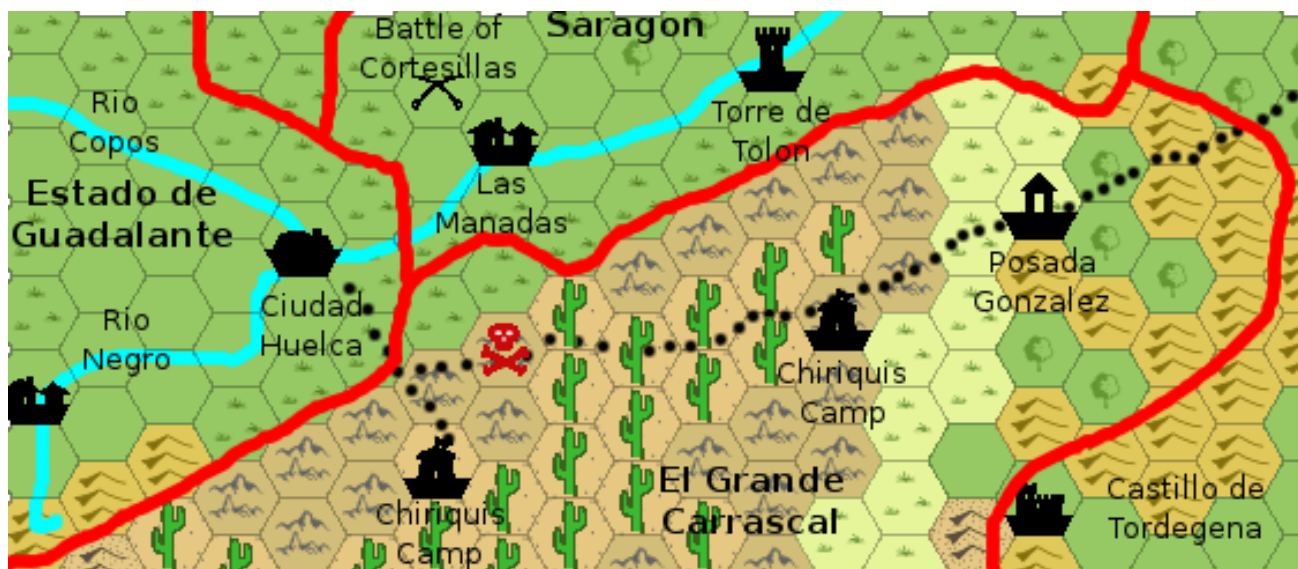
Hernan Mello: Human (Espa) Myrmidon Fighter 5, LE. Weapon proficiencies: lance (specialized), saber (specialized), dagger. Non-weapon proficiencies: Weather sense, Horse Riding, Animal Training.

Luis Felipe da Silva: Human (Verdan) Spy Bard 5, CN. Weapon proficiencies: rapier, main gauche. Non-weapon proficiencies: Musical instrument (banjo), Horse Riding, Disguise, Lip Reading. Legacy: Shout.

On the Tracks of the Narvaezans

The PCs are not the only adventurers recruited by the Baron of Guadalante. Actually, he calls out all the adventurers he can find within a few hours, and sends them along several paths out of Guadalante. Since it is difficult to track a small party in the prairies, and heavy rains have made tracking even harder, search parties need to scatter out, in the hopes of catching the kidnappers' tracks far from Ciudad Huelca.

The PCs would hardly be the strongest or most trusted search party, so they are not assigned the direct route to Narvaez along the Rio Copos. If they are not native Guadalantans, they also are not assigned to search in the Pampa Rica, so the only



Map of Grande Carrascal region

directions they can be assigned to are those to the east, into the Carrascal. There may be other parties headed in the same direction, toward Buenos Vientes or the southern reaches of the Carrascal. The DM can either stage a rigged random assignment, or can simply have the Baron choose to send the PCs towards the Chiriquis Camp – the only important point is that the PCs are finally sent in that direction.

The initial part of the trip towards the Chiriquis Camp is spent under the same heavy rain until reaching the Guadalantan border, where the rain subsides, giving the PCs a chance to pick up the trail of the kidnapers (at a minor penalty, e.g. -2 to the skill roll). A party with a very specialized ranger (e.g., a hunter lupin type) might be able to detect the tracks even during the rain (with luck), but this does not affect the outcome of this stage of the adventure. If the tracking roll is unsuccessful, the PCs will have to choose among two beaten paths, which lead to the two main Chiriquis camps. The southern camp holds nothing of interest, and the gnolls there have not seen a mounted party of humans. This should lead the PCs back to the northern path.

Once the PCs have taken the path to the northern Chiriquis camp, they will meet a hungry Slagovich Juggernaut on its migratory route to or from the Herathian forests. The encounter takes place soon after the PCs pick up the Narvaezans' trail (see the skull & bones mark on the overland map). The Juggernaut is famished and will attack the PCs, attempting to eat one of them, or perhaps one of their mounts. Once it kills its target, the Juggernaut will attack only to chase the PCs, as it would rather eat its prey than continue fighting.

Slagovich Juggernaut (Voat, Herathian, from the Savage Coast MCA, page 110).

HD 7+3; HP 28; AC 5. Atks: 2 claws (1d6), 1 bite (2d10).

This encounter can be skipped if the party is already worn down or is of lower level than expected. On the other hand, if the party is especially strong, it is possible to make the encounter more dangerous by adding a second Voat.

Meeting the Chiriquis

Following the trail of the kidnapers, the party approaches the Chiriquis lands. It is apparent that the Narvaezans passed straight through the Chiriquis camp. The party can try to bypass the camp through stealth and by making a detour, but this will delay their pursuit, so that they will catch the Narvaezans late at night. If this is the case, skip to the next encounter.

The Chiriquis actively patrol their land, attempting to block any interloper. Such vigilance is not unknown, but in this specific case it is due to the actions of Pedro Estiarte. The lupin, who has some familiarity with the Carrascal Gnolls, has successfully negotiated for the Chiriqui Gnolls' help by offering gold and supplies in return for the promise to delay any interlopers.

While taking on an entire village of gnolls is probably too much even for experienced characters, there are several ways the party can bypass the Chiriquis. One option is to challenge the tribal chief, Shantak, a Gnoll Honorbound, to a duel. As an Honorbound, the chief cannot refuse the challenge, and will allow the party to pass if defeated in single combat.

A second option is to negotiate with the tribal wokan, Vagtar. This shrewd, grizzled gnoll will require a major service (DM's choice) in return for taking the player characters on as his apprentices (for a day only). As the wokan's apprentices, the party members will no longer count as interlopers in the Chiriquis lands, and will be allowed to pass through the camp.

The party can identify Shantak as an Honorbound by the typical Honorbound marks, which are displayed prominently through war paints on her fur. As to Vagtar, the wokan will actively try to recruit the PCs if he is aware of their presence.

The Chiriqui Camp

The Chiriqui camp is composed of approximately twenty tepees. Around one hundred gnolls, including thirty warriors (F2-4), live in the camp. The DM should stress the sense of danger by having gnoll warriors growl threateningly at the party members. The composition of the party will also affect the Chiriquis reactions – Guadalantan and Cimarron PCs will be met with greater hostility, whereas lupins, especially those with some gnoll blood, will be viewed with curiosity. rakasta PCs and members of less common races (from a Guardiano point of view) will also raise curiosity, but the reaction of the gnolls will be more reserved than openly curious.

Chiriqui NPCs

Shantak, Gnoll Honorbound Fighter 6, LN.

The tribal chief is a powerful female Honorbound fighter. She controls the tribe with a combination of honor and savagery, and is well respected (and feared) by most members, except Vagtar, the Wokan. Shantak

will keep her word, and will not let her followers put themselves in unnecessary danger. This, even beyond her personal honor, is the main reason why she would accept a PC's challenge – she believes she can handle any but the most evidently powerful warriors in honorable conditions, and therefore keep her promise to Estiarte without risking losses in the tribe.

Gralak, Gnoll Shaman Priest 6 of Ixion, LN.

The tribal shaman is a follower of Tabak, the sun spirit. He recognizes that Tabak is the same entity as the Narvaezan god, Ixion. As such, he is unlikely to offer any help to a party that would oppose a priest of the Narvaezan church – especially since Padre Moreno made a show of recognizing the shaman as an equal, something that Gralak has long sought from the Narvaezans.

Vagtar, Gnoll Wokan Wizard 5, TN.

A trickster and rogue at heart, Vagtar enjoys nothing more than pulling a good prank on the pompous and self-inflated tribal leaders, Shantak and Gralak. He would not do anything that could endanger the tribe, but he understands that the Narvaezans pose no threat to the Chiriquis, so he has no qualms about foiling the promises exchanged with Estiarte.

Rograst, Gnoll Savage Warrior Fighter 7, LN.

This warrior is the second in command to Shantak, as well as her mate. He is also the strongest fighter in the tribe. He does not like for Shantak to accept the challenge of any outsider, or for her to allow Vagtar to run his gig, but will capitulate to the Honorbound's

inflexibility. His main purpose in the encounter is to act as a threat, to remind the PCs that an entire tribe of savage gnolls would easily take them down if they tried anything stupid, and to act as comic relief once the deal with the Chiriquis is struck.

The Ghost Outpost

When the PCs manage to bypass the Chiriquis, they find that the kidnapers have taken a trail into the heart of the Carrascal, then turned towards the Gargoñan border. At this point, however, the storm that had plagued the party in Guadalante breaks through to the Carrascal, making travel difficult. Since they believe pursuit to have been avoided or delayed, the Narvaezans take shelter in an eerie LB Trading Company outpost, “Posada Gonzalez” to weather the storm. The PCs will likely follow suit, as they will see the lights of the outpost slightly before the storm hits them.

PCs with a specialized knowledge of the LB Trading Company may remember that there is no such outpost in the Carrascal, although there was one years ago (on a good success at the appropriate skill roll). Indeed, the outpost is the result of a ghostly infestation. The ghost of a LB Trading Co. employee, killed by the Long Legs years ago, manages the outpost, which is itself a phantom which appears only by night: by day, only the ruins of the original outpost can be seen.

The ghostly landlord, *Gonzalez*, will at first behave normally, though observant PCs might notice something is amiss: Gonzalez is only partially solid, and a successful perception skill roll (half Wisdom for unskilled PCs) may let a PC dimly perceive objects or people who are behind Gonzalez. Moreover, many items in the outpost are clearly outdated -- for example, Gonzalez keeps a crossbow rather than a

smokepowder gun under the bar, and speaks an outmoded dialect of Espa.

Gonzalez will not allow the characters to attack the Narvaezans (and vice versa), and will warn the two groups against leaving the outpost during the night, saying that the gnoll savages would kill them if they did.

Indeed, if the characters and the Narvaezans do not manage to dispel the ghosts, a large group of ghostly gnolls (two per each living person in the inn) will attack the outpost. The two groups must either survive the attack, or find a way to put the landlord ghost to rest, at which point the gnolls and the outpost will disappear.

Gonzalez, ghostly innkeeper

The ghost of an employee of the LB Trading Company killed by Gnoll raiders, Gonzalez appears as a squat, pot-bellied man in his early fifties, with olive skin and a bushy mustache. To a casual observer, Gonzalez appears as a fairly typical innkeeper, although especially rustic in his language and clothing.

Gonzalez does not realize he is dead, and behaves as a normal, living human – actually, proving to him that he is dead may dissipate the resolve which keeps him on the Prime Material plane.

By talking to him, it is possible to obtain some hints about his vulnerabilities: in particular, he will talk profusely of his hate (and fear) of the “gnoll savages”, pointing at his vulnerability to gnoll-crafted weapons. He is adamant in refusing to let anyone out after the storm strikes, claiming that the “gnoll savages” would kill them. Gonzalez will attack with his *cause despair* power if thwarted on this issue, and then physically as well, flying

into a rage against those who would leave and calling them “traitors” and “gnoll friends”.

Gonzalez can only truly be killed if he is reduced to 0 HP or less by the strike of a gnoll-crafted weapon (though not the ghostly weapons of the gnoll spirits, who in any case do not attack Gonzalez as long as there are other targets available). However, reducing him to 0 HP with other weapons or spells allows the characters to escape, as the outpost dissipates and returns to Limbo with Gonzalez.

Gonzalez,
Semicorporeal II Magnitude Ghost.

HD 6; HP 25; AC -1 (while in Limbo)/6 (on the Prime Plane).

Physical appearance: Preserved humanoid (Gonzalez appears as in life).

Anchor: Place (the entire outpost is a ghostly apparition brought forth by Gonzalez’ will).

Trigger: Cyclic (Gonzalez and his inn appear only during stormy nights; the inn otherwise remains in Limbo).

Ordinary powers: semicorporeal (immune to normal weapons; can be hit by red steel and magical weapons); rejuvenation (completely heals with 45 minutes rest); undead spell immunities.

Extraordinary powers: Cause Despair (radius entire inn; ST vs spells negates; despair causes -1 penalty to all rolls); Resist Magic 20%.

Ordinary vulnerabilities: holy water (1d8 HP); turned as ghost

Extraordinary vulnerabilities: gnoll-crafted arrows, tomahawks and other weapons can hit Gonzalez, and strike him as if he was

corporeal. He is also repulsed by gnolls and others with gnoll blood (e.g., lupins with a gnollish bloodline) . He must pass a Saving Throw vs. Spells to be able to confront or attack such characters (note that Pedro Estiarte does not have enough gnoll blood to affect Gonzalez significantly, although in case of combat Gonzalez will always choose another target, if given the possibility).

Gnoll Spirits,
Incorporeal I Magnitude Ghosts.

HD 2; HP 8 each; AC 0.

Physical appearance: Distorted humanoid (the gnolls appear as more monstrous, sometimes showing wide wounds or other unrealistic features).

Anchor: Place (the ghosts only appear near the outpost).

Trigger: Cyclic (the gnoll spirits appearance closely follow that of Gonzalez’ inn).

Ordinary Powers: incorporeal (immune to normal weapons; can be hit by red steel and magical weapons); rejuvenation (completely heal with 1 hour rest); undead spell immunities.

Extraordinary powers: Howl (1/night, death in 10’ radius, ST vs death at +2).

Showdown with the Narvaezans

Depending on the events in the ghost outpost, either the Narvaezans will escape with Catalina, or the PCs will do so. Unless one of the parties is wiped out or at least severely weakened, the other will (or should, in the PCs’ case) give pursuit. Thus, the structure of

the last encounter depends heavily on the outcome of previous encounters.

If the PCs have managed to get out of the ghost outpost with Dona Catalina, the Narvaezans will follow them and attack, possibly setting an ambush or charging them. Otherwise, the PCs will have to pursue the fleeing Narvaezans. They will manage to reach the kidnappers near the Gargoñan border.

CONCLUSION

Successfully concluding the adventure (i.e., saving Dona Catalina) should award the PCs a substantial experience bonus (10% of the amount needed to reach next level), over the XP gained for individual encounters.

Moreover, the PCs will have earned the gratitude of the Baron of Guadalante, who will award them the highest (and only, given the young age of this state) honor of Guadalante, the *Medalla al Valor*. On the other hand, should their identities become known to the don Hugo de Narvaez, the Baron will become their enemy, and they will be wanted criminals in Narvaez.

REFERENCES

[Savage Coast Campaign Book](#) (by Tim Beach)

[Savage Coast Monstrous Compendium](#) (by Loren L. Coleman and Ted James Thomas Zuvich)

Van Richten's Guide to Ghosts (by William W. Connors)

HIGH MAGIC CAMPAIGNS

With the right magic, PCs could likely bypass some of the encounters – e.g., if magical detection was available, it might supersede the need for tracking, while flight or teleportation could allow the characters to bypass the Chiriquis camp.

However, note that the magical properties of *Vermeil* make divination spells unreliable at best in the Savage Coast. Essentially, the PCs will not be able to get a good reading while the Baroness is more than 5 miles from them.

For what concerns magical transportation modes, note that Teleportation usually requires knowledge of the destination point, whereas flight can be hampered by strong winds. Flying during a storm, in particular, would not be advisable.

History of the Lupins



FROM
THE VAULTS
OF PANDIUS

by Átila Pires dos Santos

(with assistance from Agathokles)

Maps: John Calvin; Art: J. & I. Calvin

In this article, we aim at providing an expanded view of the history of the lupin race. We also introduce five new lupin breeds, two of which are extinct in the Outer World but survive in the Hollow World or on the Hollow Moon, and discuss the relation between lupins, hutaakans and goblinoids.

LUPIN TIMELINE

Before 5000 BC Stone Age

The ancestors of the lupins evolved from an early species of so-called "Cave Lupin" (*Canis Habilis*), which went extinct at some point during the first Stone Age. The first three breeds, the Aardovai, Coyotl and Wolvenfolk, originally lived in the area that would later become the Yazak Steppes.

5000-3000 BC Blackmoor Age

During Age of Blackmoor the three breeds remained mostly primitive, still living in the Yazak region.

The main exceptions were the Coyotl tribes that crossed the Black Mountains and met Oltec human groups in the area where now lies the Great Waste. At that time, the region was much colder and wetter than in the

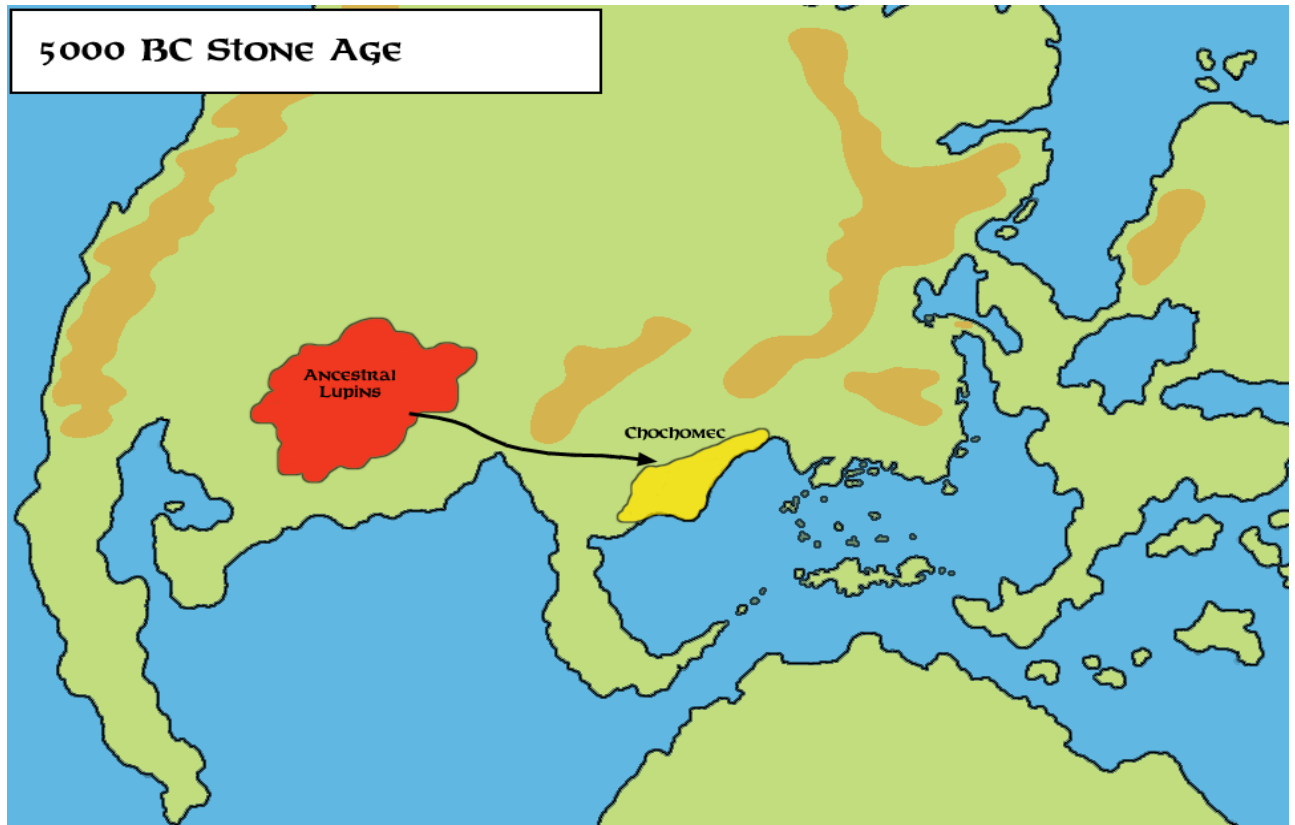
modern era, and hosted rising civilizations. In particular, the Mictec people enslaved the technologically less advanced Coyotl in great numbers, to the point that there were more Coyotl than humans in the Mictec cities, especially in their main city, Mictlán. Eventually, the Coyotl rebelled and created the Chochomec civilization, which allied with the rising Azcan Empire.

3000-2500 BC

The Great Rain of Fire and the Second Stone Age

After the Great Rain of Fire destroyed the Blackmoor civilization and caused the planetary axis to change, the Immortals preserved the Oltec civilizations by removing them to the Hollow World. Among the nations and tribes saved were the Chochoemics.

Only a few Chochoemics remained in the Outer World, and moved with some surviving Azcans into the Nithian basin. There the Azcans mingled with local Neathar tribes, forming a new ethnic group that would give rise, a millennium later, to the Nithian civilization. The Chochomec Coyotl also became part of this new civilization. The Immortals known as Wepwawet / Upuaut / Ophois and Duamutef, the son of Horon / Horus / Orisis were their patrons.



Legend:

- **Red:** Lupin ancestral lands, at the Yazak Steppes, up the Great Escarpment; *Canis Sapiens Canus* (Wolvenfolk), *Canis Sapiens Oltecus* (Coyotl), *Canis Sapiens Yazakensis* (Aardovai), some hybrids;
- **Yellow:** Chochomec civilization, SW modern Sind; *Canis Sapiens Oltecus* (Coyotl);

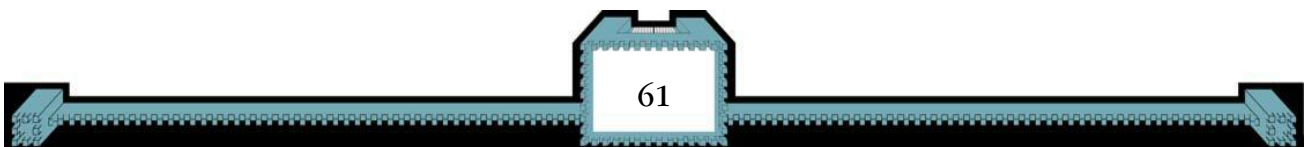
Meanwhile, a new Aardovai offshoot breed, hardier folk with Coyotl and Wolvenfolk blood, was created: the Gnomish Crested.

Aardovai, Wolvenfolk and Gnomish Crested tribes migrating from the Yazak Steppes moved into the Black Mountains and then, the Known World, mainly the plain of the Streeel River and the Northern Reaches. Some Wolvenfolk tribes went further close to the North Pole, settling in the cold Norwold and Heldann regions, while some Gnomish Crested remained at the Black Mountains. Most of the Coyotl, Aardovai

and Wolvenfolk tribes, however, remained in the Yazak Steppes, where they mingled and lost their tribal identity.

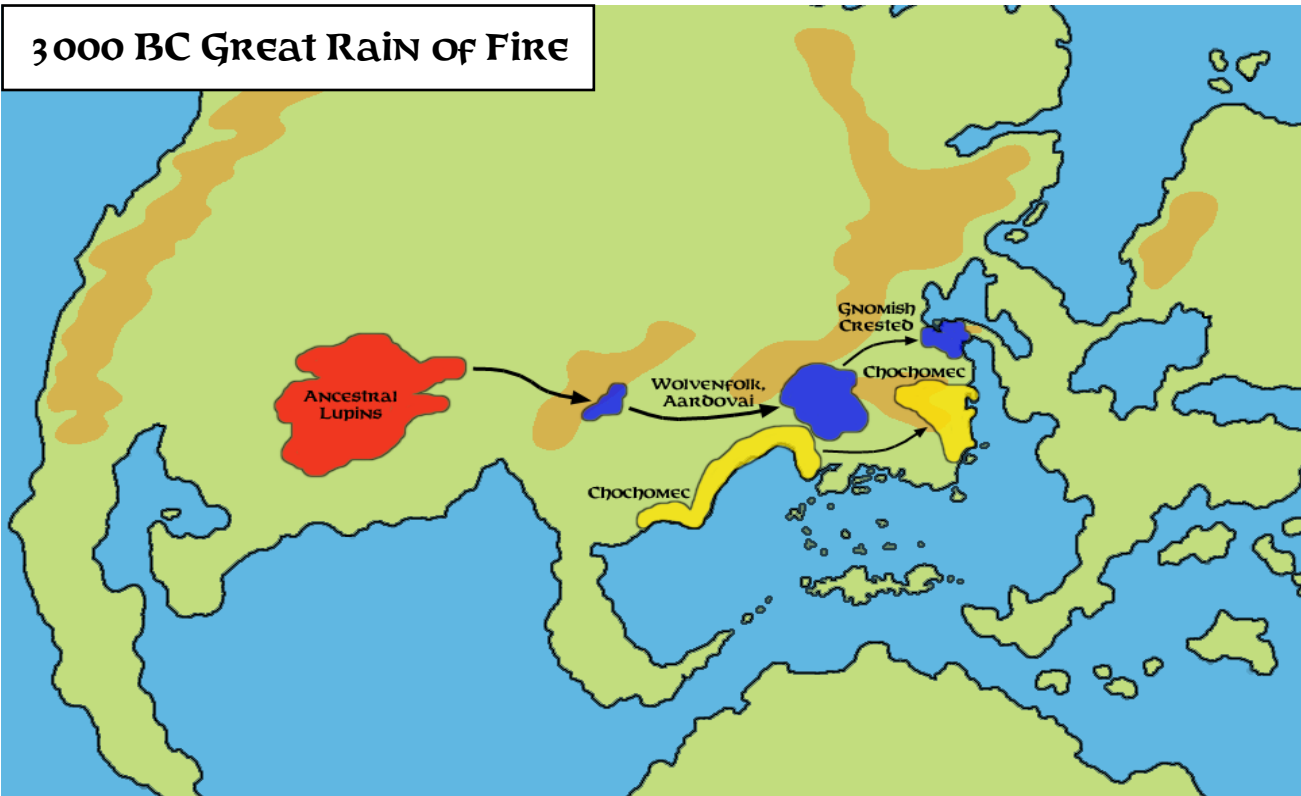
2500-1700 BC TAYMORAN AGE

During this time, lupin tribes in the southern Streeel Plain fell under the control of the rising Taymoran Empire. Earlier during their history, the Nosferatu Kings of Taymor had created servant races that merged human intelligence with animalistic ferocity and a weak will that made them easy to control, the





3000 BC Great Rain of Fire



Legend:

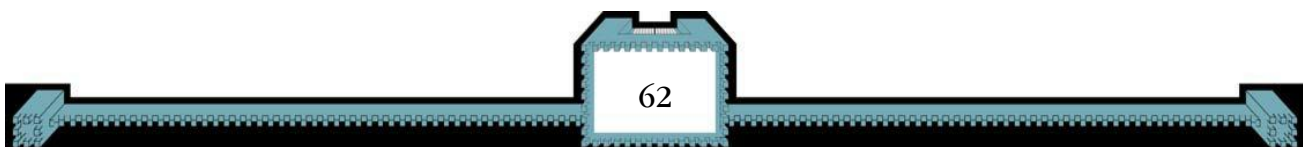
- **Red:** Lupin ancestral lands, at the Yazak Steppes, up the Great Escarpment; *Canis Sapiens Canus* (Wolvenfolk), *Canis Sapiens Oltecus* (Coyotl), *Canis Sapiens Yazakensis* (Aardovai), many hybrids;
- **Yellow:** Survivors of the Chochomec civilization, Valley of Nithia; *Canis Sapiens Oltecus* (Coyotl);
- **Blue:** Taymoran border, modern Darokin and Northern Reaches; *Canis Sapiens Canus*

Mythic Lycanthropes; they did so by engineering a magical disease. Those Necromancer Kings who were not willing to become undead themselves tried to defend themselves from their powerful neighbours by employing the lupin tribes as guards and lycanthrope hunters. They used their own powerful magics to instill useful abilities in the lupins - a special ability to recognize werewolves, and a racial hatred of these creatures. This changed the lupins to the point that Aardovai, Coyotl and Wolvenfolk traits

were supplanted by the new traits, giving rise to the Taymoran Hairless, Taymoran Runner and Taymoran Hound breeds.

1700-1500 BC First Goblinoid Invasion

The Glantrian Cataclysm forced the elves of Glantri to take shelter in the Shadowdeep, as well as forcing the humanoid hordes to split and flee in different directions, including south to the Streel Plain and west to the Yazak



Steppes. With the fall of Taymor, these goblinoid tribes displaced the lupins living in what is now southern Darokin and Karamaikos.

Taymoran Hairless tribes living closer to Glantri fled from the effects of the Glantrian Cataclysm, entering the caverns under the Broken Lands. These lupins, the ancestor of the modern Cimarron Hairless, fell under the shadow of Atzanteotl, and became his temple guards among the Shadow Elves.

Southern lupin tribes of both Taymoran Hairless and Hound breeds fled to Ochalea, evolving into the Ochalean Houndling and the High Shar-Pei breeds during the following centuries.

The Taymoran Runner tribes mostly fled west, some taking cover under the shade of the Black Mountains, some moving even further, back into the Yazak Steppes, their ancestral lands. These lupins would return to their nomadic origins, abandoning the Taymoran civilized ways, and become the Borzoi and Long Runners respectively.

In the Yazak Steppes, goblinoids overrun the Rakasta civilization, forcing the native Aardovai, Coyotl and Wolvenfolk to move away from their path, to the south, down the Great Escarpment, towards the central Savage Coast. These lupins became the ancestors of the "*renardensis*" group.

The original Aardovai tribes - weakened and dispersed - collapsed to the brink of extinction, being replaced or absorbed by the hardier Gnomish Crested in the Northern Reaches and the Black Mountains, and other breeds elsewhere. The last few pure Aardovai tribes were moved by the Immortals to the Hollow

Moon, where a suitable environment for their survival was created.

By this time the first Kobolds and Carrasquito Lupins appeared in the Known World and in the Yazak Steppes respectively, descending from enslaved lupins (Taymoran Hairless and Aardovai) and goblinoids.

1500-1100 BC Nithian Golden Age

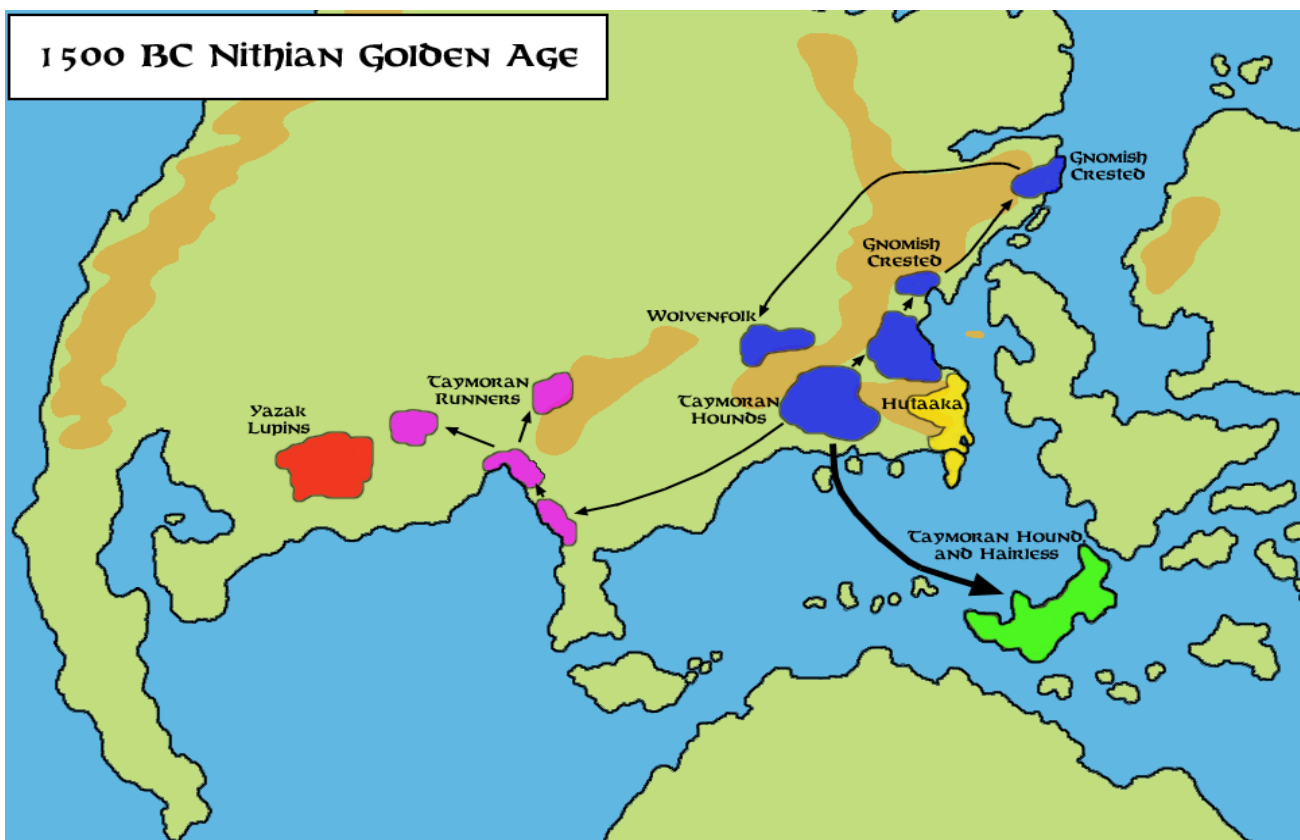
During the peak of the Nithian Empire, Pflarr magically changed the last known group of pure Coyotl, the descendants of the Chochomecs living in Nithia. They became the Hutaakans.

In Kavkaz, the Gnomish Crested began interbreeding with Wolvenfolk; eventually, they would become the Kavkazan Painted breed. Their Northern Reaches cousins allied with neighboring gnomes in order to survive. This alliance explains the modern name of the Gnomish Crested breed.

Meanwhile, a group of Norwold Wolvenfolk migrated south, entering the Adri Varma Plateau. There, they slowly changed, becoming the Senjabi breed.

Kobolds migrated with other goblinoids as part of Wogar's Horde. After reaching Hule, the horde then migrated to Atruaghin, conquering and enslaving the natives. Even after the horde split in three, the kobolds stayed in Atruaghin lands.

As Atzanteotl's followers took over Azca, the Chochomecs of the Hollow World deserted Atacalpa, migrating to Oltec lands in the east.



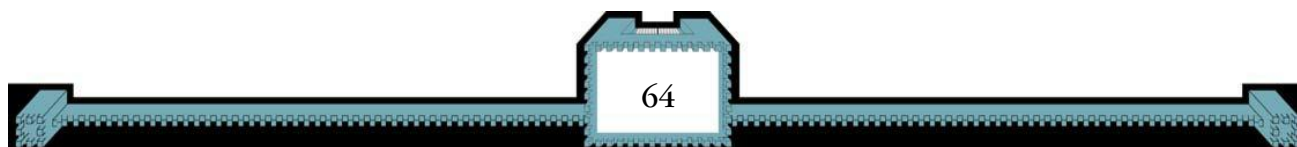
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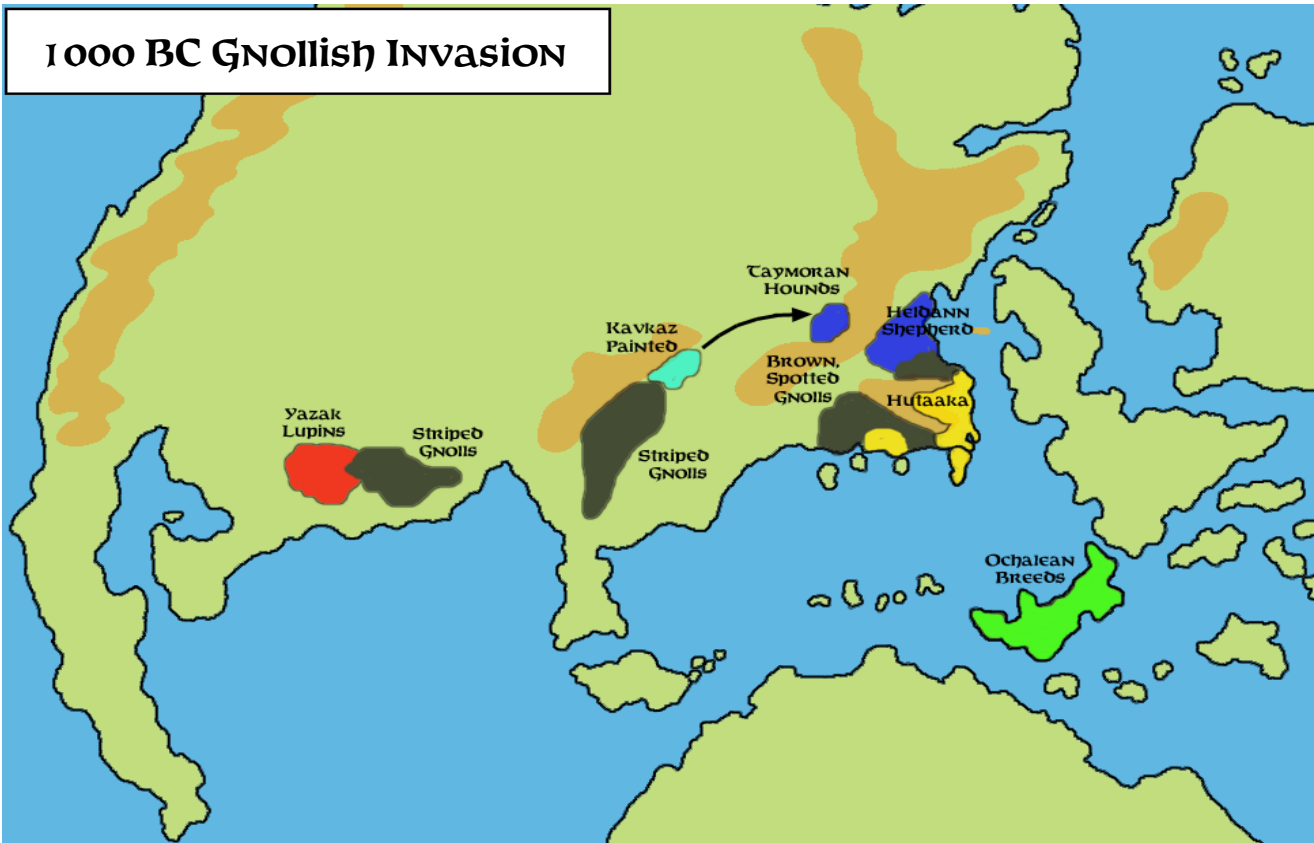
- **Red:** Yazak Steppes, down the Great Escarpment; Hybrid subspecies: proto-Canis Sapiens Renardensis;
- **Yellow:** Hutaakan Nithian civilization, Valley of Nithia; Canis Sapiens Hutaakanus (Hutaakan);
- **Blue:** Darokin, the Northern Reaches, Heldann, Norwold, Adri Varma and Kavkaz; Canis Sapiens Canus, Canis Sapiens Colossus (Taymoran Hound), Canis Sapiens Proteles (Gnomish Crested, Northern Reaches and Kavkaz only);
- **Violet:** The steppes; Canis Sapiens Macer (Taymoran Runner);
- **Green:** Ochalea; Canis Sapiens Colossus (Taymoran Hound), Canis Sapiens Parvus (Taymoran Hairless);

1100-900 BC GNOLL INVASION

By this time, the Gnomish Crested breed had declined significantly, with only a few clans surviving near Nithia. In the XII century BC, Nithian wizards and researchers tried to emulate the creation of the Hutaakan race by the Immortal Pflarr, by magically crossing

goblinoids with the Gnomish Crested. Since the goal was to produce a more viable and stronger race than the Gnomish Crested, the powerful trolls, a very vital race with high regenerative qualities, were chosen. Several attempts were conducted, with different subject sets and mixtures. None of them proved to match the wizards' expectations,





Legend:

- **Red:** Yazak Steppes, down the Great Escarpment; Hybrid subspecies: *proto-Canis Sapiens Renardensis*;
- **Yellow:** Hutaakan Nithian civilization, Valley of Nithia; *Canis Sapiens Hutaakanus* (Hutaakan);
- **Blue:** Northern Reaches and Heldann; *Canis Sapiens Canus* (Heldann Shepherd), *proto-Canis Sapiens Mystax*, *Canis Sapiens Colossus* (Taymoran Hound);
- **Green:** Ochalea; *Canis Sapiens Colossus* (Taymoran Hound), *Canis Sapiens Parvus* (Taymoran Hairless);
- **Black:** Traldar lands, Northern Reaches, Plains of Fire (Graakhalia) and El Grande Carrascal; *Canis Erectus Meridionum* (Striped), *Canis Erectus Septentrionum* (Brown), *Canis Erectus Hilaris* (Spotted);
- **Cyan:** Kavkaz; *Canis Sapiens Pictus* (Kavkazan Painted);

as most of them resulted in strong but savage and rebellious humanoids, resembling the Hutaakans only in their general physical features. The results were deemed unsatisfactory, and the newly created humanoids, the gnolls, either rebelled and fled or were released into the wilds west and north of Nithia.

The first gnoll breed created, the Striped Gnolls, was only a marginal success. This strong breed was shipped to would-be masters in the main colonies in the Serpent Peninsula and the Gulf of Hule. The Striped Gnolls, after a few years of servitude, were released into the wilderness, where their population grew uncontrolled, leading to mass migrations.

Meanwhile, the second breed created by Nithian mages, the Brown Gnolls, entered the Northern Reaches and rapidly spread there and north to Heldann. The last breed, the Spotted Gnolls, followed in the wake just a few years later, displacing both Brown Gnolls and lupin tribes further north.

Crossbreeding between lupins (mainly the Taymoran Hound) and gnolls in the Northern Reaches and the Savage Coast led to the ancestors of several large breeds of lupins, such as the Pit-bulls and Great Dogge. The existence of these hybrids originated the common misconception that lupins descended from Gnolls.

A few Gnomish Crested tribes that escaped Nithian experiments, hid in gnomish burrows with their allies. The last Taymoran Hairless pure breed groups that still existed in the Known World also entered the Northern Reaches, joining the Gnomish Crested. Both breeds began evolving into the *mystax* group.

Just like the other ancestral breeds, the Aardovai and the Coyotl, the Wolvenfolk breed

is no more - all remaining Wolvenfolk-descended lupins are actually crossbreeds with varying degrees of Coyotl, Aardovai and/or gnoll blood. Their direct descendants are the Norwold Malamute and the Heldann Shepherd. The lupin Immortal, Saimpt Loup started recreating the Wolvenfolk, giving them a new, magical bloodline that would prevent dilution through the normal process of crossbreeding.

During this time, Atzanteotl betrayed the Cimarron Hairless, forcing them to flee from Aengmor and settle in what is now eastern Boldavia or within shadow elf territory.

900-500 BC Alphatian Expansion and Nithian Decadence

In Ochalea, miscegenation between the Taymoran breeds (Hairless and Hounds) created the Ochalean Houndling and High Shar-Pei breeds. The Foo Dogs interacted with pure Taymoran Hairless, resulting in the birth of the Ochalean Crested, and the Ogre Magi bred the Chow-Chow from Houndling and Shar-Pei slaves. The Ochalean culture, an original mix of Cypric, rakastan and lupin culture was also created at this time, also under the supervision of the benevolent Foo Dogs.

The Rajahstan of Sarna, one of the many Sindhi petty kingdoms west of Atruaghin, began to depend on goblinoid mercenaries, mainly Grey Kobolds, in order to keep its independence. When the Red Orcs were expelled from Atruaghin lands, many Grey Kobolds found their way into Sarna. Wizards of Sarna, studying the Nithian creation of the gnolls, developed a new variant of the kobold breed: the winged Urd.

Sarna grew overpopulated with both Urds and kobolds. Eventually they went out of control, attacked and sacked Sarna, then spilled into the neighbouring lands. The petty Sindhi kingdoms and the tribes of Atruaghin made a brief truce to counter the kobold and Urd threat. A combined Sindhi-Atruaghin force hunted down and killed most of the goblinoids. Some Urds fled into the mountains north and west of Sind, while others hid with Grey Kobolds deep in Atruaghin lands. As they briefly came close to extinction, some Urds were moved into the Hollow World.

500-100 BC Fall of Nithia

During the Fall of Nithia, some hutaakans were involved in Thanatos-worship: as punishment, Pflarr withdrew their hutaakan bloodlines, leading them to a centuries-long quest for expiation or revenge. These lupins became known as the Nithian Ramblers.

Pflarr also sent some hutaakans to the western colonies of Nithia, in order to preserve them from Nithian corruption. While some kept their traditional ways, others got involved with the colonial rebels, being the ancestors of the Foxfolk (Niedegard and Black Mountains).

Kobold clans were driven into the uplands of the Northern Reaches from the west. They overran and exterminate the gnomes, and occupied their subterranean kingdoms. The *Mystax* Lupins were either enslaved and thus absorbed by the kobolds, or migrated north (into other parts of the Northern Reaches and as far as Norworld; these are the Gnomish Snoutzer ancestors) or west (into Glantri, where they split into two groups: Blue Bandit and Hound of Klantyre).

100 BC-0 AC Goblinoid Invasion of the Yazak Steppes

A new wave of goblinoids from the Yazak Steppes forced many lupins to move south from the Yazak Steppes to the Savage Baronies and City-States area. Others migrated further west, getting close to the Herathian border; shortly after that, "lupin" mages started appearing in Herath.

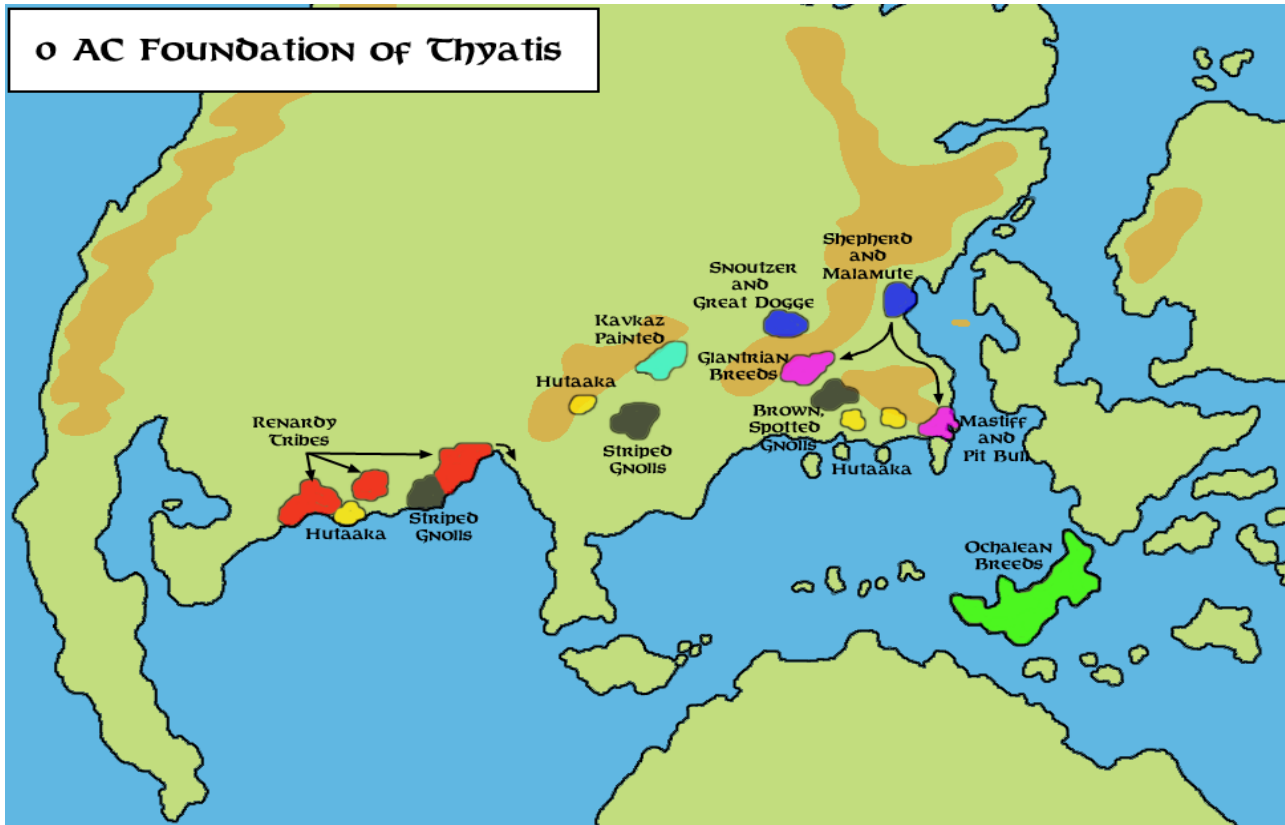
The first permanent settlements were established by five tribes of *Renardensis* Lupins, which later became the Five Tribes that founded Renardy. It was over one of these sites, Louvines, that the Renardois capital was built at a later date.

Lupin tribes from the Northern Reaches and Heldann migrated south, especially *Colossus* Lupins, entering Glantri (some migrating further west, entering the Savage Coast) and Thyatis (some going as far as Ochalea, adding to the local Chow Chow and High Shar-Pei blood).

0-400 AC Rise of Thyatis

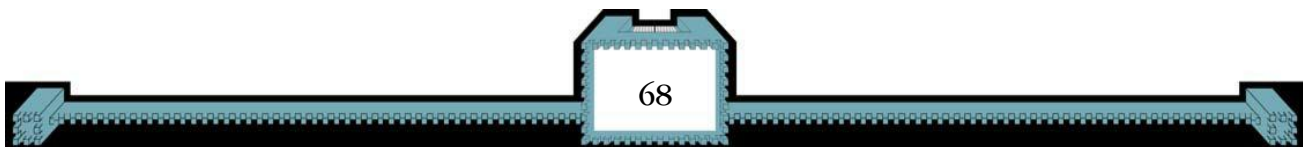
In Ochalea and Thyatis, lupins became citizens of the Thyatian Empire after Empress Valeria's proclamation.

New breeds also emerged as the tribes of Renardy adapted to their environment. Most modern breeds of Renardy trace their bloodlines to this time.



Legend:

- **Red:** Savage Coast; *Canis Sapiens Renardensis* (Maremma, Doggerman, Zvornikian Sentinel, Golden Retriever, Renardois Folk, Basset Hound, Beagle, Slagovich Herder, Ispan Pistolero, Water Lupin, Das Hund, Burrow Bandit, Bouchon, and Papillon), *Canis Sapiens Parvus* (Carrasquito), *Canis Sapiens Macer* (Borzoï and Long Runner), *Canis Sapiens Colossus* (Eusdrian Bulldog);
- **Yellow:** Hutaakan last colonies, Altan Tepes, Black Peak, Black Mountains, Niedegard Mountains; *Canis Sapiens Hutaakanus* (Hutaakan), *Canis Sapiens Goupilus* (Foxfolk and Fennec);
- **Blue:** Northern Reaches and Heldann; *Canis Sapiens Canus* (Heldann Shepherd and Norwold Malamute further north), *Canis Sapiens Mystax* (Gnomish Snoutzer), *Canis Sapiens Colossus* (Great Dogge);
- **Green:** Ochalea; *Canis Sapiens Colossus* (Chow Chow and High Shar-Pei), *Canis Sapiens Parvus* (Ochalean Crested and Houndling);
- **Black:** Broken Lands, Northern Reaches, Plains of Fire (Graakhalia) and El Grande Carrascal; *Canis Erectus Meridionum* (Striped), *Canis Erectus Septentrionum* (Brown), *Canis Erectus Hilaris* (Spotted);
- **Violet:** Thyatis and Glantri; *Canis Sapiens Parvus* (Cimarron Hairless, Glantri and underground), *Canis Sapiens Mystax* (Blue Bandit and Hound of Klantyre, both in Glantri), *Canis Sapiens Colossus* (King Mastiff and Torreóner Pit-Bull in Thyatis; Glantri Mountaineer and Bloodhound in Glantri), *Canis Sapiens Canus* (Flaemish Shepherd in Glantri);





Legend:

- **Red:** Renardy and the Savage Coast; *Canis Sapiens Renardensis* (Maremma, Zvornikian Sentinel, Golden Retriever, Renardois Folk, Basset Hound, Beagle, Slagovich Herder, Ispan Pistolero, Water Lupin, Burrow Bandit, Bouchon, and Papillon), *Canis Sapiens Parvus* (Carrasquito), *Canis Sapiens Macer* (Borzoï and Long Runner), *Canis Sapiens Colossus* (Eusdrian Bulldog), *Canis Sapiens Goupilus* (red Foxfolk);
- **Blue:** Northern Reaches and Heldann; *Canis Sapiens Canus* (Heldann Shepherd and Norwold Malamute further north), *Canis Sapiens Mystax* (Gnomish Snoutzer), *Canis Sapiens Colossus* (Great Dogge), *Canis Sapiens Goupilus* (white Foxfolk further north);
- **Green:** Ochalea; *Canis Sapiens Colossus* (Chow Chow and High Shar-Pei), *Canis Sapiens Parvus* (Ochalean Crested and Houndling);
- **Black:** Broken Lands, Northern Reaches, Plains of Fire (Graakhalia) and El Grande Carrascal; *Canis Erectus Meridionum* (Striped), *Canis Erectus Septentrionum* (Brown), *Canis Erectus Hilaris* (Spotted);
- **Violet:** Thyatis and Glantri; *Canis Sapiens Renardensis* (Doggerman and Das Hund in Hattias), *Canis Sapiens Parvus* (Cimarron Hairless, Glantri and underground), *Canis Sapiens Mystax* (Blue Bandit and Hound of Klantyre, both in Glantri), *Canis Sapiens Colossus* (King Mastiff and Torreóner Pit-Bull in Thyatis; Glantri Mountaineer and Bloodhound in Glantri), *Canis Sapiens Goupilus* (Fennec in Ylaruam), *Canis Sapiens Canus* (Flaemish Shepherd in Glantri);
- **Orange:** Sind and Atruaghin; *Canis Sapiens Canus* (Senjabi, Shunka Warakin and a few Flaemish Shepherds);
- **Yellow:** Arm of the Immortals; *Canis Sapiens Ruber* (Guará);
- **Cyan:** Kavkaz; *Canis Sapiens Pictus* (Kavkazan Painted);

400-500 AC Lycanthropic Wars

At this time, the Five Tribes finally united. King Loows (Louis I) was chosen by the tribal chiefs as the first king of Renardy.

Groups of Striped Gnolls migrated west, joining with native Foxfolk. These proto-Guará tribes soon journeyed together further west, finally reaching the Arm of the Immortals.

The Alphantian Lycanthropy outbreak began and lupins joined the fight against werewolves in Brun, utterly purging the Savage Coast of the lycanthropic threat. Some breeds (mainly Doggerman and Das Hund) left the Savage Coast, entering the Known World in order to keep their fight against the lycanthropic plague.

Senjabi tribes migrated south again, entering Sind. They were welcomed since they were strong allies against the lycanthropes that invaded the land. A group of Flaemish Shepherds, led by a capable tribal leader (that would become the Immortal known as Saimpt Malinois), allied with the Senjabi against the lycanthropic threat.

The Senjabi Lupins were rewarded with the opportunity to join the lowest part of the Himaya caste as merchants. Many were insulted and refused the offer, becoming Pariah Lupins. A large group of Pariah Lupins, led by Rez, entered the Atruaghin lands to keep their fight against were-creatures.

Shortly thereafter, Saimpt Malinois and Saimpt Mâtin became Immortals.

500-900 AC MODERN ERA

During these centuries, several colonization attempts were performed, more or less officially, by the Thyatian Empire. Thyatian lupins, mostly belonging to the Pit Bull and

Das Hund breeds, followed the human migrations to Glantri and the Savage Coast.

Local lupins in Averoine and Linden were approached by Sire Claude d'Ambreville, who obtained the recognition of citizenship for the Glantrian lupins. Many of these lupin followers of Sire Claude d'Ambreville (mainly Flaemish Shepherds and Bloodhounds, but also opportunistic Blue Bandits) were guided by Clébard de Clairvault (a Flaemish Shepherd himself) to Renardy after the sudden disappearance of their leader.

Also, around this time, erect ears (a sign of Carrasquito ancestry) became fashionable among Papillons in Renardy. Individuals with this trait are called the Neo-Papillons.

900-present AC RENARDY AND THE CLAIRVAULT DYNASTY

In the last century, Clébard de Clairvault and his descendants Gaston and Louis IV brought Renardy from the Middle Age to the Modern Age. The Renardois lupins acquired the Sylaire culture, with some Ispan influences, from the Glantrian lupins and the Torreóner Pit-Bulls. Clébard married the Renardois Princess Ralon, became King, and initiated several reforms. Both monarchs later became Immortals, and are now part of the established Renardois pantheon.

The Brotherhood of Vintages was also formally established by Queen Ralon, while new trade routes were opened with the Savage Baronies, especially with Torreón.

Meanwhile, the Baronial lupins (Carrasquito, Narvaezan Maremma and Ispan Pistolero) had acquired the Espa culture from Thyatian colonists, both human and lupin (mainly Torreóner Pit-Bulls).

LUPINS TODAY

Nowadays, Renardy is a strong, modern kingdom, cultivating alliances with the Barony of Torreón and the Kingdom of Eusdria, two major military powers of the Savage Coast. The main source of instability in Renardy is the so-called Heresy of Pflarr, the belief that Pflarr should be the only lupin Immortal and that nobility lies in one's ability to prove ties to a hutaakan bloodline.

Thyatis, with Hattian, Thyatian, and Ochalean lupin citizens has the second largest lupin population, followed by Glantri and the Heldann Freeholds. In Thyatis, lupins are recognized as citizens, and many Hattian lupins serve in the Hattian Legions, while in Ochalea, lupins can be found in all strata of the society, including the Mandarinate.

In Glantri, there are no lupin nobles, and most lupins live outside the cities and fiefs. The Cimarron Hairless are basically enslaved by the Boldavian vampire barons, but most other lupin breeds fare much better.

In the Heldannic Territories, lupins are found both among the Hattian conquerors (especially Das Hund and Doggermen) and the Heldanner natives (especially the Heldann Shepherds).

Nations of the Savage Coast also hold significant lupin communities, especially in the Traladaran City-States of Zvornik and Nova-Svoga where lupin noble clans have equal status with the local human aristocracy.

Water lupins sail in Verdand and Minrothaddan ships through the Sea of Dread and the Izondian Deep. They often trade with the Senjabi merchants of Sind.

A small but respected breed, the Fennec (or Fanaq), lives in the Emirates of Ylaruam. Most Fennecs are followers of the Eternal Truth.

Minor lupin communities are found throughout the Northern Reaches and Norwold (Ostland Stövare, White Foxfolk, Norwold Malamutes and Heldann Shepherds), while nomadic lupins travel the less populated areas of central and eastern Brun.

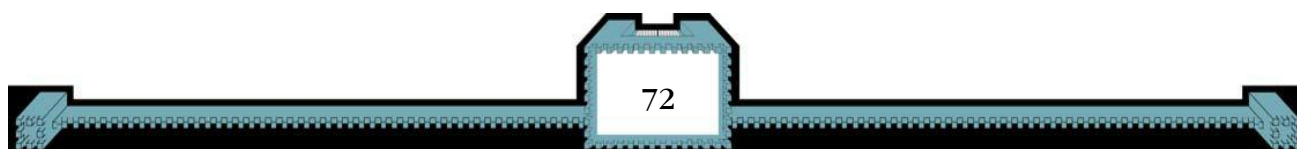
Goblinoids with lupin blood can be found throughout Brun. Together with other goblinoids, they are predominant in the Broken Lands and comprise a significant part of Hulean society and army. Gnolls have advanced societies in Grande Carrascal and Graakhalia. They and kobolds have large strongholds in the Broken Lands and the Northern Reaches.

Lupins can also be found outside the lands of Brun. The Aardovai tribes inhabit the Rilles region of the Hollow Moon, while both the hutaakans and their ancestors, the Coyotl, live close to the World Spine of the Hollow World.

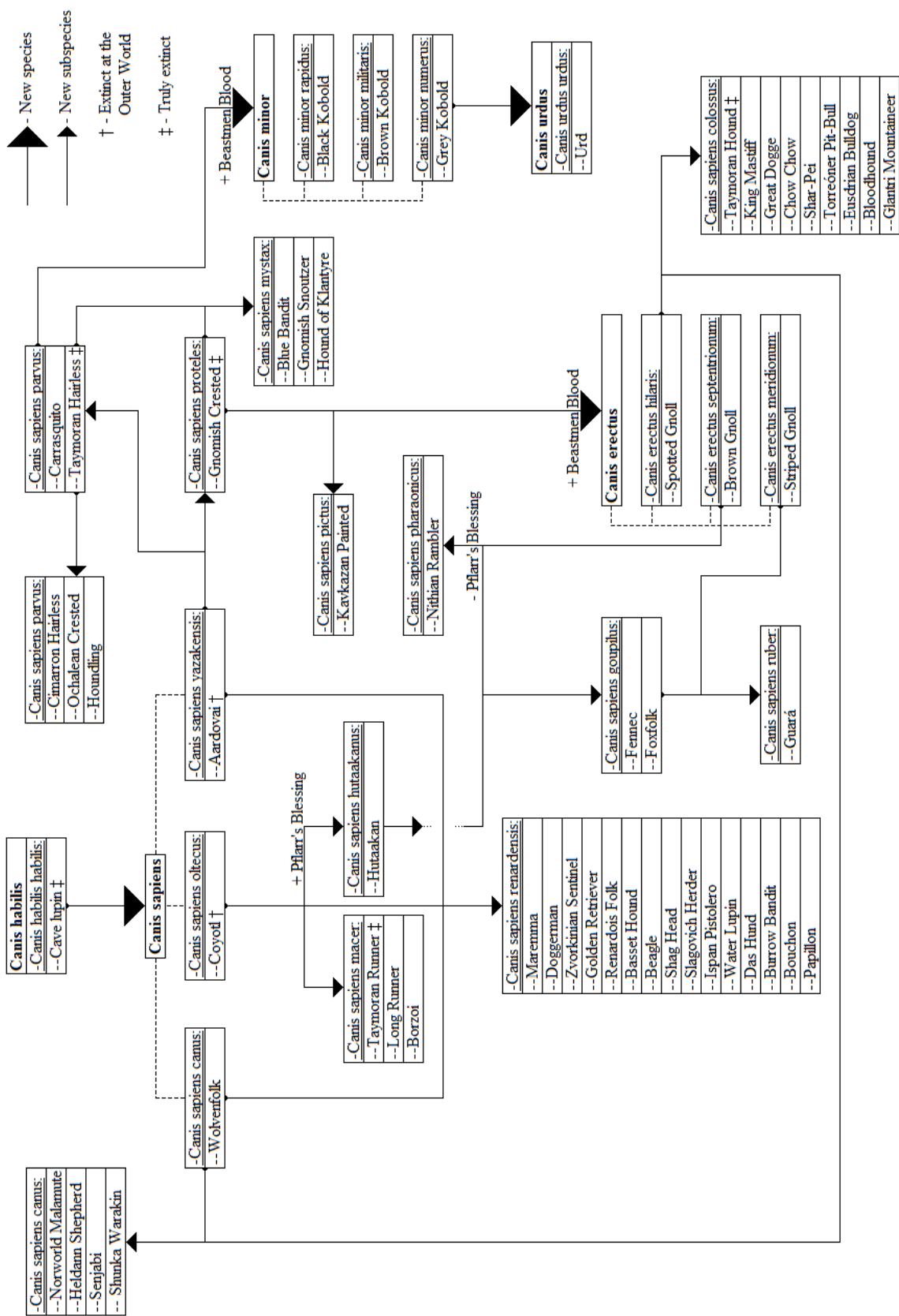


Legend:

- **Red:** Renardy and the Savage Coast; *Canis Sapiens Renardensis* (Maremma, Zvornikian Sentinel, Golden Retriever, Renardois Folk, Basset Hound, Beagle, Slagovich Herder, Ispan Pistolero, Water Lupin, Burrow Bandit, Bouchon, Neo-Papillon), *Canis Sapiens Mystax* (Blue Bandit), *Canis Sapiens Parvus* (Carrasquito), *Canis Sapiens Macer* (Borzoï and Long Runner), *Canis Sapiens Colossus* (Torreóner Pit-Bull, Bloodhound and Eusdrian Bulldog), *Canis Sapiens Goupilus* (red Foxfolk), *Canis Sapiens Canus* (Flaemish Shepherd);
- **Blue:** Northern Reaches and Heldann; *Canis Sapiens Canus* (Heldann Shepherd and Norwold Malamute further north), *Canis Sapiens Mystax* (Gnomish Snoutzer), *Canis Sapiens Colossus* (Great Dogge), *Canis Sapiens Goupilus* (white Foxfolk further north), *Canis Sapiens Renardensis* (Doggerman and Das Hund with the Heldannic Knights);
- **Green:** Ochalea; *Canis Sapiens Colossus* (Chow Chow and High Shar-Pei), *Canis Sapiens Parvus* (Ochalean Crested and Houndling);
- **Black:** Broken Lands, Northern Reaches, Plains of Fire (Graakhalia) and El Grande Carrascal; *Canis Erectus Meridionum* (Striped), *Canis Erectus Septentrionum* (Brown), *Canis Erectus Hilaris* (Spotted);
- **Violet:** Thyatis and Glantri; *Canis Sapiens Renardensis* (Doggerman and Das Hund in Hattias), *Canis Sapiens Parvus* (Cimarron Hairless, Glantri and underground), *Canis Sapiens Mystax* (Hound of Klantyre, Glantri only), *Canis Sapiens Colossus* (King Mastiff and Torreóner Pit-Bull in Thyatis; Glantri Mountaineer in Glantri), *Canis Sapiens Goupilus* (Fennec in Ylaruam);
- **Orange:** Sind and Atruaghin; *Canis Sapiens Canus* (Senjabi and Shunka Warakin);
- **Yellow:** Arm of the Immortals; *Canis Sapiens Ruber* (Guará);
- **Cyan:** Kavkaz; *Canis Sapiens Pictus* (Kavkazan Painted);



Lupin Taxonomic Table



→ New species
 → New subspecies
 † - Extinct at the Outer World
 ‡ - Truly extinct

LUPIN BREEDS

Although all the lupin breeds have much in common, they can be classified into different subspecies, and distinguished from related species by using some important characteristics, in particular their keen senses. It is known that Taymoran magic was used to increase the already powerful senses of all lupins. The Taymoran magic, however, does not affect the lupin hybrids and lupin-blooded goblinoids, such as gnolls and kobolds. Such beings simply are not true lupins, and the Taymoran magic does not recognize them as such, or perhaps their diluted bloodlines prevent it. Since beastman blood also affects lupin senses, gnolls and kobolds do not enjoy the acuity of smell and hearing of even the less sensitive true lupin. Thus, gnolls and kobolds, while classed in the *Canis* genus, do not belong to the *Canis Sapiens* species, but rather to a separate subspecies, *Canis Erectus* and *Canis Minor* respectively.

On the other hand, the ancestor species, *Canis Habilis*, is also classed separately, due to the great gulf of evolution between it and the oldest *Canis Sapiens* subspecies.

Lupin breeds with high levels of beastman blood are also separated into different subspecies (mainly some breeds of the *Canis Sapiens Parvus* and *Canis Sapiens Colossus* groups, but also *Canis Sapiens Ruber* and *Canis Sapiens Pharaonicus*).

Size and other physical characteristics also help to differentiate other subspecies. *Canis Sapiens Parvus* and *Canis Sapiens Mystax* breeds are small and have erect or semi-erect ears; *Canis Sapiens Macer* breeds are slim, medium-sized and have rose ears and longer snouts; *Canis Sapiens Canus* breeds inherited much of their ancestral Wolvenfolk traits,

being larger and having erect ears; *Canis Sapiens Hutaakanus* and *Canis Sapiens Goupilus* also have erect ears, but are smaller. *Canis Sapiens Colossus* groups together the largest breeds, all having smaller snouts. *Canis Sapiens Renardensis* is the largest group, having breeds of all sizes, but always drop ears.

The Merry Lupin Gallery (CONTINUATION)

In this section, we provide an introduction to the new breeds presented in the historical overview - the extinct Aardovai and Coyotl, and the extant Guar, Senjabi, Water Lupin and Kavkazan Painted.

Aardovai



Aardovai (by I. Calvin)

One of the oldest lupin breeds, together with the Coyotl and the Wolvenfolk, this small breed gave origin to all known small modern breeds, although none of them inherited its two distinctive characteristics: fur with black stripes and a mane. The gnolls, on the other hand, preserved these features, even though they are very different in other aspects, such as height. This breed is known for adapting quickly to new environments and situations, learning very fast. The Aardovai are extinct in modern Mystara, although they can be found in the Hollow Moon.

Coyotl



Coyotl (by I. Calvin)

One of the oldest lupin breeds, together with the Aardovai and the Wolvenfolk, the Coyotl breed has much in common with these other two and may be a hybrid breed. The Coyotl

were the first to meet humans and the first to have a human-like civilization. That, however, happened because they were enslaved by the Mictec, one of the Oltec peoples, with their will controlled by a powerful concoction, called the Amber Drink (see the Diseases and Magic Substances section for more details). Although quite toxic in the beginning, the Coyotl eventually built up a resistance to it, becoming completely immune to Wolfsbane and to the mind controlling effects of the concoction, allowing them to rebel and establish the Chochomec civilization.

In modern times, the Coyotl are extinct in the Outer World, but preserved in the Hollow World, where the Chochomec tribe survives in Oltec lands.

Guará

This breed is an obvious mix of the Foxfolk Lupin and the Striped Gnoll, as shown by their red fur and fox-like faces, combined with their unusual stature and black mane. It came about when Striped Gnoll tribes moved west from El Grande Carrascal, reaching the woodlands of Robrenn and Eusdria. Here, they were absorbed into the local Foxfolk tribes, and the newly formed tribes continued to migrate west, eventually reaching Jibarú. They remained there long enough to learn the Jibar language; there, they also received the name of their breed, Guará, meaning "red" in Jibar. The Guará did not remain in the Jibarú forests though, but moved further to the Arm of the Immortals, which remains their home in modern times. The Guara migration west was driven by their need to seek out the precious Lobeira fruit shrubs (see the Diseases and Magic Substances section for more details). They only stopped



Guara (by I. Calvin)

twice, when they encountered druids willing to help them find the shrubs.

Inspired by tales of this legendary breed, Renardois explorers sailed west. The Renardois colony of Preuve was founded on the site where these explorers met for the first time with the Guarás. Prevue soon became a missionary colony, focused on bringing the Guarás to the "rightful lupin faith of the Church of Renardy". That proved to be a hard task, however, since the Guarás, contrary to most other breeds, are a solitary people who prefer to live alone in the forest, and only join with others of their kind when looking for a mate. Guarás do occasionally come to Preuve, but they usually return to the forest after some time. This unusual behaviour causes all kinds

of misunderstanding between Guarás and the Renardois lupins.

Some Guarás, on the other hand, became part of "Bandeirantes" groups, especially those fighting rakastas or orcs. They make reliable scouts, as they are at home in the forest and with the plants and fungi that can be found there, and know the uses they have. Guarás seldom leave the Arm of the Immortals, since many of them are affected by the Red Curse and depend on a local fruit, the Lobeira, to ward off Affliction.

Senjabi



Senjabi (by I. Calvin)

This Sindhi breed has a wolf-like appearance, although it has short, light-coloured fur. They arrived in Sind during the time it faced its

greatest threat, the lycanthropy crisis of the V century AC. The keen senses of the Senjabi (Senjab being the name the Sindhis give to the unclaimed region north of Kadesh, Peshmir and Gunjab, around Lake Hast) were truly helpful for Maga Aditi's revolt against the shapeshifters. However, as opposed to the mages, who were able to establish themselves as an upper caste, the Senjabi were forced into the lowest part of the Himaya caste after the crisis, and had to adapt to a mercantile life. This they excelled at, developing a good “nose for business”.

Those Senjabi who refused their imposed place in Sindhi society became part of the Nantyaj, and are now known as the Pariah Lupins.

Shunka Warakin

This breed, native of the Atruaghin lands, are direct descendants of the Pariah Lupins, the Senjabi who refused to become part of the Himaya caste. A large group of the Pariah Lupins, led by a Lupin called Rez, migrated east in order to continue their fight against the were-creatures. There, they learned that lycanthropes were living among the natives as respected members of the tribes. Knowing that they would need to fight both lycanthropes and normal humans if they kept their old ways, they decided to adopt guerrilla-style tactics, becoming silent assassins.

The name of the breed, Shunka Warakin, was given to them by the natives of Atruaghin, meaning “those who carry off lycanthropes”. In Darokin, they are known as Dingocus. Both names, however, are much older than this breed; when Rez and his lupins arrived in Atruaghin lands, the legend of the Shunka Warakin already existed. It is not certain what the original creature or creatures described by

the legend were, but it is likely that it was a tribe of Taymoran Runners that hunted mythic lycanthropes living at this area.

Water Lupin



Poodle (by I. Calvin)

The *Luperco d'Água* is a breed of great sailors, well at home among the waters. This breed probably emerged on the islands of the Texeiran colony of Protectorado da Presa. Thanks to their natural propensity for sea travel, Water Lupins can nowadays be found in many ports along the Savage Coast, being especially common in Renardy, Dunwick, and among the sea wolves of Vilaverde and Texeiras. They can also be found in Slagovich and Hojah. Some Water Lupins can also be found in the Known World, especially on Minrothaddan ships. They have a friendly rivalry with the Meditor water elves, since

both consider themselves equipped with better navigating senses. They deeply wish to one day create their own Guild in Minrothad, but are yet newcomers there, with neither the numbers nor the political pull for such a move. Water Lupins have curly, white fur much like the Bouchon, which makes them look rather funny, something that may lead someone foolish enough, to underestimate this breed. Despite their looks, they are capable warriors, usually quite skilled with cutlasses and sabres.

Kavkazan Painted

The Kavkazan Painted breed is perhaps the oldest breed still vigorous in the Outer World. Their origins can be traced back to the Aardovai breed (with Coyotl and Wolvenfolk blood) that migrated from the Yazak Steppes to the northeast part of the Black Mountains (Kavkaz). While those that continued their migration to the Known World were the ancestors of the Taymoran breeds and the Gnomish Crested, those who remained in Kavkaz became the Painted breed. The Kavkazan Painted are closely related to the Gnomish Crested breed that reached the Northern Reaches c. 1700 BC and were later employed by Nithian mages to create the gnolls. Both Kavkazan Painted and Gnomish Crested are frequently mistaken for gnolls because of their similarity; the alternative names of these breeds are related to the gnolls: the Pseudo-Gnolls and Proto-Gnolls, respectively.

The Kavkazan Painted took part in the many wars fought in this region against the goblinoids of Hule. They are able to sniff out goblinoids better than any other race, including lupins (or others) with the beastmen bloodline. This gives them a +3 bonus to Tracking and Danger Sense rolls, as well as a +1 bonus to avoid surprise. They also can

smell the intentions of the goblinoids and thus anticipate their movements, giving them a +2 to hit rolls.

Hutaakans & Lupins

The Hutaakan people were created from the last pure Coyotl people living in the Outer World. Descendants from the first advanced lupin civilization, they helped the humans living in the valley of the Nithia River to build the Nithian civilization. The Immortal Pflarr blessed this lupin people, teaching them many secrets and making them even wiser. Originally, they were very close to the Nithians, but gradually became more distant and reclusive, moving to the surrounding mountains, as the humans became more power-hungry and ambitious.

They were unused with their new homes however, and had problems doing the necessary hard work at first. That happened at the same time the Traldar people passed through a desperate moment of its history, devolving into a primitive state. The hutaakans helped them, but they also took many Traldars with them as servants, later reducing them to the status of slaves. Eventually they became used to this, growing more and more dependent on these slaves.

Meanwhile, inspired by the success of the hutaakans, the Nithians attempt to create their own hutaakan-like people as a servant race, capturing Aardovai lupins and magically blending them with trolls. They, however, proved to be too savage (especially the Spotted Gnolls), and soon they rebelled, fleeing Nithia and entering the lands of the Doulakki and the Traldar. There, gnolls and Traldars almost annihilated one another and the hutaakans retreated once more into a reclusive life.

Some hutaakans had followed the Nithians to the colonies in the Gulf of Hule and helped in the missionary attempts against the Temple of Chaos. When the Nithian Pharaohs turned to the worship of Thanatos, they became actively involved with the rebel groups that held power in the colonies and planned to overturn the corrupt Pharaohs and restore the Nithian Empire to its old glory. These hutaakans were involved in the creation of Cinnabryl and the Legacies, weapons for the rebellion against the corrupt last Pharaoh. They, however, never truly had a chance to use these weapons since the Immortals intervened, erasing all recordings about the Nithian Empire on the Outer World and, after purifying it of entropic corruption, sent the few uncorrupted survivors into the Hollow World.

At the same time however, some power-hungry hutaakans who lived in Nithia embraced the cause of the Entropic Immortals, Thanatos and Ranivorous. These traitors started an interbreeding program with gnolls, with the aim of creating a “perfect breed”, which would combine the gnolls’ physical prowess with the hutaakan acuity of senses and mind. When the Immortal Pflarr learned of these plans, he withdrew his blessing from those fallen hutaakans, which became the Nithian Rambler breed.

The hutaakans involved with the rebellion also lost their memories about it and about their previous lives. They forgot about Pflarr and his teachings, and his bloodline eventually started to fade away. Some of them kept fighting against entropic forces, such as the goblinoid tribes of the Yazak Steppes, leading local lupin tribes against them and eventually mingling with them, becoming part of those breeds and giving them some of the hutaakan Bloodline, which became strongly associated

with leadership. Many others retreated to mountain valleys west and east of the Gulf of Hule, and reverted to a reclusive lifestyle. They still mingled with local lupin natives, and developed a nature-oriented philosophy, possibly as a result of contact with druidic or elven teachings. They eventually became the Foxfolk Lupin breed - red furred Foxfolk in the Niedegard Mountains region and white furred Foxfolk in the Black Mountains. After the rise of evil in Bielagul, the White Foxfolk left the Black Mountains, bound to the east. One group reached the Norwold region, while another ended their journey at the Northern Reaches and Ylaruam, where they became the Fennec breed.

Hutaakans in the Known World who remained true to the way of Pflarr were preserved. Those who lived in doomed Nithia were taken to the Hollow World, while those who lived in the Valley of hutaaka were left there, as they had no contact with or knowledge of the Nithian corruption, having remained isolated in the secret valley after the gnoll invasion of Traldar lands.

Lupin-blooded Goblinoids

Two of the goblinoid races have more than a passing resemblance to lupins, hinting at some cross-breeding in the past.

The brutish gnoll race emerged when Nithian mages mixed Gnomish Crested lupins with the beastmen blood from trolls. Despite appearing similar to lupins, they are as tough and furious as their goblinoid ancestors. Three gnoll breeds were created, the Striped, Brown, and Spotted Gnolls.

The relation between kobolds and lupins, on the other hand, is less understood, due to

physical features of the kobolds, such as horns and scales, which lupins lack.

Striped Gnoll

The first breed created, the Striped Gnolls were perhaps the only truly successful Nithian creation. Smaller and less aggressive than other gnolls, but still quite strong, they were soon taken to (and thereafter created at) Great Waste/Savage Coast colonies as slaves, being vital to the quick success of those settlements. Sometime later, after a few years of servitude, they were released into the wilderness, where their population grew uncontrolled, leading to mass migrations. They settled the caves of Graakhalia and El Grande Carrascal; living in such difficult places taught them the necessary survival skills.

These gnolls usually have light brown fur and black snouts; mature Striped Gnolls have a black mane that resembles a mohawk. Usually they have black stripes on their legs, torso, head and back, but in Graakhalia some individuals have black spots, instead. They usually have a Neutral alignment instead of Evil, despite their beastman blood, and are the closest gnoll breed to their lupin cousins. This is due to more extensive interbreeding that happened after the fall of Nithia, and the smaller amounts of beastmen blood used to create them.

Brown Gnoll

Slightly larger than the Striped breed, the Brown Gnolls are also more aggressive and bloodthirsty. Instead of slaves, they were created as guardians and thus received larger amounts of beastman blood. They, however, hardly fit their guardian roles, since they were simply too impatient to stand still guarding anything. They fled their Nithian masters soon

enough, without ever being exported to colonies, and entered the Northern Reaches. Eventually, they were pushed farther north by their cousins, the Spotted Gnolls, who took the best lands for themselves.

Their settlement of rougher regions made the Brown Gnolls somewhat used to difficult terrains (though not as well adapted as the Striped Gnolls), and their beastman blood makes them naturally aggressive (although, like other goblinoids, they are not necessarily evil). Their fur is darker brown and they have a white mane and black snouts. Some individuals have reddish spots, while others show strips at their legs and arms.

Spotted Gnoll

The most common breed in the Known World, and the most infamous as well, is the Spotted Gnoll. These gnolls are vicious and almost always evil, to the point of a mindless thirst for destruction, much to the delight of their Immortal Patron, Ranivorous, who champions madness and death. After the failure of the Brown breed as guardians, the Nithian mages noticed that these beings were nevertheless highly effective warriors, thus, they attempted the creation of a breed with even more beastman blood, making it even stronger and more ferocious with additional magic. This, however, poisoned and twisted the Spotted Gnoll minds, causing an increased rate of insanity. Spotted Gnolls were very quick to rebel, and caused significant destruction in the Nithian Empire, thanks to the effects of shock and surprise. In the end, the Nithians managed to drive them out, forcing them north, where they displaced the Brown Gnolls, and west, into the lands of the Doulakki and the Traldar.

Spotted Gnolls are the tallest breed, although that may not always be perceived, due to their hunched posture. They have light brown hair with black spots and snouts. Occasionally they have a tan mane. They tend to be very aggressive and often suffer from insanity, giggling before and while attacking.

Kobold

While there are many lupin breeds with goblinoid blood, kobolds are, like gnolls, goblinoids with lupin blood. Kobolds bear a striking resemblance to some of the smallest lupin breeds, such as the Carrasquito and the Xoloitzcuintli (or Cimarron Hairless). At the same time, kobolds have unique features, such as scaled skin and a pair of small horns. These features are actually a product of an allergic disease that every kobold is born with, called the Kobold's Rot (see the Diseases and Magic Substances section for more details).

There are three known kobold breeds: the Brown Kobolds (*Canis Minor Militaris*), the Black Kobolds (*Canis Minor Rapidus*), and the Grey Kobold (*Canis Minor Numerus*). The colors that name these breeds are, respectively, the same colors of their scales, although Grey Kobolds also have brown splotches. While the Brown and Grey Kobolds resemble the Carrasquito breed, the Black ones look like the Hairless breeds, including their white manes.

Kobolds, much like Carrasquitos, are known for their "clannish" behavior. By goblinoid standards, kobolds (especially the Brown ones) are very organized and have a strict hierarchy. They tend to cooperate with their kin and will also cooperate, to a lesser degree, with other races that they perceive as related (first gnolls, then other goblinoids and lupins). Kobolds are known to cooperate with Brown

Gnolls in the Northern Reaches and even the Kobolds of Kol cooperate with the lunatic followers of Ranivorous, the Spotted Gnolls of South Gnollistan.

Urd

The Urd breed is the oddest of all lupin-kind, being the only one to have wings. Like a bat, they have very long fingers with their hands and arms forming webbed wings. Since most of the time they need their arms free for flying, they use their feet to pick up and carry things, and even to wield weapons. Urds are more comfortable in mountainous environments, where they can use their natural abilities to their advantage and where they can easily find caves to settle. They can usually be found in the Khurish Massif, north of Sind, and around the south and southwest faces of the Atruaghin plateau; it's known, though, that they made their way to the Black Mountains as well, and they were taken to the Hollow World, infesting the World Spine close to Oltec, Azcan and Schattentalen borders.

Urds were created c. 800 BC close to the modern Sind/Atruaghin border, where there was an independent rajasthan called Sarna, whose domains included part of modern Jalawar. Fearing the threat of invasion by more powerful Sindhi kingdoms, Sarna enlarged its army by recruiting goblinoids, mainly Grey Kobolds, formerly part of Wogar's Horde that had conquered Atruaghin lands. Since Grey Kobolds are a rather weak breed, their greatest (and perhaps only) strength being their speed to reproduce, wizards of Sarna attempted to improve this breed through magic. They studied the way Nithian mages manipulated lupins and trolls in order to create the gnolls and took advantage of the easily mutable beastmen

blood. The Grey Kobolds of Sarna thus gained wings and became the Urds.

When the Red Orcs were defeated by the Children of Atruaghin, many of them ended up in Sindhi lands, especially the Grey Kobolds. Sarna offered them a safe haven in exchange for mercenary services. Soon Sarna was overpopulated by both Grey Kobolds and Urds, and they took this opportunity to seize power. Sarna was sacked and converted into a goblinoid state and soon they began raiding their neighbours. Sarna became a threat to all its neighbours and they made a temporary truce in order to deal with the goblinoids.

Sindhi and Atruaghin troops defeated the goblinoids and came close to completely exterminate the Urd breed. A few escaped north, to the Khurish Massif, while others entered Atruaghin, living between the plateau and the Singing Forest. Urds were also taken into the Hollow World.

The name “Urd” is a derivation from Urduk. Since the Urduk independent tribes are predominantly nomads, the word “urd” gained the meaning of “barbarian”. This word was applied especially to goblinoids and, in Sarna, it became synonymous to kobold, until gaining its modern sense.



Wolvenfolk
(by John Calvin)

LUPIN BLOODLINES

In this section, we revise and extend the list of lupin bloodlines. All bloodlines grant magical abilities that are inherited from one’s ancestors. They never occur naturally, being granted by powerful magic spells or Immortals, being transmitted to descendants afterwards. These effects listed below are for strong bloodlines; weak bloodlines grant no special abilities.

Hutaakan Bloodline

+1 Wis, -1 Cha. Hutaakans automatically receive this.

Beastman Bloodline

Darkvision as a dwarf, less susceptible to Wolfsbane (like any non-lupin race), lupin senses reduced in one step, rage as barbarian once per day. Kobolds and gnolls automatically receive this.

Foo Dog Bloodline

Can cast *protection from evil* once per day as a 1st-level caster or a caster of his class levels, whichever is higher. Also, receives +2 racial bonus on all saving throws.

Blink Dog Bloodline

Can cast *blink* once per day as a 1st-level caster or a caster of his class levels, whichever is higher.

Shadow Mastiff Bloodline

Can cast *darkness* once per day as a 1st-level caster or a caster of his class levels, whichever is higher. Also, he receives darkvision, as a dwarf, which will also work on any magical darkness, as long as the character created it.

Hell Hound Bloodline

Can cast *burning hands* once per day as a 1st-level caster or a caster of his class levels, whichever is higher. Also, resistant to fire as a Zvornik Gonic.

Taymoran Bloodline

Includes all special abilities of the Borzoi breed. Borzoi automatically receive it.

Wolvenfolk Bloodline

Includes all special abilities of the Wolvenfolk breed. Wolvenfolk automatically receive it.

LUPIN DISEASES AND MAGICAL SUBSTANCES

The diseases and magical substances presented here can also affect other races. However, they either affect lupins more intensely or have been associated with lupins since the beginning of recorded history.

Kobold's Rot

The features Kobolds have, unique both among lupin-kind and goblinoid-kind (i.e. their scaly skin and small horn or horns), are actually the product of an allergic disease that every Kobold is born with. In the Known World, it is often called the *Hystrix* (Thyatis), *Pange* or its complete form *Pangolia* (Glantri and Renardy), or even simply the Rot or Kobold's Rot. In Sind and the Savage Coast (especially in the Savage Baronies), the Sindhi name *Sarna* is used instead.

Those affected by it begin losing their hair or fur, while their skin progressively becomes scaly. If not treated, the Rot affects the whole body except for the face, palms and soles. There is also a chance (+1% per month) that one or two small horns will grow on the head. In Sindhi beliefs, a growing horn over a lupin's head can be used to create luck charms, called *Seear Singhi* or *Narric-Comboo*. The longer the exposure to infected individuals, the greater the chance to catch the Rot, especially for lupins (+5% per hour for lupins or lupin-blooded goblinoids, +1% per hour for other humanoids). Gnolls are naturally resistant to the Kobold's Rot; although they catch it as easily as any other breed, they can cure themselves within days (+5% per day chance to get rid of the disease).

The Wrath

The rare disease known as the Wrath (translated as *Ira* in Thyatian and Thyatian-descendant languages) is a curse spread by priests of Ranivorous in order to reward some of that Immortal's greatest gnoll champions. Any character infected with the Wrath has

a +5% chance per 2 HP lost to go berserk (which means 100% chance to go berserk after 40 HP lost). Treat the character as a barbarian using his rage ability. The character loses control of their actions, first foaming at the mouth and then attacking the closest target that they perceive as a threat. They will drop any weapons being carried and attack only with their mouth. If it is a hit, 15 or better means that they lock their jaws in a terrible bite. Treat each round they maintain their bite as an automatic hit. They will not let go until knocked unconscious, reduced to 0 HP or less, or doing either to their victim. There is a +10% per HP lost chance for someone bitten to also get infected by the Wrath. One famous bearer of this disease is Zar (a.k.a. Titus Titonius), Generalíssimo of Kol.

Lobeira Fruit

When grown in any region outside the Haze, the Lobeira Fruit looks much like a green tomato. When grown within the Haze, it's red with green stripes. These red Lobeira fruits work exactly as one ounce of *Cinnabryl* to ward off the effects of the Red Curse. For one week, someone that eats the fruit, including its seeds, will be protected from detrimental effects of the Curse. Fortunately, the Lobeira fruit does not cause the "red blight" effect that *Cinnabryl* can cause.

Anyone within the Haze who is under the effect of the Lobeira fruit for at least one full month will suffer the same effects of the Red Curse, even if outside the cursed lands. This means that leaving the cursed lands won't stop the Time of Grace, Time of Loss, and Time of Change process and the character will need to wear *Cinnabryl* or consume Lobeira fruits to ward off the curse. If the character is within

cursed lands, choose normally his legacy; if he's not, choose randomly one of the four areas and then choose normally his legacy.

The Lobeira shrub can be used to make a concoction that gives an extra legacy for anyone who consumes it for one week. Choose this new legacy randomly as indicated before. One entire shrub, wood and leaves, are necessary for the creation of a single vial of this concoction. Because of this, the Lobeira became extinct in the entire Savage Coast, except for the area between the colonies of Preuve and Porto Maldição, on the Arm of the Immortals. That's the reason for the migration of the Guará's ancestors from El Grande Carrascal to Robrenn, then Jibarú, and finally to the Arm of the Immortals. Believing that's the last haven of the Lobeira, the Guarás swore to protect its secrets from outsiders.

Amber Drink

The Amber Drink is a concoction created by the priests of Hel of the Mictec, one of the Oltec peoples that once lived in Brun before the Great Rain of Fire. The Amber Drink is a powerful mind control drug that will work for a whole day (or three days if larger doses are used). Made of Amber Lotus and Wolfsbane, it is poisonous for anyone who drinks it, but lupins are especially vulnerable, as they are vulnerable to Wolfsbane. If dealt in small doses, there is just a small chance (10% per day for lupins, 5% for anyone else) that the victim will suffer the effects of the poison after an hour. For a more potent effect, though, larger doses are needed, and thus the chances for poisoning increases (20% per day for lupins, 10% for anyone else).

Anyone who gets poisoned will not only suffer the appropriate penalties, but will also apparently fall into a deep slumber as long as the poison keeps its effect or, at least, for a whole day. The most disturbing part of this effect, however, is that its victim remains conscious (but still under mind control) the whole time. If not adequately treated, the victim will die and might return as an easily controllable, mindless zombie.

The Coyotl breed was controlled by the priests of Hel in Mictlán for a long time thanks to the use of this potion. However, the Coyotl started to get used to it, becoming partially immune to its properties. They no longer would suffer from the poison and occasionally the mind control would not work. That resulted in an unexpected, frightening side effect: they could still fall into the deep slumber and, if not under mind control, were now truly conscious and, yet, helpless. Only a few escaped this effect with life, though, since the priests of Hel sacrificed anyone they found in this state. Sometimes the consciousness continued even after death and these few returned as intelligent undead, mummies. Eventually, the Coyotl became completely immune to Wolfsbane and the Amber Drink, allowing them to rebel from their Mictec masters.

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Lupin/Dog breed correspondance table

Lupin Breed	Dog Breed	Where found
Guardian:		
Doggerman	Doberman Pinscher	Hattias
Narvaezan Maremma	Maremma Sheepdog	Narvaez
King Mastiff	Mastiff (or any Molosser)	Thyatis
Torreoner Pitbull	Pitbull	Thyatis, Torreón
High Shar-Pei	Shar-Pei	Ochalea
Wolvenfolk	Wolf	(any)
Ye Great Dogge	Great Dane	Ostland
Taymoran Hound	Boxer	[extinct]

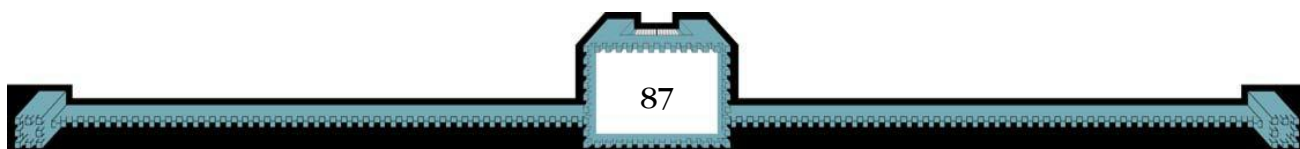
Worker:		
Eusdrian Bulldog	English Bulldog	Eusdria
Glantri Mountaineer	St. Bernard	Glantrian Alps
Gnomish Snoutzer	Schnauzer, Miniature	Norwold, Northern Reaches
Norwold Malamute	Alaskan Malamute	Norwold (arctic only), Hyborea
Zvornikian Sentinel	Dalmatian	Zvornik

Shepherd:		
Flaemish/Heldann Shepherd	German Shepherd	Heldann, Renardy, Glantri (before 900 AC)
Shag-head	Old English Sheepdog	(gypsy-like wanderers)
Slagovich Herder	Komondor	Slagovich

History of Lupins



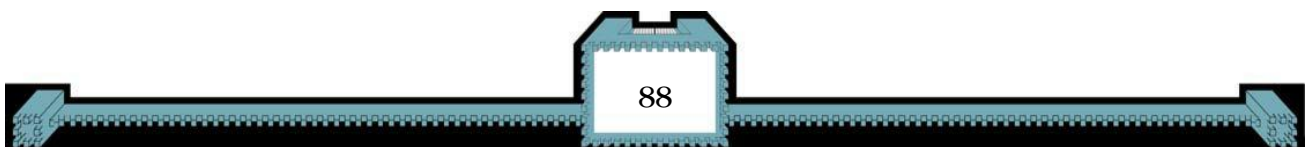
Lupin Breed	Dog Breed	Where found
Hunter:		
Basset Hound	Basset Hound	Renardy (also other regions)
Beagle	Beagle	Renardy (also other regions)
Bloodhound	Bloodhound	Renardy (recently Alphatia)
Chow Chow	Chow Chow	Ochalea
Chow Chow	Chow Chow	Ochalea
Coyotl	Coyote	Azcan/Oltec lands (Hollow World)
Foxfolk	Fox	Norwold, Robrenn
Golden Retriever	Golden Retriever	Renardy (also other regions)
Guará	Maned Wolf	Between Preuve and Porto Maldição (Arm of the Immortals)
Hutaakan	Jackal	Hutaaka Valley (Hollow World)
Ispan Pistolero	Cocker Spaniel	Savage Baronies, Renardy
Nithian Rambler	Pharaoh dog	(wanderers)
Renardois Folk	Français Tricolore	Renardy
Senjabi	Basenji	Sind
Shunka Warakin	Dingo / Rez dogs	Atruaghin lands
Water Lupin	Poodle	Any litoranean area (mainly the Savage Coast and Minrothad)





Lupin Breed	Dog Breed	Where found
Vermin Hunter:		
Aardovai	Aardwolf (c. septentrionalis)	Hollow Moon
Gnomish Crested (Proto-Gnoll)	Aardwolf (c. cristatus)	[extinct]
Blue Bandit	Kerry Blue Terrier	Renardy (possibly other locales of Brun)
Burrow Bandit	Working Terrier	Renardy (also other regions)
Das Hund	Dachshund	Hattia
Das Hund	Dachshund	Hattia
Fennec	Fennec	Ylaruam
Hound of Klantyre	Scottish Terrier	Klantyre (Glantri)

Wee Folk:		
Bouchon	Bichon Frisé	Renardy
Carrasquito	Chihuahua	El Grande Carrascal
Cimarron Hairless	Mexican Hairless	Schattenalfen, Boldavia
Taymoran Hairless	Peruvian Hairless	[extinct]
Ochalean Houndling	Pekingese	Ochalea
Ochalean Crested	Chinese Hairless	Ochalea
Neo-Papillon	Papillon	Renardy



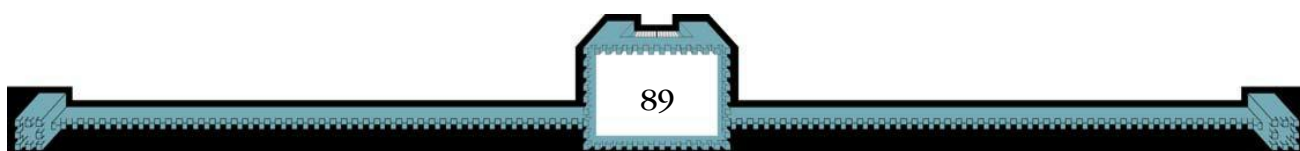
History of Lupins



Lupin Breed	Dog Breed	Where found
Nomad:		
Long Runner	Longdog	Yazak Steppes
Borzoi	Borzoi	Nova Svoga
Kavkazan Painted (Pseudo-Gnoll)	African Wild Dog	Kavkaz
Taymoran Runner	Saluki	[extinct]

Feral [Gnoll & Kobolds]:		
Spotted Gnoll	Spotted Hyena	Broken Lands, Ylaruam, Northern Reaches, Sind, Black Mountains, Hills of Kavaja
Brown Gnoll	Brown Hyena	Northern Reaches, Norwold
Striped Gnoll	Striped Hyena	Graakhalia, El Grande Carrascal
Kobold (Brown and Grey)	Chihuahua with Mange	Known World (Greys mainly in Atruaghin)
Kobold (Black)	Peruvian Hairless with Mange	Known World
Urd	Dog-faced Bat or Flying Fox Bat	World Spine (Hollow World), Black Mountains, Khurish Massif (Sind), Atruaghin

Mongrel:		
Random Breeds	any Mongrel or hybrid	





The world of Mystara has known almost no end of suffering throughout the planet's existence. Dating back as far as the caveman-esque era of Blackmoor and the Great Rain of Fire, to the creation of magic from a nuclear reactor; A meteor that obliterated two principalities of Glantri, to a potential Week Without Magic; Empires lost in a storm, or erased from time completely. From the island continent of Alphatia to the lost pyramids of Nithia, tragedy has befallen the planet at entirely too frequent intervals.

Most of these horrible tragedies are driven, or at least assisted, by some Immortal with a chip on their shoulder. Some others simply come from the horrible luck that behoves the hollow planet. Surely there has been a reason that the planet has not destroyed itself yet (though arguable, as it has already suffered two cataclysms in most accepted realities). Perhaps there was someone watching over the realm? An overseer that only reared their head to defeat a potential threat to the world, then returned to the shadows, researching the next great planetary threat from a hidden fortress?

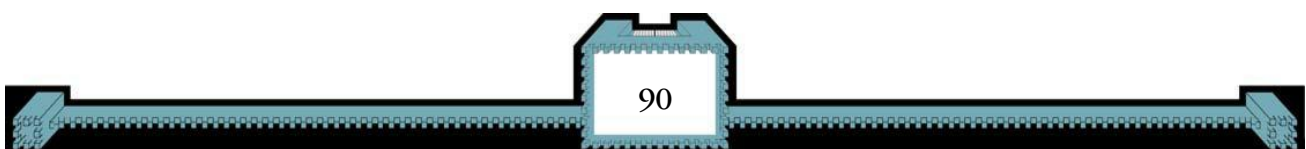
The concept of the Defender is applicable to all realms of course, and is read about in fictions on all planets in the multiverse. Legends tell of these heroes who selflessly

throw themselves at the world's threats and often come back with grievous wounds. So what of Mystara? Where is Mystara's hero? Mystara's great Defender?

THE CONCEPT

An organization known as the "Light Warriors of Mystara" (or the L.W.M. for short) has existed since around the time of the birth of magic. The original creation of the Radiance's threat was not merely a simple thing. At one time, the magic source of Mystara did not cause the awful Day of Dread after overuse. It wasn't until several Immortals had toyed with the magic-giving engine that they caused it to be detrimental, thinking that this would deter the most powerful use of the item in the form of gaining Immortality (a security function that proved fruitless as Etienne would later show us).

There were eyes on the Immortals that day – disapproving eyes from beyond even the Immortals' comprehension. An Old One, a "god" of the immortals, observed with disdain at how petty the Immortals could be. Believing that Immortals can be just as bad as they could be benevolent, the Old One decided there needed to be another way, a way that would stand in the way of planetary



threats from all walks, including that of the planet's self-appointed Immortals.

Though the details of the deal with the first Defender are long since lost, the tradition has been maintained ever since that day. A hero is chosen that holds the tenets of good in their heart, and is sent to retrieve an artifact weapon and armor that will help them through the fights ahead. They gain powers that start to rival the Immortals, but without ever ascending to their ranks. Instead, this Defender resides upon Mystara, and – using a vast network of information and technology thought lost (even as far as some Blackmoorian remnants) – they would keep vigil over the planet in their own way. Some Defenders worked alone all their lives, while others would hire clandestine mercenaries and soldiers to help them. The rules of the Defender were always the same: protect Mystara and all that it held.

Adventuring Potential

How and where the Light Warriors of Mystara exist are up to a DM, but the basic tenets are to keep an adventuring group going well past the high levels, allowing PCs to start dipping into demi-god and Immortal level gaming while still functioning as a campaign everyone can enjoy. It gives the DM a huge potential for monsters that simply do not get seen within regular or even mid-level gaming. This gives the DM the ability to have an extremely powerful NPC help the players (The Defender) and an organization for them to operate out of.

It could also be one of the players' aspirations to become the Defender, and an entire campaign can be based around that character's rise, quest for the epic level armor and sword of their choosing, and then the trials of

forming a base. It allows for that player to design their own base, and put economics into the game, with the Defender choosing to be a more political one as to keep the nations in check as well. In general, the task of protecting a planet with so many bad things lining up to hurt it is daunting, but one that offers an endless supply of high-level adventures.

For the Players



PCs initial contact with the LWM will be almost non-existent. Players taking some abilities in historical/myth knowledge of the planet may know of the group and want to get to know them better. Others may happen upon the legendary

group of protectors by accident. Most of the time, it is assumed that the group wants to be a part of the LWM and is working toward such. In this case, the Players will dedicate their campaign time to defending small villages from the threats beyond its farm fences. As the group reaches around an estimated level of five, they should be moving from their villages to a larger goal, such as studying what evil threatens their major area or uncovering a plot to put their kingdom in turmoil.

The PCs probably won't have a direct contact line to the Light Warriors until the DM deems it time. The PCs should be of good alignment

and more concerned for the protection of the people and lands than what is popular. Players with knowledge of the Defenders group may find themselves following the trail of the organizations campaign, and even trying to help from the sidelines to assist. Eventually contact is made and the players can plead their case to want to join the cause.

For the DM

The DM should ensure the Defender has taken an interest in the players due to their dedication to protecting the planet from overarching evil. A good rule of thumb that the LWM should follow is "One for every Ten". What this means is that every LWM soldier should be able to kill ten average enemies. The Light Warriors do not employ mass numbers and often have to hold their ground against overwhelming odds. Adventures with the LWM should often seem a dire situation where the enemy vastly outnumbers the team. To accomplish the mantra of "one for every ten" the PCs should be around level ten before being fully accepted into the LWM as a soldier.

This does not mean the game must wait until then. As early as level five, the Defender, or his Commanders (often the tactician) should be taking notice. There isn't always a threat ready to destroy Mystara itself, and the downtime is often spent scouting new items or people to supplement the Light Warriors' arsenal. Perhaps the PCs made a name for themselves killing a black dragon that was trying to organize all of its kin to destroy a whole nation? Maybe remains of the great magic-sucking machine from the Wrath of the Immortals are being salvaged by a secret society? Even still, perhaps the players have been captured and slated for execution by a government they fought against due to their

corruption? The LWM would have no qualms with interfering, both politically or just physically, to save those people and add them to their number. Once a label of "Protector" is established with the player group, they will have the attention of the Defender and his army.

One useful tool of the Light Warriors army is the organization of the "Regulars". Soldiers that don't quite meet the standards of the LWMs "one for every ten" rule. This is where the players will find themselves in the beginning. It is also the most likely way to be noticed by the Defender. Regulars do not reside near the LWM Fortress, but rather they reside in society all around. They train hard and continue on adventures for the protection of the lands until they reach level ten or so. It will be probably be these "regular" scouts that make initial contact with the PC's and even give them jobs. Even at level one, perhaps a "regular" has determined that they want the PC's group in with their ranks and so they began covertly conditioning them for this life. The campaign can fit whatever the DM can imagine, as long as it meets with the standards of protecting societies and saving the innocents. After time in the "regulars" unit, the PCs should be leveled up to handle the major events.

Once a member of the LWM proper, the PCs should be assigned to a group. Below are the different military branches within the Light Warriors of my personal Mystara (seen in the examples provided). While DMs are free to come up with their own, this layout is designed to help provide a greater understanding of where to go once players are involved with the group. The divisions are each indicative of a play style your PCs might enjoy.

Golden Guard: The defender's personal troops. They are the all-encompassing arm of adventure. Any applicable class fits with them. From Magic-User to Warrior, Espionage to Tactician, this is the default group to put your players in. They will be put wherever the Defender needs assistance. Adventures can range from infiltrating a government for information on a doomsday device to assembling to fight the Tarrasque as it arises from the great crater in the sea. Archeologists may be sent to discover Nithian ruins or a mighty war may be run with the Defender and his group at the front. Overall, this is a great place for players that love to mix it up.

Alpha Squadron: Brute force and massive battles are commonplace when you assign your PCs to this group. They specialize in all kinds of fighting, though emphasis is placed on Melee combatants. Alpha squad adventures should be based in hack-and-slash campaigns where there is more combat and less politics. If Alpha squad is sent in, it's because negotiations failed, or were never started, and the enemy must be removed. Threats to the planet in the form of large scale fit here and DMs should feel free to provide wonderful adventures with armies of ogres, behemoths, and giants. A great battle in the Alpha Squad record involves an army of these mammoths being arranged by a Titan who felt it was time to reclaim Mystara as his own.

Any warrior class fits into Alpha Squad, Clerics and Paladins are a very close second. Magic Users in this form of campaign are not often used, but can be with some creative thinking. Rogues are almost never used here, as being sneaky and using discretion are often not part of this groups agenda.

Mystaran Special Forces (M.S.F.): Assigning players to this group should be more Rogue

and Ranged oriented, with healers a close second. Adventures here are designed to really show what the Light Warriors are fighting for. Saving civilians caught in the awful grasp of war, healing and resurrecting family members out of the kindness of their heart are the healers job while the Rogues and Archers hold back the oncoming assaults. Melee fighters are often involved as well, though as a last resort as it means the threat has reached the innocent.

Evacuation and salvage missions are the norm here, and often the DM will be encouraged to craft adventures with many NPCs that need the players help. This adds a "rescue and protect" style of adventure that encourages PCs to pick their battles. Magic use in the offensive manner causes many casualties on civilians (as any wayward *fireball* has shown) and is rarely used in these campaigns.

Magestorm: Scholars and Wizards of all kinds assemble to form this division. Campaigns here are very different, and should be considered for much more political or role-play oriented gaming. Magic Users are the primary go to in these campaigns, but all are honestly welcome. The decision to be in Magestorm should involve players digging historical sites, unearthing relics of the past and adding them to the LWMs power. Digging up forbidden knowledge on the Immortals is another favorite of this group. Political campaigns can be made here too, having PCs become emissaries to powerful governments to express their dissatisfaction to some plot that hurts much of Mystara just to improve one nations standing.

Espionage and good role playing skills are just as important as dice rolls here, and sometimes much more so. DMs should take the dice as only one part of the whole here,

and encourage players to push range of emotion to sway the diplomats to their way of thinking. Action is not lost here, however. Magestorm is called in to rain "Magic artillery" down on their enemies, tactics they have studied from both Glantri and Alphatia. Of course, outside of military application, no tomb is ever really safe, is it? Rogues assist just as well here, as do heavy fighters, provided everyone has a healthy appetite for knowledge and wisdom. Still, it is often Magic Using classes that rule the day here, even if fighters are paladins and rogues are historian treasure hunters.

Beyond The Rank and File

Getting up into level twenty, players may find themselves having a performance record that looks like a demi-god. DMs are encouraged to keep the game going with even more difficult adventures to challenge them. In every campaign there are supplements that expand the adventure. Epic level campaigns can be used with this to offer the worst of the multiverse and not threats from Mystara itself. The hells and abyss are always looking for areas to wage their blood wars upon, and both thirst for souls to be sucked into their own prison-realms. Thanatos is a malevolent force that will hatch schemes to thwart the LWM at every turn. The crust between Hollow World and Mystara houses over a million humanoids that, if returned to the surface, will be nearly unstoppable.

While the Light Warriors will probably never become Immortal themselves, they will strive to be just as strong as them. Once players become this strong, becoming a Commander is a great way to show their progression. The acting Defender will not be replaced until he officially retires, and at that point even a new

Defender can be chosen. These adventures will use books that involve epic levels (Such as 1st editions Codex of the Immortals or 2nd/3rd editions Epic Level handbook) and involve truly history shaping events. The Lord of the 9th level of hell may decide to push against Mystara...and the Defender will have no qualms of marching through hell itself to put a stop to that. Immortals may finally be slain in the pursuit of keeping them in their place. Whichever the case, the DM should be prepared to alter things often not messed with when it gets to this level.

As a Commander

Becoming a Commander in the Light Warriors is no easy task. Around level twenty, and provided the PC has made an incredible name for themselves, the Defender should speak to that PC. The PC should be completely trusted and never doubted in their loyalties to the organization and its cause. The DM should have a clear role picked out for this new appointment of Commander. As outlined below, each of the default Commanders have a specialty they bring to the table. What does the players offer? Ensure they add something unique to the table, even if it clashes with some of the others. A tactician often disagrees with the warlords point of view and only through cooperation (or sometimes complete disregard) do things get done.

A new Commander must have their own division within the military. Players should be just as involved with the DM in this creation. Name your new branch of the military, appoint some of your table mates as generals in your new arm of the LWM. Design a logo or flag that your division will wear. This will define where your players want to go with the high level campaigns and working together will ensure everyone's involvement.

At this point, the DM should involve the new Commander with all the updates that the LWM has. Meetings within the fortresses war room will involve that player and they will even have a say on how future adventures are shaped via direct input. If a player doesn't want to plow through hell to stop Asmodeus from trying to interfere with the planet, maybe they would rather find a way to banish anyone from the hells altogether from touching down on Mystara. Instead of butting heads with the Immortals on Pandius, the new Commander could be a liaison between the two. The liaison could also be a spy, and has begun pulling information out of Pandius to directly feed the LWM on what the Immortals are plotting next? Investigation missions also include researching the dreaded Black Ball on Mystara, Finding the truth about Synn and her plots, and any number of great mysteries left on Mystara.

As a Defender

The Defender is often controlled by the DM and embodies the die-hard spirit of good. The unrelenting urge to stand up against all of evil and no matter how many times you are taken down, you will stand up yet again. All too many of the Defenders adventures end with a resurrection on his part, and one day...his spirit may just refuse the resurrection. Perhaps the sorrow of seeing a planet threatened by destruction so often has finally gotten to them? Or maybe a golden age was ushered in and the Defender finally decided it was time to pass the mantle on to the next. This means giving a player control of a military that can span all across Mystara. Such a campaign involves a replacement of the Commanders and the Defender, as a retirement often means the old regime steps down for the new one. The difference between a Commander and

the Defender is not too large, however. It just means that all final say on activities will go through the Defender, and they do have the power to override the decisions if they so choose.

Defenders should be somewhere in the range of demi-god to immortal in level. Adventures here are sure to include other immortals, or threats of invading planets and species destroyers. The Defender has to make decisions and also be ready to fight, so campaigns involving a player as Defender will need both heavy role playing and long combat encounters.

One of the first things a player should do before becoming the Defender is quest for an artifact weapon and armor. The DM is encouraged to work with the player to determine what these artifacts will be and often will custom make these items to fit the PCs character and style of play. The quest, in itself, should be made with a group of the PCs closest allies (as often they become the new Commanders) and should span all across Mystara at a minimum. This is a hard topic to describe, because it really is custom tailored to each campaign and setting.

Below, in the example section, is my personal design for a sword and armor that fit into my campaign (and the name the player then took). The campaign should be a mix of everything from ancient studies to Mystara-wide searching that culminates in the discovery of the Weapon and Armor the player will use the rest of their days. Some notes go by when creating the artifacts are that they level up with the player in some way. Level dependant stats often ensure the items are not outshined later on. This can cause a breaking effect if done without much balance, so again, care must be taken when designing

these. A safe weapon scaling is to add 1 to either attack, damage, or a saving throw per each level of the wielder (in example, the legendary sword I chose adds +1 to damage every level of wielder and nothing more, but has numerous magic activations per day for truesight, protection from archetypes, and a few magic blasts for ranged attack). Adjustments should be made with the DM and Player working together if the item gets too overpowered at first, and scaled as the Defender campaign wears on. This can be as easy as giving the weapon a level chart that flows with the owner. The weapon should accommodate the PC so as they get higher in level, the weapon adds damage, magic abilities, or even extra spell casting as it goes. The armor should always offer a high AC, as the campaign will have high powered enemies. As the level progresses, special abilities such as Damage Reduction, Miss Chance, or Spell Turning should start to increase.

EXAMPLE ORGANIZATION

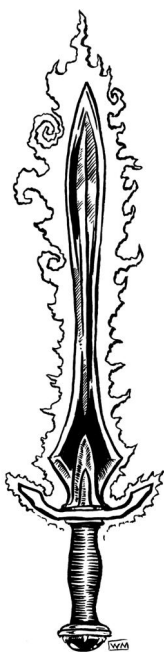
(The following is lifted directly from my Mystaran reality and is how I originally envisioned the concept of the Defender and his L.W.M army. Characters and designs that follow are of my own design, and certainly should not be confused with a direct how-to on the creation of the Defender and their army, if they even have one with your campaign. This is merely the foundation I set forth and built upon in my own campaign and offer it to all of you with the hope that many of you enjoy the ideas and concepts therein. Note that all characters have had stats intentionally left out. This is to keep from being aligned to one edition. The descriptions of each of the characters should give any DM a good idea how to designate each character.)

Date: 1029 AC

The Fortress: A floating island 2-miles in diameter kept aloft via magic in almost all areas. Inside of the floating island is enough Blackmoorian engineering to use thrusters to keep the island afloat should magic fail. A small castle merely three stories tall sits in the center, with numerous barracks, magic studies, and crafting buildings are to the right of the castle's entrance. An airship port is hidden underground in a tunnel that houses numerous airships. Some of the piping is designed to emit clouds at the bottom as a means of non-magical vision obstruction. Magical activators in the war room of the castle can activate invisibility, mirror image, or any number of protective spells on the island itself. The war room itself contains computers and designs from ancient Blackmoor that have been stabilized and engineered to be useful without self-destructing.

The Legendary Artifact - The Masamune Sword: Throughout legends over not only Mystara, but so many other planets and their cultures, legends tell of a great sword. The name of the sword is often varied - Excalibur, Muramasa, Hrunding, Durendal, Masamune, Caladbolg. The truth is far more complex than what each legend offers it. The real name of this sword is as unknown as the form it carries.

The artifact is a spirit and not a sword, it merely takes the shape of a sword. Throughout the Multiverse, this soul travels and imparts its wisdom upon those who would discover it. It places itself in an area where it is needed most and becomes tangible for a hero to wield. It can exist in numerous places at once, offering a hero the means to save the people behind them. All



of these swords were known for being a heroes blade that fought evil at every turn. The names change, but the purpose always the same. Often, it is created with a protective armor that kept the hero safe while they fought, and all the time the sword took the form of what the wielder wished, provided that form was a sword.

The Defender had heard the legend of a great sword known as "Masamune" on Mystara and took a team of his finest friends to find it. They traversed from Mirros to Darokin, to the great libraries of Glantri, a sunken and forgotten library in the Alphatian sea (even before Alphatia sank no less), to the uncharted continent of Davania and Skothar, and eventually to the Cave of the Masamune hidden within the sands of the red coast.

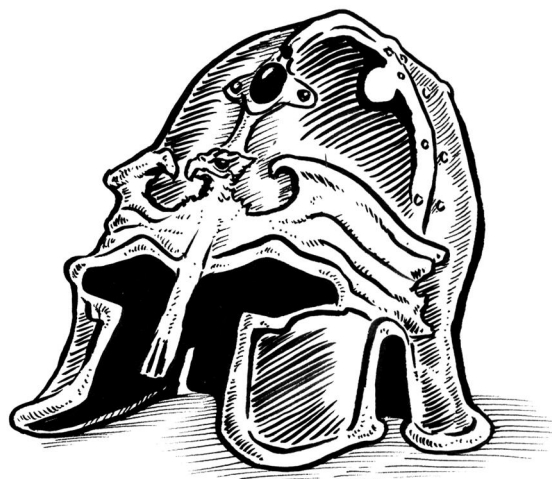
The cave's trials tested all the Defender-to-be had in him. He and his friends fought through a maze nearly two miles long, another, deeper layer filled with the undead of the desert, and yet a third layer that shifted them through different planes and realms. At the very end of the bottom layer lay a long path.

His allies were instructed to watch from a rock balcony above while the pre-Defender was challenged to a race with the spirit of the sword. It was no regular race, as the cave layer began to crumble behind he and the spirit. Rocks spat forth in explosive force as the cave itself did its best to stop the man from reaching his prize. The race through the last layer pushed the man to his limits, but in the end he drew the legendary Masamune sword from its place in an altar. The sword took the form

he desired most and cloaked him in armor of his own minds choosing, gold to symbolize purity and not opulence as most assume. The man even took the name of the sword, Masamune, from that day forward.

The Defender "Masamune": Wearing gold armor from head to toe and a gold open-faced helmet with a ruby gem in the center at the forehead, Masamune stands as the planet's current Defender. His real name, much like his allies, was changed at their inaugural meeting. From that night forward, he and his "Commanders" swore to never use their real names again. The title of Commander in the L.W.M. was to signify that they were all leaders, not a one of them higher than the other. Though Masamune held the title of Defender, he would not use it to override the others and hence gave himself a military rank of Commander along with them.

Masamune stood through entirely too many fights during the Wrath of the Immortals, though never against the Immortals themselves. He instead intercepted a team of Alphatian professionals that almost blew Glantri up from under the grounds it sat on. He, conversely, led a team to beat back the



hordes of the abyss that were pouring through a huge gate opened by a hidden Glantri war mage team on Alphatia. Masamune was in Sundsvall with his entire team when the great Maelstrom struck and barely escaped. He has seen the Wrath of the Immortals and for that he has become disdainful of their presence. His adventures have taken him from Karameikos, where he became good friends with the King, to Glantri...an empire that has branded him, several times, with a kill-on-sight order for the local militia. At the end of the day, his only concern is that Mystara exists for years ahead. He, himself, stood and attempted to divert the meteor that crashed into Glantri, using every spell he could conjure to divert it from its real target of Glantri City.

Though not often seen with him, due to his reckless nature to try and tackle problems himself, Masamune's personal division of the military is the fabled "Golden Guard". They are often with him on large military campaigns and other fights in which the Defender realizes its just too big for himself to handle. The Golden Guard specialize in overall efficiency, where masters of all disciplines are present. Magic Users, Rogues, Melee and ranged warriors, Clerics, Paladins. All experts of their fields are accepted into the Golden Guard, and while the team itself does not specialize in one specific discipline, they have the talent to field all manner of problems as the need arises.

Commander "Blackplague": Taking his name from a disease of legend, he has been rumored to have killed more people in his life than that ferocious epidemic. At some point in his life, which some say was as a high commander in the Heldannic military, he saw that killing for a nation was not as honorable and helpful to the citizens as he thought. He changed his name long before he met the Defender, but turned his mercenary sword to aiding those who were being oppressed instead of those who just had the coin.



Sporting the furs of the Ostlanders and the black leather armor of the Heldannics, his northern Known World influence is apparent. His body is a collection of muscles and standing at a large six feet and six inches, he is an intimidating man to behold. He brings brute force tactics to the LWM and is often sent with his arm of the military "Alpha Squad" to the front lines of any major conflict.

Commander "Wyvern": With blue hair on pale white skin, it is no wonder that he attracts the most attention when he is seen. This is something he welcomes, as his Half-Nymph blood loves to revel in parties and enjoyment. He was once known as one of the finest demon hunters of Mystara, having tracked down liches, death knights, and even fought an arch-lich from the nethers of the abyss when it snuck into Darokin during a really bad deal one day.

He carries the name Wyvern in honor of one of his greatest fights, a fight which landed him his trademark "Fang" and "Claw"; his dagger and shortsword respectively. Hewn from the creature he killed for it and then enchanted to perfection, his fighting style is quick and sharp. His care-free spirit often clashes with that of Blackplague, but at the end of the day, the two find peace in the lives they help save.

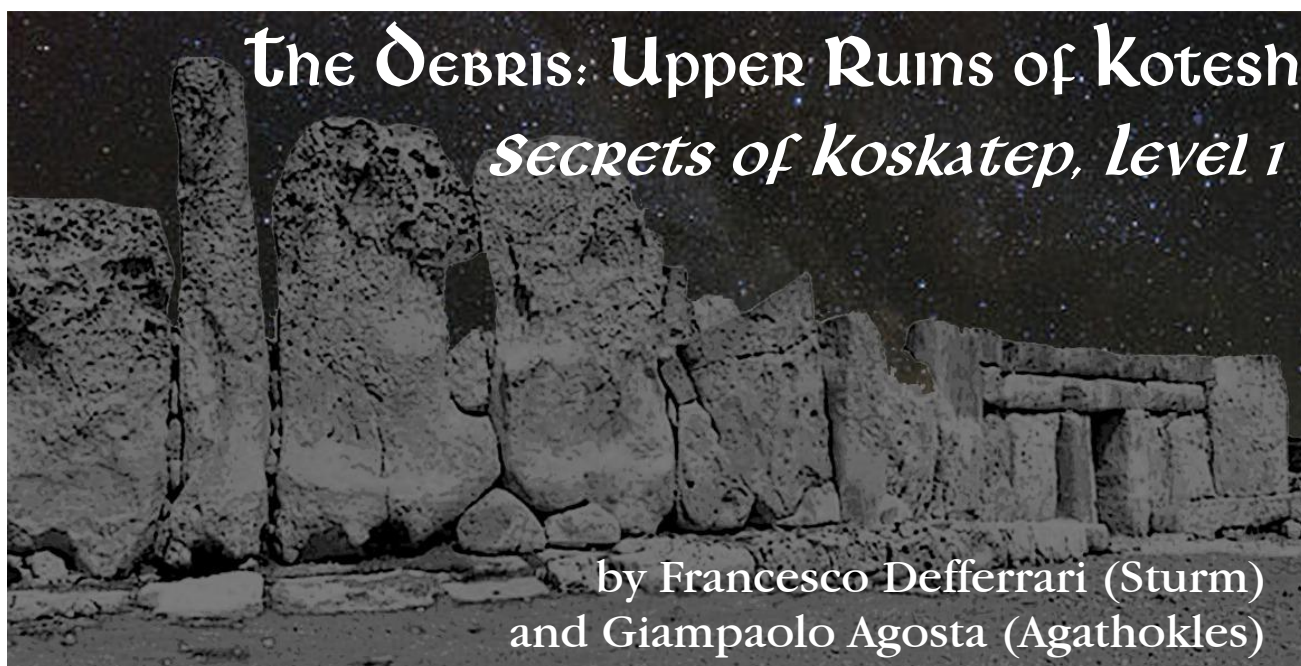
His specialties are in city-urban fighting where civilians are thick. He trains his team, the Mystaran Special Forces, to protect all civilians while forming defensive points for them to hide in. An outbreak of the orcs from the broken lands saw a city in Glantri nearly destroyed. An hour after the some-thousand orcs came through, only a hundred or so townspeople were dead. The rest credit their lives to the quick reactions of the man with the blue hair, and his mercenary force.

Commander "Mage": Simply taking the name "Mage" in an attempt to stay as humble as possible, Mage came from a dark background of training from a man he had no choice but to accept. Orphaned at infancy, he was discovered by a traveling necromancer who had been studying in the mountains of the small farming town. The necromancer took him and trained him from a young age to be a blight upon Mystara, but in a fight with the Defender, Masamune saw there was good in him and that he had been misled for far too long.

Accepted into the L.W.M. as their newest Commander, Mage fights in a modest red Glantrian robe enchanted with protection. This misleading armor is intentional, as his arts are with the mind and the human psyche far more than physical. He is the L.W.M. master tactician and advisor, though often it falls on him to talk to the governments and groups

that discover it was the Light Warriors that were involved in something. He tasks himself with making sure his team, "Magestorm", can drop magical might upon any opponents that have grown too large in numbers for a mere clash of militaries. In AC 1025, at Mirros, a huge construct known as "The Red Steel Tank" sought to destroy the empire's capitol, Blackmage organized his team in an attempt to rust and destroy the machine. A construct of steamcraft and magic, the tank itself was a huge 6-legged walker with a spell resistant shell of red steel. When direct spells proved impossible due to enchantments and high defenses, his team set about making the weather fierce for the tank, creating huge mudslides with *transmute rock to mud*, and otherwise slowing the walking death tank long enough for the rest of the Light Warriors to hit it hard and dismantle it.





INTRODUCTION

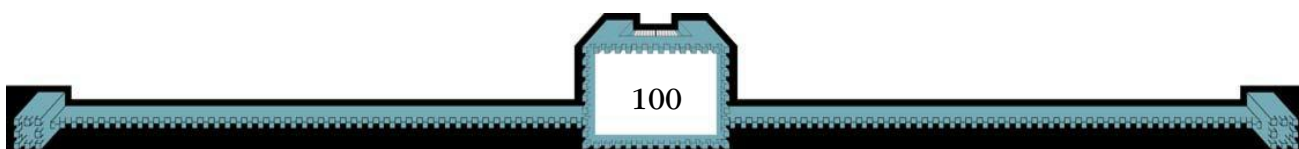
Koskatep, the mega-dungeon featured in *Threshold Issue #1*, sits atop a lonely hilltop along the upper course of Achelos River. It has been occupied by various forces throughout the eons, even before the Great Rain of Fire, and is still an active ruin even in modern times.

The first level of Koskatep, the Mountain of Bones, lies on top of the hill itself. It is partially exposed, and is composed of the upper remains of an abandoned ogre city, Kotesch, which has been inhabited by bandits and Traladaran freedom fighters in past centuries. The Debris have little treasure, except for the weapons and possessions of the ogres and the giants that dwell here.

SECRETS OF THE UPPER RUINS

In a forgotten and closed room there is still the tomb of a Traladaran knight who died in 900 AC fighting the Thyatians, with his magical armor and sword.

After the Darkers take control, many ogres and hill giants live here (at least more than 20), well paid by the Darkers to keep intruders away. These folks are organized and finely equipped so trying to avoid them rather than fight them all would be much wiser.



HISTORY

The upper level of Koskatep is a stratification over the ruins of the ogre city of Kotesh (see level 2), a stratification also built mostly by ogres and hill giants from 227 AC to the present (1000 AC), but occupied by followers of Nyx and Ixion for short periods too. The attempts by the ogres to rebuild Kotesh were always thwarted by The Last One, a very powerful and ancient vampire living deep in level 7, who has been the true master of the ruins in the last seven centuries. He didn't want to manifest his presence to the outside world, so he never settled the upper level, but he eventually destroyed, personally or through his minions, any long term occupants of the Upper Ruins when they tried to explore the levels below. Remains of these past massacres and battles dot the ruins.

From 227 to 313 AC: After The Last One killed the priests of Ixion and provoked a landslide to bury Kotesh and its acropolis turned into a temple (see Level 2), the ruins were completely abandoned and avoided for several years.

From 313 to 396 AC: A powerful gnoll leader (and later, his successors) built a settlement called G'kurash (see keys from 38 to 47). The Last One controlled them easily, but they became greedy and raided the humans of Achelos too many times.

From 396 to 425 AC: Troops of the Kingdom of Achelos conquered the ruins and built several fortifications over the gnoll settlement and to the right of it. Eventually the troops were mysteriously murdered overnight (by

The Last One's minions) and no one ever discovered how.

From 425 to 445 AC: A tribe of orcs infected by vampirism and lycanthropy, the Mokrg, occupied the ruins, though Achelos' troops tried several times to defeat them.

In 445 AC troops of Achelos conquered, burned, salted, and buried the place, periodically sending adventurers and soldiers to maintain it clear of monster occupancy. The situation remained more or less the same until 699 AC, and Koskatep gained the reputation of one of the most cursed ruins in the west. During this period, secretly, adventurers sent both by the Church of Ixion and the Church of Nyx tried several times to defeat The Last One, but all failed.

From 699 to 725 AC: For many turbulent years orcs, humans, ogres and giants tried in turn to claim the place, each people lasting only for some seasons. Yet the structures in the eastern part were significantly expanded and those in the western part reinforced.

From 725 to 788 AC: The ogres and giants prevailed at last, made peace with the Kingdom of Achelos and began to build a lasting city, until a massive undead attack destroyed it.

From 788 to 800 AC: The ruins were infested with powerful undead despite several attempts by ogres and humans to dislodge them.

From 800 to 818 AC: Lord Vudar, a cleric of Nyx, guided a massive Darkers expedition to the ruins, occupying them with human and ogre soldiers. They built several structures in the eastern part but were eventually destroyed by The Last One.

From 818 to 856 AC: A black cloud lingered over the ruins for years, sheltering followers of Thanatos from all over the world. Eventually an alliance of ogres and giants, including even some dragons, destroyed the cloud and killed its occupants.

From 856 to 892 AC: Koskatep changed hands several times, from ogres and giants to orcs to humans, to orcs and gnolls, to ogres, to humans, to undead.

From 892 to 900 AC: Troops of the Kingdom of Achelos and priests of Ixion established a stronghold over the ruins, but left the place in the turbulent times of the Thyatian invasion.

From 900 to 912 AC: The ruins were the occasional hideout of Traladaran rebels, ogres and giants. For years, Thyatians searched the region in vain to locate Koskatep.

In 912 AC Traladaran freedom fighters used the ruins as their main base against Thyatians for almost a year. Eventually a Thyatian punitive expedition found and massacred them, but they too left the ruins shortly after, considering them too far from civilized areas and creepy.

From 913 to 934 AC: Thyatian explorers and soldiers stop frequently to camp in the

ruins, as do Traladaran rebels, orc raiders and ogres and giant shepherds. Sometimes they are killed by The Last One's minions, sometimes they fight among themselves and are recruited by Him post mortem.

From 934 to 944 AC: Priests of Ixion from Thyatis occupy the ruins and enter the levels below down to the sixth, but are eventually stopped by The Last One.

From 944 to 955 AC: The Kul-nook Orcs, followers of Thanatos, slay the priests and build a settlement in the ruins but are eventually exterminated by ogres and giants.

From 955 to 971 AC: The Cruth ogres and giants returned in force, but again their rebuilt town was destroyed by The Last One with a huge poisonous cloud.

From 971 to 994 AC: The ruins were apparently unoccupied. Some groups of adventurers died exploring them, others made out alive to spread the tale of "the cursed mountain of bones".

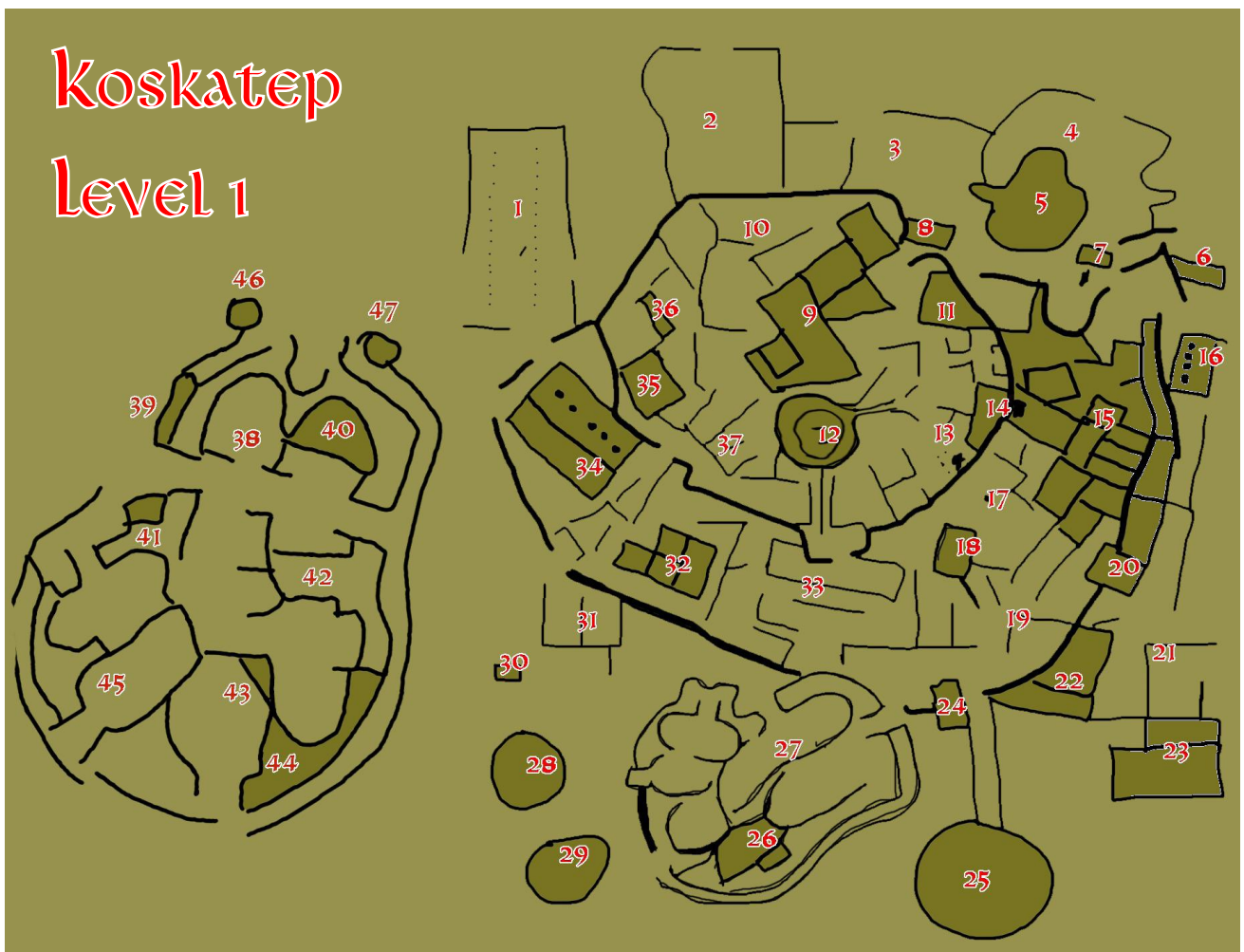
From 995 AC: The Cruth ogres began to return to the area and established contacts with the Church of Nyx. The Darkers soon learned of The Last One's persistence and began to make plans to defeat him.

In 998 AC (or at a later date, if a DM desires so) the Darkers, followers of Nyx, should take control of the ruins in force, momentarily defeating the Last One and installing in this level well-equipped ogre and hill giant guards, as explained above.

INHABITANTS

The ruins have been recently used as a shelter by small bands of ogres and hill giants. These folks may or may not be hostile, depending on the PCs' actions. In any case, they are aware that the dungeon is very deep, but their knowledge about specific areas spans only the first two levels.

After the Darkers take over Koskatep, they control this level through their Ogre mercenaries. Before that time, the level is not controlled by a single force, although the Last One maintains surveillance through his minions. The vampire lord will take action against any force trying to take lasting control of the level, by sending a party of his vampire spawn (which can be generated as a standard NPC party, except that all members have been turned into Vampires).



In the dungeon key on the following pages, text highlighted in light purple refers to the times after the Darkers take control of the ruins.

KEY TO THE UPPER RUINS

1 The Great Temple

Originally built by ogres and dedicated to Hel, it was later occupied by the Darkers, by followers of Ixion, by giants, by Traladarans, and every time rededicated to another Immortal. It has been abandoned and lain in ruins for many years, but recently, just for fun, the Last One placed a creepy statue of his patron Thanatos in the middle of it. Attempts to destroy the statue will result in activating several regenerating, deadly **magical traps** quite hard to spot and disarm (requiring a thief and a wizard working together). Old blood spatters around the base of the statue should give PCs a clue.

The area is otherwise empty, although followers of the Last One occasionally meet here (1 in 6 chance every night, select two random followers from the *Followers of the Last One* table).

Just a few days after the Darkers take control of the ruins, they will destroy the statue of Thanatos (succeeding in disarming the traps) and will substitute it with a statue of Nyx after two months. The temple will then be repaired and slowly repainted, and almost always occupied by 1d4 low level clerics of Nyx. It will be no longer used by the followers of The Last One. If PCs kill the clerics, that will trigger an **alarm** bringing a lot of ogres from area 9 and causing 2d4+2 followers of Nyx coming after the PCs from the levels below.

2 The War Court

This area was used as marching grounds by the army of some now-forgotten warlord. Digging here, explorers can find spear blades, arrow points, broken and rusty armor pieces. Goblinoids sometimes scavenge weapon or armor parts as well, so there is a 10% chance of a random encounter from the Humanoid scouting parties table.

Expanded History of the Ruins

In the upper corner of the left wall there are still some half deleted ancient wall paintings showing several undecipherable figures and the image of a burning city, a reference to the ancient inner temple of Ixion buried at the bottom of the ruins. Clerics or followers of Ixion seeing this will have a vision about the necessity of protecting the temple from the Darkers and the Last One.



(2) Lord Vudar was a Darker that tried to reclaim Koskatep around 800 AC, with the aid of ogres and giants. He was eventually captured by The Last One, but his silver medallion of Nyx can still be found in this area. Any Darker or member of the church of Nyx would be very

Eventually the Darkers will know the story and will rebuild this area as a war court with a statue of Lord Vudar, but it could take years for them to be able to complete it.

3 The Market

This open area was once a market from 955 to 971 AC. Digging here reveals shards of pottery and other household items, some of them giant-sized (generally useless, although a giant-sized spoon might be used as a mace in a pinch).

Here the ogres are building pens to hold a variety of big **chickens** they are breeding. By night this will draw to the area a couple of **giant ferrets**, not very aggressive but a probable source of noise if startled.

4 The “New Town”

This area was occupied by many huts and cottages from 955 to 971 AC, a poorer district of the town. Most of the area has been cleaned out by the ogres recently. During the day, it is easy to meet **1d4 ogres** at any time (30% chance, increase by 15% for every turn spent in the area).

The number of ogres living and working here will increase to **2d4** one or two months after the Darkers take control of the ruins.

5 The Pigpen

This walled area has been repaired, and is used as a pen to hold **pigs** raised by the ogres; as large beings, the ogres need substantial amounts of food, which they obtain mostly from livestock. The pigs are numerous, semi-wild, and rather aggressive against anyone not ogre-sized (treat as boars). Entering the area or releasing the pigs can be deadly for unprepared adventurers.

interested in the object. Also the magical armor and scythe of Vudar are hidden in level 7, along with his diary. As he was a distant cousin of Lord Sulescu; he too would be very interested in these objects. PCs could be sent to Koskatep by Lord Sulescu himself if he discovered in his castle some clue about the distant ancestor. Sulescu could already be or become an ally of the Darkers if the DM wishes so.

(4) Both the market and the huts were built after 955 AC, the date of the last attempt by the Cruth Ogres to rebuild Kotesh permanently. The ogres were exterminated by The Last One in 971 AC and have returned in relative force to the ruins only from 995 AC. The Last One has occasionally sent his minions to harass them just to discourage more permanent settlements.

(5) This building of stone slabs was built by a short lived gnoll chief in 881 AC over a previous group of houses. In a corner of the building there is still the buried, carved knife +1 once belonging to him. It is the anchor that The Last One sometimes uses to summon his ghost (as wight, HD 3) and scare the pigs.

After the Darkers take control it's just a matter of time before either they forever banish what's left of the ghost or the Last One uses him as a distraction during an attack against them.

6 The Old Tower

This building is empty and too small to be comfortable for an ogre. It is sometimes used by followers of Thanatos who come to visit the city and its less reputable dwellers. Symbols of Thanatos are etched over the walls, serving as a threat against those who would trespass. At night, there is a 25% chance of an encounter from the Followers of the Last One table.

Some time after their takeover the Darkers will repair and bolt the building as part of their renovation work, and it will no longer be used by Followers of the Last One.

7 The Well House

The shack is large but mostly empty except for the well itself, a long, rough hemp rope, and two large buckets. There is a 10% chance of encountering a **single ogre** (ogre NM, C) at any time.

Eventually the Darkers will discover the existence of the passage and will try to contact the nixies.

8 The Guard Post

This building has been recently repaired and reinforced with makeshift fortifications (equivalent to a *timber fort*). **Three ogres** (one of which is an ogre 1) keep watch at all times here, ready to repel raiders and adventurers alike. Also, they can easily call for reinforcements from area 9.

After the Darkers take control the guards will increase to **four ogres and a hill giant**.

(6) This building was part of a destroyed fortification, built by the Knights of Achelos in 892 AC. A secret compartment very difficult to spot at the lower base of the north wall hides a prayer book of a long deceased cleric of Ixion. The church, historians and the descendants of the cleric would pay a high sum for the book.

(7) The ancient well was built by gnolls in 314 AC and has been used by all occupants of the ruins ever since. No one knows this, but the well is connected to the lower level through a convoluted and mostly submerged network of small tunnels that eventually lead down to level Six and to a community of nixies allied to the Dark Fairies of that level. Other tunnels lead also to passage to the Elemental Plane of Water.

(8) This tower, repaired and rebuilt several times, is at least three hundred years old. Not much is left of its history except for many different graffitis and drawings left here by bored guards of at least six different races and cultures.

9 The Ogre Town

This group of tall buildings has been cobbled together in recent times by the ogres who took over the Debris. After the Darkers arrive, they provide better engineering skills to improve the structural soundness of the buildings. In any case, more than **20 male ogres** live here, including a chief, *Golbag* (Ogre 5, C).

There are also 5-8 (1d4+4) **female ogres and children** living here, though not permanently as the ruins are still deemed dangerous. They are, however, well capable of fighting back. There is also a 50% chance that 1d4+2 male or female **hill giants** are there, too.

After the Darkers arrive the number of hill giants is doubled and they have a chief, **Trosh** (Hill Giant 6, C), while the female and children have mostly been moved to level 2. With the passing of months, at the DM's discretion, the population of ogres and giants in the ruins will increase and extensive reparations will be under way.

10 Sheep Pen

This area is used as a pen for holding **sheep** during the night. **Two large dogs** (treat as grey wolves) and an **ogre sentry** (ogre NM) keep watch at night. During the day, the area is empty.

As the Darkers are not stupid, they will eventually discover the mass grave and clean it, the question is if they will manage to do it before the Last One awakens the zombies.

11 The Armory

This room includes a relatively well preserved passage beneath the inner walls, which gives access to the lower levels. The ogres know it but so far they have visited the level beneath – the ancient ogre city

(9) As this was the center of the last upper city in several historical periods from 700 AC onwards, the ogres have found several relics of the past, as jewels, weapons and armors belonging to past ogres, giants, orcs, gnolls, human leaders and warlords, things that could have a great value in the right places.



(10) It is now covered by a meter of earth, but here in 788 AC many ogres and giants, warriors, females and children were massacred by the undead of The Last One. Being a bit of a hoarder, he buried their remains here, as you never know what can be useful in the future, and a hundred ogre and giant zombies could always make a good night of the living dead.

(11) The ogres have given its name to the room as they have found rusted remains of weapons here, and indeed the room was an

of Kotesh - only a few times, and still have to decide if they are ready to clear and reclaim it. The door to this area is bolted as several critters tended to come out during the night from below.

When the Darkers take over, the level below is less dangerous but the room is still closed and guarded by ogre mercenaries (4 ogres, NM, C) Another passage can be found in area 44, although the ogres and the Darkers are not aware of this.

12 Watchtower

This was an ogre-sized watchtower, several times reused as a granary or depot by other humanoids or humans. Before the Darkers arrive, there is only a 10% chance that a random humanoid party (roll on the **Humanoid Scouting Parties** table) will be found here.

Given its high position, the Darkers will restore it to its use as a sentry point, while in other times it might be used as shelter by roving humanoids, thanks to its defensible position. Thus, After the Darker take control of the area, mercenary warriors (3 orcs 2, N and 3 human F3, N) will be stationed here.

13 The Debris

Among the scattered ruins here there is a passage to area 17. A party of human-sized or smaller humanoids could navigate the passage to enter or exit the inner city without scaling the wall or confronting the guards at the entrance.

Some months after the arrival of the Darkers the wall will be repaired and the passage closed. Magdub will never come to live here, as the place has too many sad memories for him, but he'll visit sometimes with many ogres. Clever PCs could notice a medallion with a tree around his neck, very similar in shape and design to the one of the dead female ogre.

armory in several periods from 700 AC. Unknown to them, several well preserved weapons, one magical, have been packaged and buried here by Traladaran freedom fighters in 912 AC.

(12) Here the Traladaran freedom fighters made their last stand against the Thyatians in 912 AC; here the Kingdom of Achelos fell forever. The King, his knight, and the rebels appear here and cry silently on the seventh night of Flaurmont every year. They do not attack and ignore any living presence, but if a priest of Chardastes happens to be here in that night, the King will show him the hiding place of The Banner of Achelos, an artifact that could be a crucial asset for anyone wishing to resurrect the ancient kingdom.

(13) What apparently seems just a rock is revealed to be - upon closer examination - the body of an ogre female hugging a child, both killed by the poisonous, volcanic cloud The Last One sent in 971 AC. Magdub, shaman of Terra and informal ruler of the Cruth Hills Ogres, would be able to recognize the medallion she has in her hands, and she is her mother hugging his little brother, whose bodies were never found. PCs leading Magdub to this discovery would earn his eternal friendship and gratitude.

14 The Tomb of Ivan

This building - thanks to its position near the wall - has survived time better than others. It was originally the tomb of a **Traladaran knight**, Ivan Dobrovic, buried in 910 AC. Three Thyatian soldiers attempted to breach and plunder the tomb. One of them was wounded by a spear trap while entering the area, while the other two pressed on only to be faced with the outraged ghost of the Traladaran knight (**lesser banshee**, Int 11, L). The legionnaires fell to the knight's deadly wail. Their superior officers considered them to have deserted, as their companion never told the truth (he would have been punished for acting without leave if he had). The ghost is intelligent, and can be communicated with (this requires using *speak with dead*, though). It is aware of a great evil in the deeper levels, but cannot pinpoint its precise nature.

Three months after the Darkers take control of the ruins, they establish friendly contact with Ivan's ghost, who will pass on to them information he gathers from the PCs.

As Ivan is a sort of local hero among traladaran rebels of the west, and he would be willing to join any new rebellion against the Thyatians, he could be a huge asset for such a cause. This storyline could be very important in the campaign as in the past Traladarans of the Achelos kingdom have been sometimes enemies of the Darkers, but now an allegiance would be useful to both to claim the independence of the west from Thyatian rule, and Ivan could be the mean to do exactly that. The Darkers will gain his allegiance by also promising to give him a new body, a proposal he'll gladly embrace. The body could be a construct, a dead Darker or even a dead PC, on DM discretion. A live Darker or a live PC particularly dedicated to the cause of freedom could be willing to share their bodies with Ivan, gaining exceptional powers.



15 The Orc's Town

This area is composed of ruins of tightly packed houses. Most of these buildings had subterranean portions (originally used for storage). Later occupants of the area carved passages between the cellars, creating a veritable warren. Before the Darkers come, this area is inhabited by a small orc clan (**20 orcs** NM led by an **orc 3** leader, females and children), since it is difficult to navigate for ogres. There is an entrance to the lower level through a dried out water tank, although it is difficult to navigate (requires Climb Walls rolls or appropriate skill rolls -- e.g., Mountaineering/Caving, if the characters have climbing equipment). The orcs sometimes hunt for treasures (old coins and weapons) and food (rats and mushrooms) in the lower level.

The Darkers will mostly leave the modern orcs alone, since they are already allied with the Ogres, but will establish contacts and cooperation with them. The orcs, sensing the growing power of the humans-ogres alliance, will be willing to join it. The Darkers will never discover the buried orcs.

16 The Shrine of Ixion

It was built by clerics who occupied the ruins from 934 to 944 AC, over a previous fortification. Frescoes and statues inside were apparently destroyed and rebuilt several times, as it was desecrated by Followers of The Last One, re-dedicated to ogre and giant Immortals in 955 AC and desecrated again in 971 AC. The ogres are slowly cleaning it but there is only a 10% change to meet **two ogres** working here (NM, C)

A priest of Ixion, a cultist of Thanatos and an ogre shaman of Jammudaru were buried here in different years. Just for fun, The Last One had them dug up and then combined their souls and bodies into one **unique, original undead** (as Nightwalker hd22) that is now waiting for His call, completely insane, just beneath the stone floor.

(15) What no one knows is that beneath the orcs "town" are buried the undead remains of the Kul-nook Orcs, followers of Thanatos that occupied the ruins from 944 to 955 AC and under them of the Mokrg Orcs, even nastier ones who lived here from 425 to 445 AC. Eventually, The Last One plans to awake them all, have them vampirize the modern orcs and send them all against ogres and Darkers.

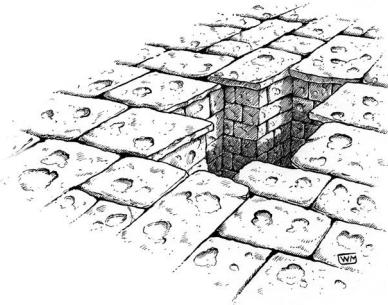
(16) Dedicated archaeologists could find several religious memorabilia from the past decades digging here, mostly ceramic figurines or small silver coins that depict immortals and were offered to them.



17 The Tunnel

Among the ruins is hidden a passage to area 13. It takes a successful roll to find hidden doors to locate the passage.

Some months after their arrival the Darkers will discover and close the passage, never finding the treasure.



18 The Bird's Pen

Albog's tribe (see below) keeps here an incredible variety of domesticated birds, several variants of chickens, ducks, geese, turkeys, peacocks, pheasants and quails, for eggs and meat. One or two young **ogre boys**, (NM-2, C) will be here at any time during the day, and will escape to area 24 to raise the alarm if they spot someone.

Several months after their takeover the Darkers will discover the grave, too. Vudar will be freed and if he has not already, it's also foreseeable that Lord Sulescu will join them at this point.



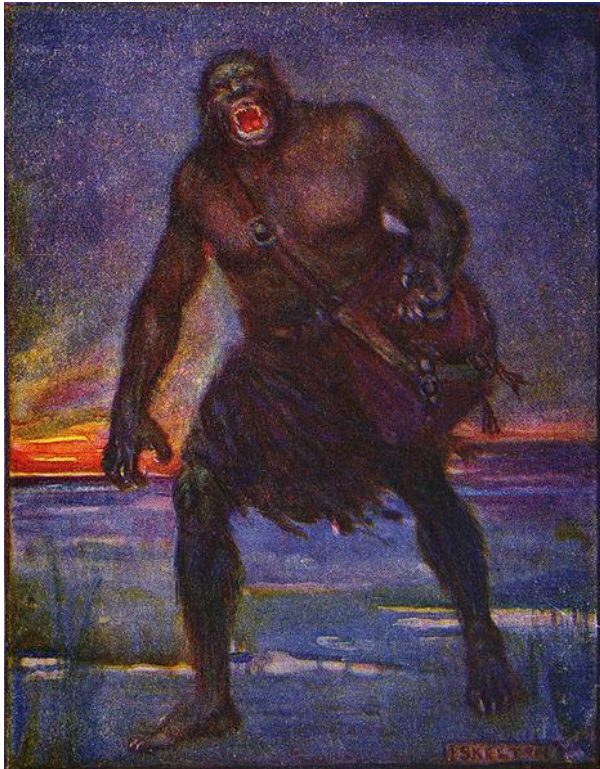
(17) The tunnel is very ancient, built to secretly connect the inner to the outer fortifications, by Achelos troops in 400 AC, and used by all the inhabitants of the ruins ever since. In 603 AC a group of adventurers dedicated to Ixion, the Golden Rays, were killed by the Darkers. Their equipment, mostly consecrated to the Sun God and therefore anathema to the Darkers, was buried here and was never discovered. Their killers were also destroyed, by minions of The Last One, in level three.

(18) The building was once the house of Nera, sister of Lord Vudar, killed here by minions of The Last One in 818 AC. For the same reasons as in area 10, the minions of the Last One buried here also all the knights and the priests who followed. Vudar, and his wife Mila too. Nera and Mila are partially awake in a sort of uncomfortable, dark dream. They are used by the Last One to blackmail Vudar into serving him. Telepathic PCs could sense their suffering. If the PCs try to awake and heal the two women they should do with inflict wounds spells of they'll harm them, as they are nosferatus. Rescuing the two women would result in Vudar being free and grateful to the PCs to the point that he'll be willing to save them from the wrath of other Nyx followers, even if they are allied with Ixion, but not arriving to complete betrayal of his cause.

19-23 The Ogre Village

A smaller tribe of 12 ogres, led by Albog (ogre 4, C), Golbag's younger brother, lives in this part of the ruins, with females and children. Albog's tribe is subservient to the larger tribe led by Golbag, and they resent it. It could be possible to negotiate for Albog's followers to ignore the PCs, if the chief is sure he will not be harmed.

The Darkers will not care about dead adventurers, but eventually they'll force Albog and his ogres to fully obey Golbag, or else. It's possible that minions of The Last One will try to use Albog to their advantage.

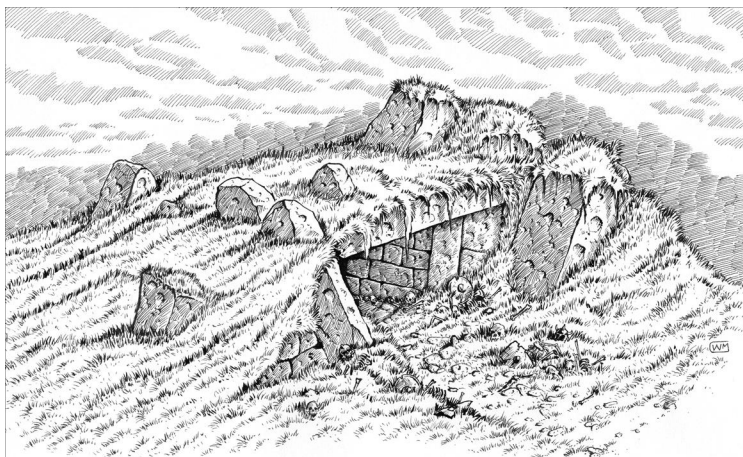


(19-23) These buildings were built by orcs, ogres and giants from 944 to 971 AC over previous, smaller houses. Later they were occupied by several carrion crawlers and giant worms that killed at least a group of young adventurers. Remains of both the critters and the humans were used by Albog's ogres to decorate their rooms. Willing PCs could be able to obtain several personal items of the adventurers to give back to their heirs. In truth, all the items are a dead end and no descendants can be found except for one small silver brooch, with the name Livia inscribed on it. The brooch could be traced to an artisan in the southern village of Gorica, who still remember having sold it to a young warrior. His name was Julius Keonios, his daughter Livia still lives in Gorica, and will be moved to tears seeing the brooch. His father had it made when she was born, to celebrate her birth even if his wife died in childbirth. Years after Livia and her father had serious setbacks at their farm, and he resumed his adventurer life to seek fortune. The rest of his party was composed of Riverfork former soldiers. Livia will not have much to thank PCs as she leads a modest life (could be a serving maid, small artisan or even "entertainer", to DM's discretion), but will do what she can.

24 The South Guard Post

This building serves as a guard post for Albog's tribe. A single guard (**ogre 1, C**) mans the post during the day. During the night, the passage is blocked by a makeshift barrier, and two large dogs are chained to a nearby post.

After the Darkers takeover, there will be **three** guards, day and night.



25 The Mound

Once the tomb of powerful chiefs, first a gnoll, then an orc, later an ogre, the mound was occupied by an **ochre jelly** in the last decade. The creature ate everything inside the mound, some humanoids, some humans and several animals. The ogres recently started to use it as a garbage disposal system, so they constructed the wall connecting the mound to their houses.

The Darkers will leave the creature alone.

(24) This tower is ancient and was rebuilt several times but nothing is left except for an almost invisible inscription in a lower slab on the inside. It's in Traladaran and says "Behind S mound, take Layla Riv". It was left by Ilos, a mortally wounded adventurer in 975 AC. He and his group had buried a treasure of 167 Achelos gold coins they found in the central town just behind the southern wall of the mound marked as 29. Layla was his girlfriend and in his last moments he hoped someone could find his message and bring her the treasure. Riv stands for Riverfork but Layla, of Ylari origin, no longer lives there. Some older people of the keep could remember she left for Ylaruam around 978 AC, after waiting 3 years in vain for Ilos' return. Some also remember she had a child, but no one knows if he was from Ilos. Dedicated PCs who choose to follow this trail could find her or the grown up child still alive in Ylaruam.

(25) Inside the creature - should PCs kill it - a lot of things could be found, mostly old weapons and armor, as anything softer than metal has already been completely absorbed by the thing, and even the non-magical metal is deeply damaged. The DM however could allow PCs to find some magical

26-27 The Round Village

This isolated building is partially dug into an outcropping near the main hill. It was originally part of a craftsmen neighborhood, but is now occupied by **Hort-mool**, a lone **goblinoid shaman** of Thanatos (Goblin 8/Shaman 6, C). The shaman is subservient to the Last One, but is otherwise not aggressive -- he knows he alone is outmatched. He is also quite careful in hiding his true allegiance, although he has Thanatos' holy symbols tattooed all over his chest and waist, which he keeps covered at all times. He is the main spy of the Last One in the upper level and in telepathic contact with him, but he pretends to be a lone harmless herbalist and has given free potions to the ogres over the years to gain their trust, so they let him be. If the PCs come as enemies of the Darkers he could offer to accompany them, only to betray them to the Last One later. PCs could expose him only if they see the tattoos or if they are stealthy enough to catch him walking to area 1 to meet other *Followers of the Last One* (see table).

The Darkers will not immediately suspect Hort-mool and will leave him alone, but PCs allied with them could receive the task of investigating him from one of them in the level below.

28 The Azure Mound

This stone building was painted with now almost faded azure decorations. It has no door to enter. Once the tomb of a giant chief, his bones are now scattered near to the north wall along with his old rusty armor (but still valuable). The tomb was indeed re-used in 993 AC by a group of Darokinian adventurers that buried here their fallen comrade. The ogres have not opened it.

After a few months the Darkers will find Lunio, too, but will not resurrect him. Rather, they'll convince him to embrace his new, better, condition of undeath but will aid him in overcoming the craving for human flesh. Lunio will become a full time Darker agent in less than a year.

weapon belonged to an ancient chief. For example an orc chief of several centuries ago had an intelligent, cursed sword that slowly led him to complete paranoia.

(26-27) This area was built from 802 AC onwards and occupied by ogres, giants, humans and undead in different times. There are still many broken and burned walls. Hort-mool has buried a veritable treasure trove of objects, scrolls, potions, weapons he took from the remains of ogres and giants house and from adventurers he killed and hid all in a small concealed room in area 26.

(28) Lunio Caerwyn, a level 5 thief, is awake inside the tomb, as The Last One raised him as a ghoul retaining his intelligence and memories. Lunio "lived" the last lonely dark years between desperation, paranoia, horrible dreams and an unclear sense of time, the ways of The Last One to torture him. If the tomb is open, he'll act as trapped for only a few days, will thank his rescuers and express the desire to return to his hometown of Dolos. The PCs will however realize immediately that he is undead and has gone a bit mad. Outside the tomb, besides, Lunio will begin craving human flesh in a few hours. To choose how to deal with him could be

29 The Yellow Mound

This building is named for the yellow bricks in the middle of the wall. It's closed, too, and has no door. It is the tomb of **Valush**, a hill giant warrior that died saving his community from vampires (i.e. minions of The Last One) in 965 AC. His body and weapons are still inside, with many objects and small treasures he owned. Inside the sepulchre, he was staked to prevent him from returning as a vampire. Should anyone remove the stake, he will awaken. He will be wary of humans but not automatically hostile, yet he will be soon aware of his condition and will know he could not return to his people, as they would refuse him, and anyway his loved ones will be dead or quite old by now. He will finally ask the PCs to kill him, or force them to do so by attacking (even though he will be careful not to kill them).

The Darkers will eventually find Valush and will be able to turn him away from his suicidal intentions by convincing him to embrace his new condition and by showing him that there are giants willing to accept him in their society.

30 The Stone Tomb

This little building made of stone blocks preserve what is left of an ogre child, a female named Kijtra (her name is inscribed with ogres letters in the front stone), her few toys and a little knife. She was killed by minions of The Last One and buried here in 783 AC and her resting place strangely remains undisturbed. Ogres leave flowers and berries in front of the tomb, as they consider it a sacred place.

The Darkers will eventually discover Shakrta and - by moving with her permission the Tomb of Kijtra to a guarded location in area 45 - will be able to obtain her help to destroy The Last One. Indeed, she will be the one informing them that He is still alive, hidden in level 10, after their takeover, as her hate is so great that his magic cannot hide his presence from her. Once The Last One is destroyed Shakrta will at last be ready

particularly hard, as Lunio has a family and a girlfriend he loves, and does not want to die. Generous PCs could find a high level cleric able to resurrect him as a normal human being, but if he returns to Dolos he'll sadly find out that his former companions are gone, his mother is dead and his girlfriend his married to another man. He will be able to find his sister and father however and will be grateful to the PCs anyway.

(29) Just behind the southern wall of this mound is also buried the treasure of Ilos as described in area 24.

(30) The tomb has survived undisturbed for so long as it is protected by Shakrta, the mother of the child, who committed suicide in front of it and has remained here ever since "to protect her from the monsters". The Last One has tried several times to reanimate the child and bind Shakrta herself, but he has always failed as the hate the ogre mother has for him is too great. Some nights, Shakrta can be seen crying near to the tomb. She will not harm PCs, unless they try to break into the tomb. Shakrta is a very powerful ghost. She will not speak, either, but will tell her story if PCs insist, and will warn them of the Great Evil brooding in level

to leave this world, but before that she will ask to transform the Tomb of Kijtra into a sanctuary.

31 The Ruined House

A large house, perhaps once belonging to an ogre chief or a merchant, this building was last used in 935 AC by warriors and priests of Ixion, but the Kul-nook Orcs massacred and ate them, then left their bones scattered all over the place. The ogres and giants never repaired the house as they considered it cursed.

Eventually the Darkers will encounter the Vision and, after an initial setback, will destroy it once and for all.



32 The Little Fortress

This group of rooms was a small fortress built by Achelos' troops from 396 to 425 AC, later destroyed (only two small barely visible old coat of arms remain engraved on the walls), rebuilt for the last time by ogres in 955 AC and still standing. The ogres are not currently using it.

The Darkers in some months will start using this building as a warehouse for the ongoing reparations of the town, and eventually will expand it to create barracks for human warriors. Probably they'll never find the mass grave; if they do, they'll simply let the remains rest.

7. She will not be able to aid them as she is bound to the tomb.

(31) The reason why the house has been abandoned for the last several decades is that sometimes a Vision appears of 2d4 warriors and priests of Ixion, who attack anyone not leaving in a few moments. Should the Vision encounter PCs of their same faith, or working for the Church of Ixion, they will be able to grant several aids: 1 restore spell, 1 cureall, 1 raise dead, 1 Truesight, 1 dispel evil, 1 cure serious wounds, 1 remove curse, 1 bless, 1 protection from evil. Once their spells have been exhausted, the Vision will dispel forever.

(32) Buried one meter under these rooms there is the mass grave of the soldiers of the Kingdom of Achelos massacred in 425 AC by minions of The Last One. Their remains are quite hard to find but very interesting historically as they have weapons, clothes, coins and other small objects of the time. Minions of the Last One could reanimate them as skeletons if necessary.

33 The Old Battle

This area has particularly ruined buildings, signs of magical explosions, battered walls and a lot of scattered bones and old stains of blood. A central area near to the door of the inner town, this place was a battlefield several times in the last centuries. Useful weapons, however, have already been pillaged by the orcs, and scavenger animals have left only some old bones.

It will take time, but eventually the Darkers will clean this place too, will find the valuables, remove the curses and sell them to finance their rebuilding project and their cause.

34 The New Temple

Built by the Traladarans in 893 AC, and dedicated to Zirchev. It has been abandoned for years, but Zirchev's protection still hangs over it in some way (a devotee of Zirchev can receive the effects of a Bless spell, the first time he prays here). Clever PCs could notice that strangely the minions of The Last One have not desecrated this temple.

The Darkers will not immediately find the hidden tomb, but when they do they may be able to strike a deal with Gann, granting freedom to the Church of Zirchev in the new kingdom they wish to found.

35 The Smithy

The cyclopean walls of this building protect the smithy. This laboratory is a mix of craftsman shop and hedge wizard's den. *Urgal* (Ogre 4/Wicca 1, C) monopolizes the knowledge of iron working in the village, and jealously protects his trade secrets. This means few ogres except Urgal's assistants (**two Ogres 1**, chosen for their immense strength and equally immense stupidity) venture here, for fear of being viewed as spies by the smith. On the other

(33) As the upper town has been conquered and pillaged several times by many armies, in this area there are small caches of valuables, mostly old coins, that doomed people buried through the centuries before escaping, but were killed before retrieving them. All these valuables are cursed, and anyone finding and spending them will be persecuted by a string of small and big misfortunes.

(34) The reason why is because beneath the temple an old werebear is buried. His name is Gann; he was a cleric of Zirchev, and the Last One killed him in 425 AC along with the Achelos soldiers of area 32. There was in fact a much more ancient temple of Zirchev before the modern one. Gann is now a vampire werebear, but he has stubbornly resisted for centuries the attempts done by The Last One to control and use him, with the help of his patron. Zirchev has tried several times to lead adventurers to aid Gann, but so far all were killed. PCs sympathetic to Zirchev's faith could gain the aid of Gann.

(35) This building was used for the same purpose for centuries. Urgal found several ancient steel objects and weapons and has them hidden in a secret compartment, as he considers them his treasure.

hand, any attack on Urgal would raise the ire of the tribe – without their prized smith, they would have to pay high prices to the Blackstone Orcs for iron items rather than pay just for the raw ore.

The Darkers will be happy to leave Urgal at his work; they'll even supply him with more ore.

36 The Shaman's Hut

Rolbur (Ogre 5/Shaman 3, C), an ogre shaman of Jammudaru, lives in this hut with three apprentices (all three are *Ogre 2/Shaman 1, C*).

The Darkers tolerate Rolbur for the time being, even though he doesn't belong to their faith. They will eventually demand however an oath of allegiance from him and his patron. That could lead or not to a conflict between the Darkers and some ogres, to the DM's discretion.

37 The Market

This area is used by the ogre tribes as a market and forum. Golbag sometimes harangues his followers from the roof of the building in area 12. During the day, **1d6+2 ogres** and **1d4 hill giants** can be found here on their own business, and there is a 50% chance of an encounter at night (1d4 ogres).

After the Darkers take over this area will be even more busy and 1d4 humans could be found here too during the day. Slowly, a sort of store with a wood roof will be built, selling almost everything from herbs and food to saddles and mules.



(36) This was part of a larger building in the past, of which nothing is left, but there is a buried gem necklace somewhere, once belonging to a Traladaran woman around 897 AC, which has remarkable historical value.

(37) As this was an area of artisans' shops for humans, orcs and ogres in centuries past, small trinkets can often be found in this area: ceramics, leather objects, tools, toys and many other common things, some quite interesting and particular.

38 – 47 The Necropolis

A gnoll settlement from 313 to 396 AC, this area became a necropolis attached to the new ogre city of 725-788 AC and successive periods. Partially ruined by time, it's still inhabited by *Jomulg*, an **undead Ogre shaman** (mummy, +2 damage due to large size, casts spells as level 7 shaman), buried here in 787 AC and ever since the stubborn defender of the place. He is able to animate some old but armed human skeletons, long dead mercenaries and soldiers of the dissolved kingdom of Achelos (**room 38**) for protection.

From 995 onwards the Ogres have begun to use the necropolis again, under the strict vigilance of Jomulg, who usually rests with his full grave goods in **room 40**.

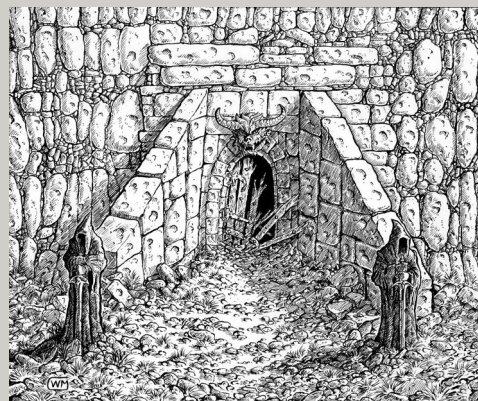
Room 41 has become instead the meager home of *Vraag* (**Ogre 2**), an ogre undertaker who was assigned to this job for theft punishment. He hates it, is scared to death by Jomulg and keeps whining about his life. He will offer to join any PCs group just to escape the place. He knows almost everything about this level. .

After the arrival of the Darkers Jomulg is much more active here, working with a cleric of Nyx to animate as intelligent undead several ogres and giants buried here.

39 The Hidden Tomb

Hidden inside what appears to be a full, solid wall there is the ancient tomb of *G'kur*, gnoll leader from 313 to 337 AC, cleric of Thanatos and dormant vampire that The Last One has left here for future use (Vampire, casts spells as 9th level cleric). The tomb contains armor, weapons and riches. G'kur will rise and be quite unhappy if his tomb is opened, but succeeding in discovering it should be really hard. If it happens at night, The Last One could even send one of his minions (See *Followers of The Last One* encounter table) to aid him.

(38) The Last One has sent minions to destroy Jomulg several times, but they all failed. He could have done it himself, but he didn't because the undead ogre was useful to keep random intruders away. If he ever decides to attack the Darkers however he'll send G'kur (see below) to kill him.



(39) Some gnoll warriors are also buried around, with weapons and armor. Their tombs are not visible from the surface, but G'kur will animate them if he needs help.

It will take time for the Darkers to discover the tomb, so much time that it's quite probable that G'kur will be sent by The Last One against them. Should his master be destroyed with him surviving G'kur will finally leave his tomb and the area altogether, searching for a gnoll tribe to subjugate and lead in conquest.

42-45 The Tombs of Giants

The big central area of the necropolis contains several tombs of ogres and hill giants, some from centuries ago, some just of one or two years ago. All of them are usually large slabs of stone and often contains simple silver or copper jewels, weapons and armors.

Everywhere on the floor there are also the **remains** of many human soldiers and adventurers that Jomulg killed when he surprised them searching the necropolis. He will animate them as skeletons if necessary.

The Darkers will not disturb the tombs and eventually they will also clean the human remains lying around.

44 The Great Tomb

This area contains a well preserved, megalithic building which gives access to an underground hall, which holds the tomb of a Hill Giant chieftain. The tomb itself is a large pit in the ground, covered with slabs of stones. The mummified corpse of the Hill Giant chieftain lies in the tomb, wrapped in crumbling, desiccated sheets of cured leather. Beneath the corpse lies a last stone slab, which covers a set of stairs which plunge into the depths of earth, and the lower levels of Koskatep.

The Darkers will eventually discover this tomb too, and the passage, but only several months after their takeover; maybe even more than a year.

(42-45) The more recent remains are just a few years old, a group of young sheared Karameikans, three boys and two girls, who came from Luln. They can be identified by several personal items. Their parents, and even Lady Sasha herself, never ceased looking for them and would be happy to receive news of their sad fate.

(44) It seems the tomb doesn't contain any treasure, but the truth is that below the corpse there is a lance +1 with the power of keeping vampires away like a holy symbol. If someone tries to use the lance against a giant, it will become so hot to be impossible to hold

46-47 The Two Towers

Old guard towers of the first gnoll town built on the surface in 313 AC, these buildings have been rebuilt several times and, incredibly, still stand. They have no door anymore, the interior is a collection of dirt and remains, and the wooden stairs once leading to the top are long fallen down. The **Giant Vampire Bat** (see Followers of the Last One table) sometimes uses them as observation points.

The Darkers will eventually repair the towers and will post one sentinel on each at any time, but the DM can decide when that will be done.



THE BATTLES FOR KOSKATEP

In 998 AC or when the DM thinks it's better, the Darkers will conquer Koskatep, defeating The Last One and his followers and forcing him to escape Level 7 and hide in Level 10. This battle is a huge event that could involve the PCs too. The battle will begin on level 1 and will end by the Starlake on level 7, lasting for hours.

The Darkers will attack with a hundred humans, including powerful wizards like Mogren, Anna Exoter, Basco Trius, (see level 7) powerful priests like Lady Sonya (see level 7) Kivid and Ilena (see level 5), around 25 Undecayed (special intelligent undeads, hd2) 10 Uncorporeals (as wights with hd4), and around 70 ogres and hill giants warriors, including Golbag and Trosh (area 9), Albog (area 19), Urgal (35), Rolbur (36), Jomulg

and Vraag (40-41) and also Shakrta from area 30 (unbeknown to the Darkers). They'll win and all the mentioned people will survive the battle.

The Last One will fight back on this level using a Nightwalker (hd20) and a host of human skeletons and zombies, mostly coming from area 32 and other areas of the ruins. All will be destroyed by the Darkers. Hort-mool (area 26) and the gnoll wight of area 5 will fight too, but will be able to hide and survive the lost battle. The Last One will also send against the Darkers at least 3 vampires (former adventurers he slew), two other gnoll wights and the giant vampire bat (see Followers of the Last One table). It' up to the DM to decide if they will survive the battle or not.

This battle will not be the last one for the control of Koskatap. Approximately one year after the Darkers take over (of longer if the DM prefers) several things could happen:

- The Darkers will be stronger on level 1 as they'll probably have obtained the aid of Ivan (Area 14), Nera and Mila (area 18), Lunio (28), Valush (29), Shakrta (30) and maybe even Gann (34).
- The Last One will unleash his revenge: with mummies, vampires and demons he will attack, from level 10, Hel's beastmen of level 11. If he succeed he'll then attack the Darkers in level 7. Here on the surface he will call to action the gnoll wight (area 5), the ogre and giant zombies (10), the undead orcs (15), the Monster (16), Hort-mool (26), several human skeletons and G'kur (39). If they win they'll go below to aid him.
- Before the Last One attack, Quehuar (see level 10) will revolt with the Inti mummies and, if he is successful, that'll lead to the opening of level 13, with hundreds of Ixion's followers attacking both The Last One followers and the Darkers, with the intent of destroying them all. On the surface, Ixion's followers will have the aid of the Vision (area 31) and, depending on PCs actions, maybe even of Ivan (14) and Gann (34).
- If Hel's beastmen in level 11 are not conquered by The Last One, they'll eventually attack level 13. They could form an alliance with the Darkers after that, controlling level 10 to 13 and leaving the upper ones to the Darkers, but in this case some Hel's followers will surely begin to inhabit the surface too.
- The fairies of levels 6 and 9 will eventually take advantage of one of the battles between Ixion, Nyx, Thanatos and Hel followers to unleash their attack. They could momentarily ally with Ixion's followers, but they'll want to use the Starlake for their purposes. If they are very strong, Ixion's followers could settle on controlling levels 10 to 13 and leave the others to them. On the surface Gann (Area 34) is more likely to ally with them, and maybe even Ivan (Area 14) and the Achelos rebels.

The DM could decide the exact timeline of all these events according to PCs actions (or inactions).

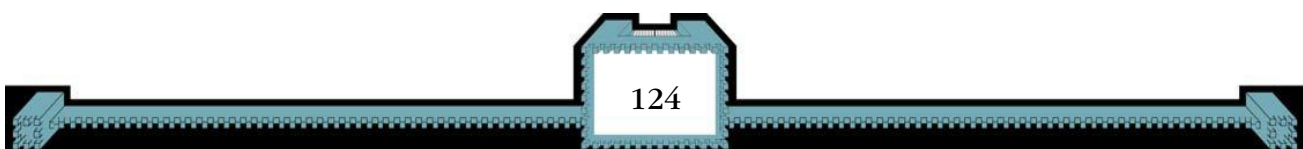
Encounter Table 1: Followers of the Last One

Die Roll (d6)	Monster	DM Notes
1	<i>Hort-mool</i> , Goblin Shaman (see Area 26)	
2	Homing Giant Vampire Bat (carries a message tied to one of its claws, written in an obscure, debased Taymoran dialect)	The message is a letter The Last One sent to one of his allies outside the ruins. It's up to the DM to decide who the allies may be: clerics of Thanatos that could be tracked down in Karameikos or abroad, important personalities of the Karameikos government that are secretly Thanatos' followers (or maybe they are not, and the message is just a ploy of The Last One to wrongly implicate them), or even the green dragon Argos of the Dymrak woods.
3	Vampire (7 HD, this undead was spawned by the Last One and is still bound to his master)	He could be a former adventurer killed by the Last One during the last century. He could be now a committed follower of Thanatos or rather a tortured personality trying in vain to escape his bound.
4	Gnoll ghost (Lesser Banshee)	He could have been from one of the numerous gnoll tribes that occupied the ruins in the past. Knows much about several levels down to the seventh, but is not really willing to talk about it nor is he subject to bribes, unless the PCs find a clever way to force him.
5	A visiting Thanaton (cleric of Thanatos) from Thyatis or Darokin (C7, C). The DM can use this encounter to plant a lead or clue to leading to one of these nations.	Like Hort-mool he might not be immediately hostile, rather trying to gain the PCs trust to study them.



Die Roll (d6)	Monster	Notes
6	<p>If there is another minion of the Last One during this encounter, he appears to be talking to an invisible person. However, <i>detect invisible</i> spells and similar powers do not reveal any presence, as the minion is contacting the Last One telepathically. Trying an <i>ESP</i> on the minion at this time may result in damage to the spellcaster (Save vs. Spells to avoid) as he gets a glimpse into the terrible thought processes of the Vampire Lord. Failing the saving throw causes a -2 penalty to saving throws against mind attacks, fear, and similar effects for 48 hours, as well as an appropriate reaction (fleeing, freezing or panic). A successful saving throw allows the spellcaster to break contact before damage is done. If there are no minions of the Last One, the PCs feel observed, sense danger in the form of a shiver to the spine, or experience other uncomfortable sensations for but a moment.</p>	

After the Darkers takeover some of the followers of The Last One could have been killed, others could be in hiding, but some, like Hort-mool, are probably still around as spies.



Encounter Table 2: Humanoid Scouting Parties

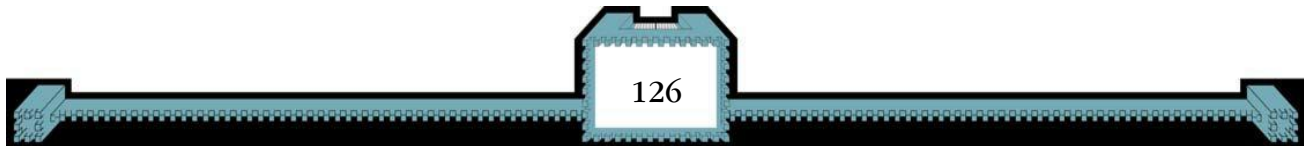
Die Roll (d8)	Monster	Notes
1	Ogre shepherds (1d3 Ogres, NM).	These Ogres are members of the local Ogre tribe. They will report the PCs to their leaders if they survive the encounter, and will be reported as missing otherwise. A party of Ogre warriors will be dispatched to check on them if they fail to report after three days.
2	Orc hunters (3d4 Orcs 1, led by an Orc 4 sergeant and accompanied by 2d4 trained giant ferrets).	These Rotting Snakes hunters are likely to attack a small party, hoping in an easy prey. They will give up easily if a few of them fall.
3	Orc scouts (1d4+3 Orc 2, all with the Stealth skill).	These goblinoids belong to the Blackstone, Jagged Claw or Rotting Snake tribe (choose one or roll 1d3). They are sizing up the Ogres and/or the Darkers, depending on the time when they are met. Their reactions depend on the tribe they belong to, but they are unlikely to attack all but the weakest parties. They might parley, offering an exchange of information.
4	Orc Warrior on a vision quest (Orc 7/Shaman 1 with totemic animal spirit companion, roll 1d4: 1- Grey wolf, 2- Boar, 3- Mountain Lion, 4- Rock Baboon).	This Orc is a spirit warrior, a type of goblinoid warrior-monk with minor shamanic skills. He is following a vision quest, which entails following a totemic spirit in a long trek which is supposed to have some spiritual significance. The Orc is not especially interested in the party, but will fight to defend himself and his animal spirit companion.
5	Gark, Orc Trader (Orc 4/Wicca 1, with Barter and Loot skills).	Gark is a self-reliant, tough goblinoid with a single eye. He has a selection of fetishes and charms to offer. These include healing draughts (1d4+1 HP each), antidotes, and protective charms (+1 to one class of ST or AC for 24 hours, only one charm is effective at every time). All his goods are fairly repulsive by human standards (e.g., a healing potion may have a weird taste and/or a turbid, greenish color), and lose their potency within one week. On the other hand, Gark is reliable, willing to deal with non-goblinoids, and accepts all currency (after checking that coins are truly made of gold, of course).



Die Roll (d8)	Monster	Notes
6	Achelos Outlaws (1d4+2 F2, 1d3 T3, led by a level 5 NPC).	These Traladaran outlaws are en route to meet a larger party of rebels, but do not yet know what their mission will be.
7	Hill Giant scout (Hill Giant, NM).	This Hill Giant is a scout from an outpost to the north. He is either looking for the Ogre chiefs or for the Darkers. His tribal leader wants to meet either of them (depending on who controls Koskatep at this time) to propose a trade alliance.
8	Hobgoblin spies (2d3 Hobgoblin 1, led by a Hobgoblin 5 sub-chief).	These Hobgoblins come from the Black Eagle Barony and belong to the Roaring Fiends tribe. The Hobgoblins report to the Black Eagle Baron, but there is a 25% chance that one of the Hobgoblin is actually a spy for an Iron Ring Master or Bargle. This spy has the Stealth skill for the Underground and Hill environments. His employer has sent him to gather intelligence about Koskatep, and is looking for a magic item, or perhaps aims to take over the dungeon.

All these parties could be manipulated by The Last One against the ogres and the hill giants of Level 1, if the latter encroach too much. Or they could try to conquer Koskatep for their own reasons. In either case, if the PCs aid the ogres and the hill giants they could gain their trust and considered guest rather than invaders. The ogres could even employ them to explore the level below, and aid them for equipment and healing.

After the Darkers takeover, the followers of Nyx will try to establish alliances with nearby orcs, hobgoblins and Achelos rebels, but they will oppose any attempt by the Black Eagle to spy on them. Any party unwilling to ally with them will be eventually considered an enemy, and in the long run they will work to eliminate it altogether from western Karameikos. Obviously The Last One, still active on level 10, could still use them against the Darkers.





FROM
THE VAULTS
OF PANDIUS

The DWARVES of THUNDERDELVE

by Demos Sachlas

Art by Jim Holloway



Dwarven Sentinel (art by Jim Holloway)

The solo adventure XS2 Thunderdelve Mountain by William Carlson (1985) introduced the lost dwarven “Halls of Paradise” to the D&D game world. The clan structure of this dwarven community was based upon information contained within the Companion Set rules, which state that each demi-human clan possesses a sacred Relic tended by a hereditary Keeper.

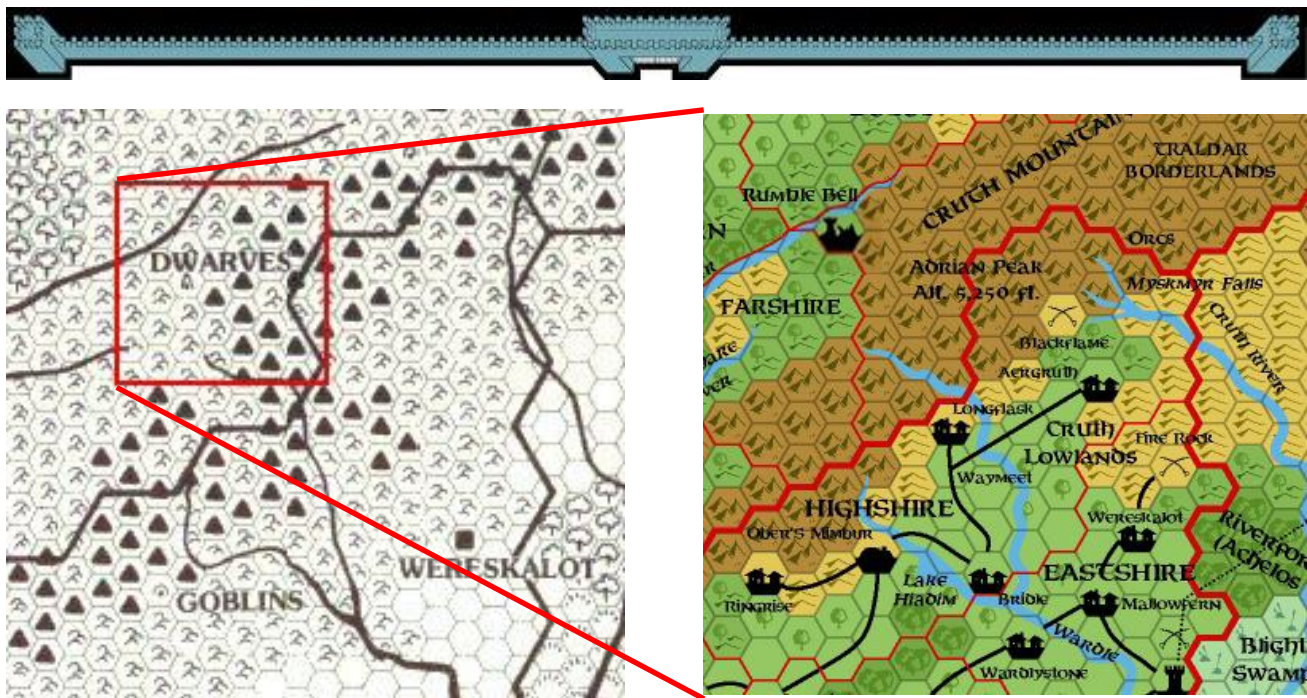
In the adventure, one plays a lone dwarf tasked by the former Clanmaster of Thunderdelve to rescue the sole remaining descendant of the

Keeper of the clan’s Forge of Power from bandits and goblins presently occupying the fallen stronghold. If successful, there are opportunities to return to the dungeon to retrieve a powerful dwarven artifact, the Hammer of Vitroin, and ultimately to destroy the dragon-like creature that led to the original downfall of this dwarven kingdom.

There are suggestions for converting the module for group play (for 5-8 characters of levels 4-6, or 2-3 characters of levels 7-9), some interesting NPCs (a local bandit leader named Redface and his colorful henchmen, in alliance with a nearby goblin tribe), further adventure scenarios, and descriptions of new monsters. A runic alphabet is also provided, as well as several inscriptions for the player to decipher.

A loose sequel to this adventure, “Dragon’s Delve,” was published in *Dungeon* magazine #62 by Christopher Perkins (1996) using the AD&D 2e framework, although for character levels 3-6. It contains a complete map of the Halls of Paradise, so one does not have to reconstruct the map from the various entries scattered throughout the original module.

The Dwarves of Thunderdelve



THUNDERDELVE

An exact location for Thunderdelve Mountain within the D&D Known World was never provided, although a careful perusal of the original map of the Grand Duchy of Karameikos and surrounding lands from the earlier Cook/Marsh Expert rulebook reveals a dwarven settlement on the far side of the Cruth Mountains:

Could this represent the location of Thunderdelve? The Halls of Paradise were not located within the actual mountains, but rather within a small valley, “nestled between two of the mountain's spurs”. When the map of the Grand Duchy of Karameikos was revised for Frank Mentzer's Expert Set rulebook, this dwarven settlement vanished, potentially reflecting the fall of Thunderdelve. The name of the ruins was gradually corrupted to “Rumble Bell” and the clan was regarded as extinct.

Taking a page from Thorfinn's most recently updated map of the Republic of Darokin, the

ruins nestle quite neatly into unclaimed territory just south of the Helleck River, in the foothills of the Cruth Mountains. Given Thunderdelve's location within a small valley, it's reasonable that the Helleck would exit the mountains through just such a valley.

As a result, the legend of “Rumble Bell” would surely be known throughout the Republic of Darokin, providing a suitable adventure hook. The situation might be comparable to the fall of Erebor as related in *The Hobbit* by J.R.R. Tolkien, in which men from the nearby communities remember the glory of the lost dwarven kingdom.

If the Halls of Paradise are restored, the module states that Nimron, the former Clanmaster, attempts to reestablish Thunderdelve as a fully operational dwarfhome. This would have immediate political implications in Darokin, particularly in light of the proximity of Thunderdelve to the elves of Alfheim. Humanoid tribes within

the Cruth mountains would also take note, and the position of Rockhome would have to be considered.

There is passing mention of an evil wizard “justly cheated” by Nimron, who may have engineered the downfall of Thunderdelve. This may have been one of the Glantrian princes, although any high-level magic-user within the general vicinity could be implicated.

The mines below Thunderdelve, rumored to harbor many new horrors, represent additional opportunities for intermediate-level dungeoneering in the player’s quest to recover the Forge of Power. Once discovered, a curse behind the mysteriously tainted forge must be discovered and lifted.

The surviving bandits also continue to harass the region, potentially under new and more powerful leadership, and must also be dealt with. The nearby goblin cave depicted on the original map of the Grand Duchy of Karameikos can serve as the focal point of a renewed goblin and dwarf war, supported by additional humanoid allies.

Once external threats have been addressed, the death of the Clanmaster triggers a civil war among the dwarves, providing an opportunity for player characters to unravel the political intrigue behind the motivations of the various factions. The module can therefore serve as the basis for a rich and long-running campaign set in southern Darokin.

THE LEGACY OF LOKTAL IRONSHIELD

GAZ 8: The Five Shires describes the history of the hin, and the difficult years of dwarven rule under King Loktal Ironshield from 929 B.C. until the successful hin uprising in 912 B.C. This was during a period of centuries of continuous war between the dwarves of Rockhome and orc and goblin tribes, although there is no mention of Loktal Ironshield or his clan in the annals of Rockhome.

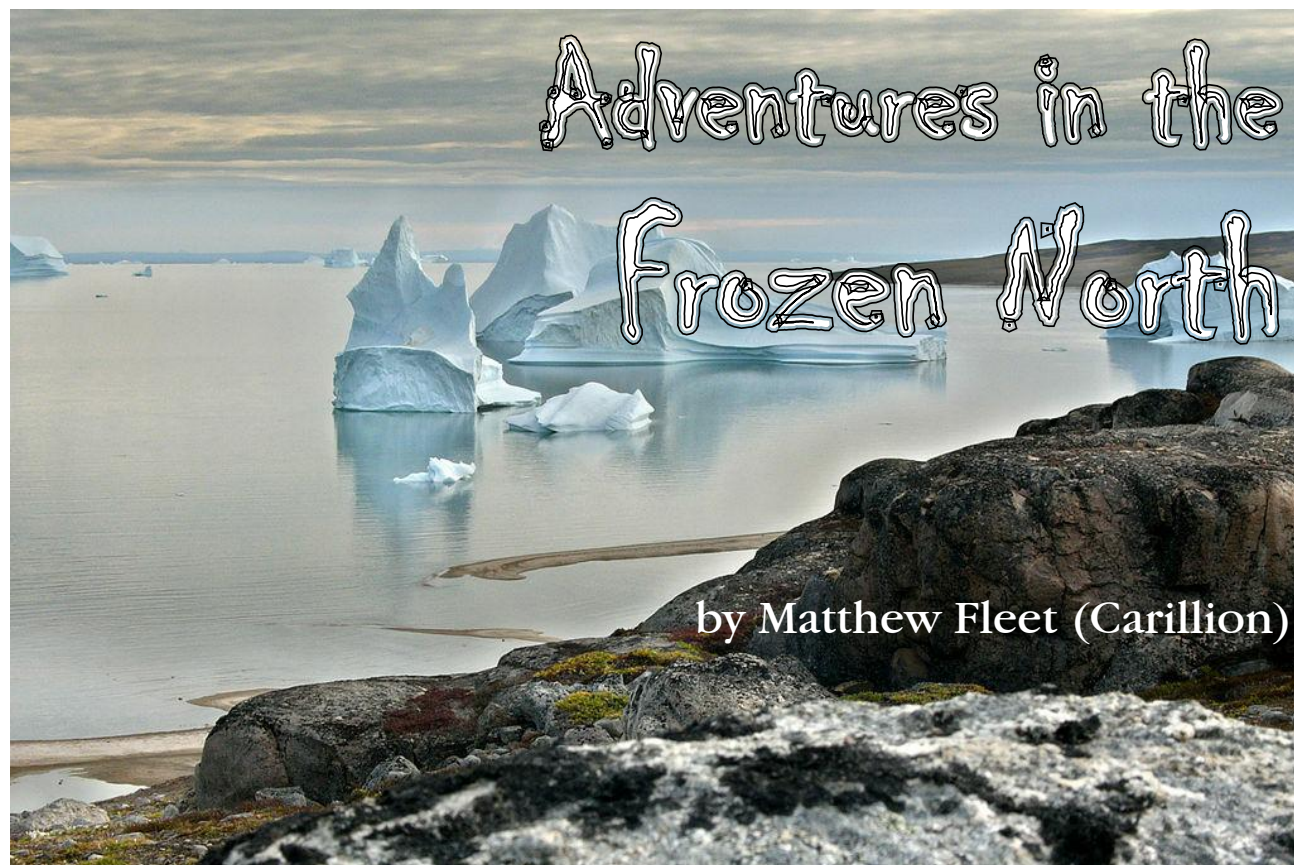
A compelling theory is that Loktal Ironshield and his followers were originally from Rockhome, the homeland of the dwarves. Their ancestral lands may have been overrun by orcs and goblins during the wars, and so Loktal led his surviving warband from Rockhome in search of a new home. He might even be regarded as a great leader among the dwarves, although it would be understandable that his reputation would be less admirable among the hin during those troubled times.

When Loktal finally turned his back on the Five Shires, never to be heard from again, it is possible that his clan actually founded Thunderdelve, going deep underground in order to avoid attracting hostile attention. This would be 1800+ years prior to the common era and Loktal Ironshield could very well have been the architect of the Halls of Paradise.

LOKTAL’S VAULT

Could Loktal’s Vault be part of a Mystaran megadungeon?

Join in on the discussion topic at [A Megadungeon Idea](#) in The Piazza forums!

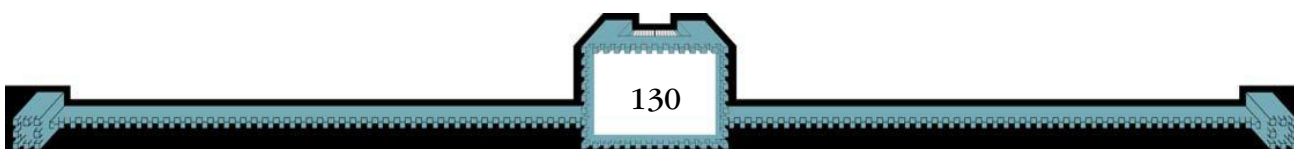


Welcome, dear reader! In this humble article, it is my intent to give additional source material for adventuring in Northern Norwold and the Norzee Isles. The canon material presented for this region was sometimes of a very light touch indeed, giving little insight as to what lies in these cold and distant lands. Fortunately, the fan Gazetteer series hosted on the Vaults of Pandius has provided detailed information on a number of areas in this part of the world, and it is in this light that I intend to continue.

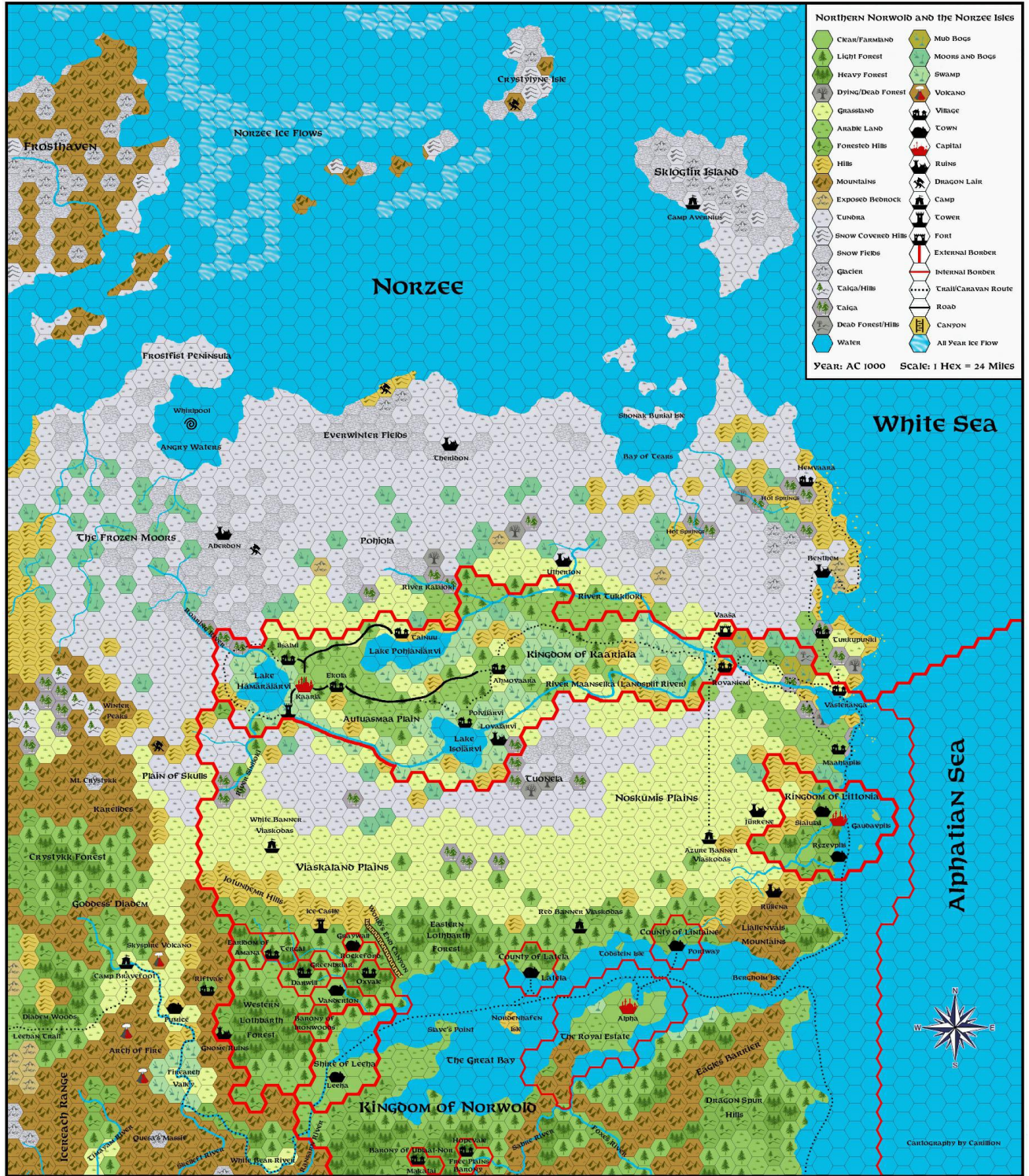
In this article, I present source material for five new locations: a frozen Island, shrouded in mystery, where even frost giants fear to tread; a magical research facility which has been built near a hidden and powerful evil; a village situated far to the north, which is ruled by a criminal mastermind and whose residents

harvest a potent berry used in magical potions; a burial Isle where the dead do not sleep easily, and where a banished and vengeful spirit watches and waits; and finally, a village of intrepid traders, who hold out against barbarians, bandits and a large dragon. I also present a map which shows where these locations are situated in the world of Mystara. This map was originally posted on the Vaults of Pandius a few years ago, but the complimentary notes were not ever completed, until now.

Before I begin, it should be mentioned that this material is only a suggestion for what lies in these areas, and is not inscribed in stone. So please feel free to change whatever details you wish to suit your own campaign. Having now clarified all of that – let us proceed onward to the frozen north!



NORTHERN NORWOLD



CRYSTYLYNE ISLE

“Little is known about Crystlyne Isle. In fact, I have only ever met one person who claims to have been there. The Isle’s name may be derived from the fact that numerous icicles resembling crystal shards hang down from the rock faces that are situated at various points along the shore. Different colored icicles apparently can be seen here – some are white, while others are blue. The explorer I met who assured me that he’d been to Crystlyne Isle even said that he’d found the remnants of a boat there on the eastern shore that was frozen into crystal. Most likely it was just covered in ice, as explorers are often full of fanciful tales....”

Travel to the Isle is only possible by boat in the warmer months, as most of the Norzee freezes over during winter. Icebergs can still be a problem even if travelling the Norzee during the Summer, and if any travellers run into serious trouble in this unforgiving sea, then death is likely, as there are no regular trade routes or fishing lanes within five hundred miles of these frozen waters.

The frost giants of Frosthaven never seem to travel to Crystlyne Isle or to any of the others close by. This is probably due to the fact that more plunder can be found by raiding the human lands to the south. And the frost giants never seem to tire of such raids...”

– An extract from “Geography of the North”, a treatise written by Aranthur, scribe to King Ericall of Norwold

GENERAL NOTES

Crystlyne Isle is surrounded by the sea known as the Norzee, and is situated far to the north of the lands of Norwold. Harsh and icy winds blast this island all year round. The island itself is barren of any vegetation beyond various types of lichen, which grow on the exposed rocks of this inhospitable place. Most of the island is either hilly or mountainous, and has numerous natural caves and tunnels which are cut into the rock and ice. A close inspection on the surface reveals that some of the rocks appear to have been crystallised by some unknown force.



Crystlyne Isle

Crystlyne Isle is indeed safe from frost giants, as Aranthon's writings suggest, but other dangers are present instead. This Island is home to approximately twenty crystal dragons of variable age, who do not take kindly to intrusions into their domain. They are led by an ancient crystal dragon named Shardarath, who has spell casting abilities far beyond others of his kin.

Due to the philosophical differences between crystal and white dragons, the crystal dragons prefer to keep themselves apart from their more numerous white colored cousins. However, there are no open hostilities, so the white dragons that live in northern Norwold are happy to leave their crystal colored cousins to their self-imposed isolation.

The reason that frost giants do not come to this Island is more than just geographical location. Shardarath lost his first mating partner to a frost giant raiding party when he was young, and he has never fully recovered from the loss. He has a pathological hatred for frost giants as a consequence, and usually attacks them on sight. Over the centuries, numerous frost giants have been slain near Crystlyne Isle, and so the giants do not come here willingly, especially as richer and less dangerous lands lie to the south. Shardarath is aware that the frost giants are too numerous in Frosthaven to attack them there directly, and does not wish to antagonize them to the point that they invade Crystlyne Isle in full force, so he merely contents himself with picking off small groups away from Frosthaven whenever the opportunity presents itself.

The crystal dragons living here normally try and scare off human explorers when they are first spotted near the island. This is normally done by flying close to the ships in an intimidating manner. They will only directly

attack if the explorers actually land on the Island and try and set up camp or begin to explore the caves where the dragons make their home. Hence the wary traveler can easily avoid conflict if he so chooses. Some of the crystal dragons can speak various human tongues and may warn explorers to leave before resorting to violence. Once issuing such a warning, the dragons will only engage in further dialogue under exceptional circumstances. However, it should also be noted that the dragons do not set regular watches, so it is entirely possible to reach the Island, camp for the night and then leave without being spotted.

The crystal dragons are careful to ensure that humans do not know that there are more than a few of them living on this Island, as this could attract additional treasure hunters and adventurers. The few encounters between dragons and humans so far have normally involved only one or two crystal dragons. More would only ever get involved if there was a battle on the Island itself. This has only happened once in recent times, and none of the adventurers survived to tell the tale. However, the boat they arrived in was crystallized by one of the dragons' breath weapons, and lies on the shore to this day in crystal form as testament to the battle that occurred.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Shardarath suspects that it is only a matter of time before the human lands to the south launch an attack on Frosthaven due to the giants' repeated raids, and he is prepared to help in this endeavor. He would consider letting himself be known to an army from Norwold that is marching towards Frosthaven with the goal of neutralizing the frost giants

there. However, he would be careful not to divulge where his home is located, and none of the other crystal dragons would get involved unless Crystlyne Isle itself was actually being threatened by the frost giants.

Shardarath could be used to carry a small number of heroes (such as the player characters) to Frosthaven and drop them off there to enable them to make a strategic strike against the frost giants, or to create distractions to allow time for a human force to arrive at Frosthaven while remaining undetected.

He is also aware that there is a malign influence in the lands to the south that is gaining power (see the [Kingdom of Kaarjala](#) fan gazetteer for more information on this). He is currently unaware of what this power is, or exactly where it is based. However, if the player characters are close to a confrontation with this evil power (the Rimal Hag), but are not strong enough to deal with her on their own, then the Cronos of Crystykk (see CM1 Test of the Warlords) could send a vision to try and get the player characters to visit Crystlyne Isle in order to solicit Shardarath's aid for any final showdown.

There is also another good adventure hook for this Island. Although no adventuring party could reasonably be expected to defeat up to twenty dragons in battle, Crystlyne Isle still offers a good opportunity to acquire treasure by stealth. As noted above, the dragons living here do not usually arrange watches to guard their Island, as very few monsters or humans visit this isolated place. Therefore, a well-planned stealth mission to steal treasure is entirely plausible, especially as crystal dragons spend much of their time sleeping, just as white dragons do. A theft which was quite subtle, such as taking some lesser items of value, or a relatively small proportion of the

total coinage of a hoard would probably go unnoticed for a while – certainly long enough for the party to make their escape. However, if very valuable items were stolen, then the dragon whose hoard had been raided would notice a lot quicker, and would go looking for the culprits possibly before they had even managed to leave the Island...

Finally, there are rumors of an Alphetian mage living in Alpha who sometimes casts a dangerous *geas* on those that offend him. In order for the *geas* to be lifted, an item made of gold must be brought back from Crystlyne Isle. Adventurers therefore should be careful who they offend in this city, otherwise they might find themselves having to go on a dangerous mission that they never planned to go on initially.

Shardarath

His statistics are as follows (BECMI rules):

(Huge Crystal Dragon): AC-3, HD14*****, HP 102, Attacks: Up to 6, Damage: 3-10 x 5, 2d8 + 8, or breath weapon or spell, save as F36, Int 17, Morale 10, AL Lawful (Neutral Good), XP 8,500

Shardarath has the following mage spells (by level) at his disposal: 5,5,4,3,2,1

Shardarath found a talisman of polymorph (the wearer can cast polymorph self 3 times a day) when he was a young dragon, which enabled him to travel to numerous human lands many centuries ago. Because of this, he was able to study with several human mages over time, and as a consequence has gained spell casting abilities far beyond what most other crystal dragons achieve. One spell of note he has learnt is an incantation which enables him to reverse the crystallization effect of any crystal dragon's breath weapon

(this incantation is a variant of the *stone to flesh* spell), which he sometimes uses to turn non-living material back into its pre-crystallized state. In addition, he can also choose to have his breath weapon inflict cold damage only, and not turn non-living material into crystal at all.

Shardarath has crafted a few magical items to aid him. Most notable is a *band of protection +2*, which adorns one of his scaled toes (hence his improved AC). He also possesses a *crystal ball with ESP*, which he uses to spy upon the nations of men in Norwold.

CAMP AVERNIUS

“When I first heard about this research facility, I was skeptical of its practical use. Located in the middle of nowhere, on an Island as cold as a black bag’s heart, and run by somebody with part Thyatian blood - how could things be any worse?”

In fact, I only went because Otharal recommended the place, as I trust the old fool’s judgment if nothing else. Now I have studied there for three years, and have mastered several new spells, most of which I believe are almost unknown outside of the facility.

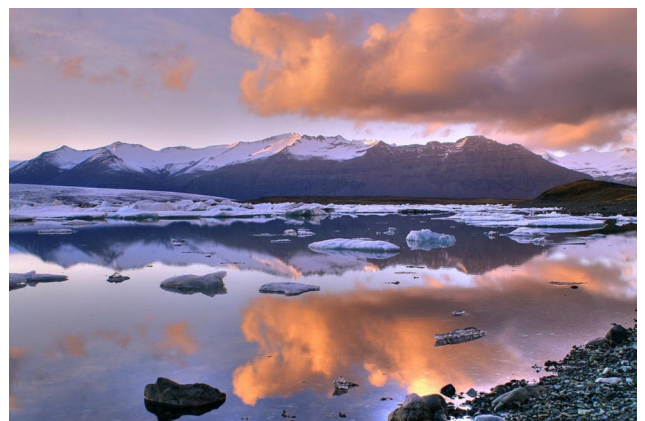
When I return to Alphatia, I think I’ll claim back the part of my Estate which was taken from me quite unfairly. I’m now confident that I’ll be victorious when I resolve matters with that fool Kirith in a duel shield.”

– From the diary of Ariandor II, Alphatian Mage

GENERAL NOTES

Camp Avernius is located on Sklogtir Island, which lies just to the north of the mainland. It is an inhospitable isle, with tundra and low lying icy hills offering little protection from the cold winds of the Norzee. The Island’s inhabitants include a number of monsters, such as ice wolves, ice trolls and frost salamanders. A few small communities of cryions also live here, following a semi-nomadic lifestyle on the Island. No Shonak tribes exist here – in fact there are no human settlements on the island at all, with the exception of Camp Avernius itself.

Camp Avernius is an underground magical research facility where cold and ice magics are studied. The facility is cut out of ice and rock next to the coast and the temperature inside is controlled magically. It also has an underground port, where the facility’s sole ship is moored. This magical ship is used to transport goods that the facility needs from other ports. It has been primarily designed to travel underwater (its enchantments do not permit it to fly), and as such, vaguely resembles a huge metallic shark. To avoid unwanted attention, the ship usually moors



Sklogtir Island

a couple of miles from the port it is travelling to, and the crew makes the rest of the journey by foot. However, the ship still has been spotted on a number of occasions, leading to rumors of sea monsters.

The overseer of the facility is Avernius himself. He was born on the Isle of Dawn and has an Alphatian father and a Thyatian mother. He is therefore generally not trusted by both Alphatian and Thyatian citizens he meets, as both groups suspect him of having loyalties to the other empire. It is because of this that he has moved away from the Isle of Dawn completely to study magic elsewhere.

Avernius set up the facility by first summoning water and earth elementals to dig through the ice and rock, and then placed various enchantments to make the place both habitable and warded against intruders. Now there are about 20 mages studying here, together with about 25 support staff. Most of the support staff prepare meals, clean, and perform other menial tasks. However, some of the support staff gather spell ingredients from the surrounding area instead. Naturally, those that do this particular task are adventurers who are able to survive the dangers on the Island, and they are paid well for their services. There is also a cleric in the facility who provides healing and the creation of food and drinking water for those who live at the camp.

This facility makes an income by firstly charging a flat fee for any that wish to study here. In addition, some magical items are crafted here and sold in various cities so ingredients (both mundane and magical) that are not found on the island can be purchased to aid the magical research conducted in the facility.

Avernius tries to keep the camp with a low profile, but it is nevertheless known to the Alphatian ruling council of wizards. In fact, they even have a spy in the facility to keep tabs on its progress. They do not view the camp as a major threat however, as Avernius has no political ambitions. Some of the research that's been completed (including new spells) has been secretly copied by their spy and sent back to the ruling council for study.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

A party of adventurers could get involved here in a number of ways. Avernius travels quite frequently, and occasionally recruits adventurers to help with various tasks back at the camp, so he could hire such a group in a number of cities. If they agree, they will be assigned to deal with any monsters which are causing the facility trouble, and also to look for much needed magical spell components on Sklogtir Island itself.

Any magic-user player characters in the party may get to hear of the camp, and try and gain entrance so they can study and research new spells. This would be an excellent opportunity to introduce new spells into the campaign. Variants of existing spells could also be introduced (such as the *magic missile* spell firing shards of sharpened ice instead, causing cold damage, etc).

If the party is hired to work at the facility, you can arrange for them to be picked up by the magical ship if you do not wish the party to make a very long trip over frozen tundra and icy seas (though this could be written as an adventure in itself).

Hidden Danger

There is a danger on Sklogtir Island of which the facility is completely unaware. A few centuries ago, there was a similar research station elsewhere on the isle, which was run by a group of Alphatian Mages. Unfortunately, a small expedition party stumbled across an ancient randara (see the D&D Creature Catalogue), which followed them and gained entrance into the facility through its shapechanging ability. Most of the inhabitants of the research station were subsequently slain, but a few mages escaped and magically warded the entrance, so the creature could not escape. The creature is still trapped inside to this day.

The residents of Camp Avernius could find the old research station and remove the magical wards in order to gain entrance, unaware of the danger inside. Once released, the randara could then gain entrance to Camp Avernius by appearing as one of the residents (or by another ruse). Once inside, all of those at the facility would be in danger. Almost all of the magical protections defending Camp Avernius are designed to prevent intruders from forcing their way in initially, and will not help once an intruder is already inside. On top of this danger, Avernius and some of the other more powerful mages often travel (via *teleportation*), and so are away from the camp quite regularly, and may not be around to help. So it could be up to the Player Characters to try and save the facility – and themselves!

This scenario could be particularly dangerous, as Camp Avernius is in the middle of nowhere, with limited supplies, and any help would normally take weeks to arrive. However, if the Player Characters do need assistance, Avernius could teleport back to the camp after his travels and arrive in time to help them. Or it

could just be the randara, pretending to be Avernius....

This is definitely an adventure where a devious Dungeon Master can have lots of fun, even if the players don't!

THE VILLAGE OF HEMVAARA

"I went to Hemvaara to try and secure a steady supply of frostberries for trade, as they often fetch a small fortune due to their magical protection against the cold. Very quickly, I managed to secure a meeting with the village mayor in his small office. There was something familiar about his face, but I couldn't place him in the meeting. All went well and I was guaranteed a small supply every month, allowing for possible disruptions in winter due to the weather. It was only after I was aboard my ship and sailing back to our guild house in Alpha that I remembered who the village mayor was – none other than Sigmund Ericsson, a wanted criminal in Landfall! I had seen his face on a bounty poster there, and so I considered passing this information on to collect the sizable reward, until it occurred to me that the trade agreement I had just secured with him would earn me even more..."

– Diary of Jodryll Cader, Minrothad Merchant Prince of Clan Corser

General Notes

Far to the North of Alpha, and even Kaarjala, lies the village of Hemvaara on the north-eastern coast of Norwold. This is the most northern permanent human settlement in Norwold. Approximately 400 people live



Minrothaddan shipwreck off Hemvaara

here, who make a living by fishing, collecting timber, and herding livestock. They also harvest and sell the magical frostberry (see below). The climate here is not as cold as most other areas this far north, due to a number of volcanic hot springs in the area, together with warmer air currents travelling up the coast from more southerly regions. This has caused a small local eco-system to develop which sustains evergreen trees and other plants in the area, such as the arctic willow.

The magical frostberry also grows in this region, and, if used in Alchemy, can create a potion that gives 50% resistance to any magical cold, and infers complete invulnerability to normal cold. In addition, the duration of any such potion lasts for 24 hours. Needless to say, this berry is well sought out by mages and alchemists. The village grows, harvests, and sells small amounts of these berries to various merchants who travel here. However, the coast is very dangerous to navigate due to numerous rock outcroppings, some of which lie just

under the water line. As a consequence, only one trading ship from the Minrothad Guilds makes the journey by sea (which it mainly achieves by that nation's expert prowess in sailing and sea magics). Even then, the journey is made quite infrequently, as even the Minrothad merchants almost lost one ship while navigating this route. The standard merchant trade route is made by land along the coast from Vasteranga.

The villagers of Hemvaara are mainly of Kaarjalan stock. However, there are

also a small number of foreigners living here, as this place is often used as a hideaway for criminals due to its remote location, and because it is outside the jurisdiction of both Norwold and Kaarjala. However, these criminals usually keep a low profile and avoid illegal activity in the village, in order not to attract any undue attention.

The current head of the village, Sigmund Ericsson (Fighter, Level 9), is wanted in Landfall after crossing the Stevedores Union (see the [“Streets of Landfall”](#) fan gazetteer for more on this organization). He fled here to avoid the bounty hunters who were looking for him, and was subsequently made the mayor of Hemvaara after successfully leading the village's defenses against a Shonak raiding party.

Since then, he has organized the selling and distribution of the magical frostberry grown in Hemvaara to foreign merchants. He has however been very careful to ensure that any

local villagers who help in this trade are well paid for their efforts. In fact, the villagers did not even know that the frostberry could be sold for such high sums before Sigmund's arrival. However, he was well aware of its value due to working on the docks under the Stevedores Union. He also has a good knowledge of what most items can be sold for in major ports.

As a consequence of the new frostberry trade, the village of Hemvarra has accumulated wealth far beyond what it had managed previously, which has added to Sigmund's popularity. Most of the other criminals who have fled here are also involved in this trade, and work together with Sigmund to ensure that no other organization can get hold of a ready supply without going through them first.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Needless to say, numerous alchemists and mages would be willing to pay a fair price to get hold of various quantities of frostberries, but are unable to do so as all of the regular supply has already been promised to other merchants. These merchants only sell their frostberries at very high prices, which has inevitably led to individuals attempting to get hold of a supply of their own. However, due to the dangerous and distant location of Hemvarra, adventurers are sometimes hired to secure such a supply.

Any adventurers hired for this task will not be able to get hold of any frostberries from Sigmund, due to his existing trade agreements. However, he only controls the frostberries that are farmed in Hemvarra itself. Wild frostberries grow in the forests around Hemvarra which the adventurers could harvest if they spend some time searching the surrounding area. The frostberry is quite rare; however a couple

of days foraging should provide enough frostberries to make the trip financially worthwhile.

The only problem here is that Sigmund, his organization, and most of Hemvarra are not going to take kindly to being undercut in the frostberry trade. If they are aware of adventurers foraging for frostberries in the wild, then they will attempt to stop them, using force if necessary. However, villagers would not directly attack an armored group on their own, but would instead inform Sigmund about the foragers at the earliest opportunity. Sigmund would then gather his gang and attack the foragers when most advantageous for him. In addition, Sigmund will initially be suspicious of any group of armed adventurers arriving in the village, as he is fully aware that bounty hunters are after him and some of his gang. He would therefore have such groups watched and followed as a matter of course.

To make matters worse, any surrounding forest situated more than 4 miles from Hemvarra is uninhabited by humans, and thus should be treated as dangerous wilderness area. Therefore, foraging there for frostberries could end up with the party encountering various monsters. However, if the party stays within 4 miles of the village, then they run the risk of being spotted by one of Sigmund's men instead.

How successfully any adventuring party deals with the above dangers will determine the final outcome of their mission.

SHONAK BURIAL ISLE

“I tell you boy, there’s treasure on that island all right, but it’s not worth the risk. I went there once myself, with other adventurers, just like you.

Now I can assure you that I’ve cleaved many a skeleton, zombie and ghoul with my trusted axe, so I don’t get the jitters just because some bag of bones is shambling towards me. However, there was something about that island that just felt wrong from the moment our boat landed on the shore. That’s when I agreed to stay with the boat owner, who refused to be left alone while my group went looking for treasure.

We waited five days in the freezing cold for the others to return, after they had entered the nearest cave from the shore, but they never came back. Me and the boat owner finally set sail on the sixth day, back to Alpha, and scarcely said a word to each other on the entire return trip. That’s when I gave up adventuring - when I realized that gold is no good to you if you’re dead.

Now I know what you’re thinking boy – how do I know treasure is on the island when I never left the boat? Well, I don’t know what was in the caves up there, but I do know what magical items my old adventuring group were carrying when they left the boat, and unless somebody has managed to grab them in the meantime, then those items are still there.”

– Garren Rockhammer, dwarven ex-adventurer, speaking at the White Wyrn Inn in Alpha

GENERAL NOTES

This inhospitable island lies at the northern end of the Bay of Tears. It is devoid of any vegetation beyond grass and lichen, as are most of the lands that are this far north. It is also very flat, consisting of frozen tundra and rocky outcroppings. What may avoid initial inspection, however, is that there is almost no wildlife on the island either. It is therefore eerily silent, with the exception of the cold whistling winds that scourge the lands. Some may pick up on this silence subconsciously when arriving, which will cause them to become unnerved, though they may not be able to identify the exact cause of their fear. Some Shonaks say that they can hear the dead whispering to them on this island, though whether this is actually true is a matter for speculation.



Burial Isle Cave entrance

Most Shonak tribes (which are similar to real world Inuit tribes 500 years ago) cremate their dead. However, a few tribes who migrate towards the north-eastern end of Norwold bury their deceased instead. Their bravest warriors and other noteworthy tribesman

often get buried on this burial isle, either in the caves that are closest to the surface, or in barrows on the surface itself. Usually, the possessions of the deceased are buried with them, to help them in the afterlife.

The Shonaks are able to reach this island all year round, either by boat in spring, summer or early autumn, or by crossing the Bay of Tears on foot during winter when the waters freeze over. The boats the Shonaks use are called “umiaks” and resemble large canoes made of whalebone and seal leather.

There are many natural caves on this on island, most of which are interconnected by underground tunnels. In one part of the caverns, there exists the remains of a Qeodharian camp, which was used as a summer base by sea raiders many centuries ago. It connects to the sea by a tunnel which can be navigated by boat. This abandoned settlement is not known to the Shonaks.

Qisuk the Accursed

Also unknown to the Shonaks is the fact that the island is inhabited by a shamanic lich named Qisuk. He was, until about 10 years ago, a Shonak shaman who was banished to the burial isle for summoning and communing with dark spirits, which was forbidden by his tribe. He was also banished because he had gained significant magical powers, and was considered a threat by the shamans of his and some other Shonak tribes. This banishment is handed out to shamans who betray their kinsmen or meddle with dark powers, and is an unpleasant fate. The accused is bestowed with a curse which makes it impossible for him or her to cast any spells, and then is left on the burial isle in spring to starve to death after the ice has melted in the surrounding bay. As the only water available to drink on the island

is either sea water, or unclean pond water, some die before the starvation even kicks in.

Qisuk had already cast a spell on himself before his imprisonment and banishment, the effect of which was to keep his soul in his own body after his death. This spell was taught to him by a dark spirit he regularly communed with, and was a variant of a ritual spell sometimes used to gain lichdom. Qisuk was aware that his own death could ultimately bring him significant power beyond what he possessed, but he was also aware that the ritual itself carried significant risks, and was not guaranteed to succeed. He therefore never had the courage to bring about his own death intentionally, which was one of the requisites needed for the ritual to be completed. However, once he was banished to the burial isle, his hand was forced. He completed the non magical requirements of the ritual, while the spell itself had already been cast, thus enabling Qisuk to circumnavigate the curse that had been bestowed upon him.

Fortunately for Qisuk, the spell worked and his life force remained in his body after his own death. He awoke, one week after his ritual suicide, with his full spell casting abilities restored. The curse bestowed upon him previously had prevented any spellcasting until his own death, and was now negated since he had actually died.

Qisuk was vain during his life and this has continued in his undeath. He has employed a ritual using a small vial of vampire blood to stop his flesh rotting away, which has been mostly successful. In addition, the continually freezing temperatures on the island have slowed down any decay to a bare minimum. Qisuk therefore appears as a gaunt and deathly pale human, as opposed to a

NEW MONSTER

Barrow Wight

AC: 2

Hit Dice: 7-9**

Move: 180' (60')

Attacks: 2

Damage: 1-12/1-12

No Appearing: 1-4 (1-8)

Save As: F7-9

Morale: 12

Treasure Type: B

Intelligence: 9

Alignment: Chaotic

XP: 1250 (or greater)

A barrow wight comes into being when the spirit of a deceased, evil and accomplished warrior (fighter level 7 or above) inhabits a human corpse. The body it usually inhabits is the body that it owned in life, and it mainly exists to slay the living in combat, just as it did before it became undead.

A barrow wight appears as a skeletal figure clad in armor (usually that of which it possessed in life). Its skin is withered and covered in frost, while most of its flesh has rotted away. Its eyes glow with a dull red light, and it sometimes can be heard cackling in an unholy voice when it closes in on its prey. It also emanates an aura of cold, which causes its skin to have a frosted appearance even if the climate would not normally warrant it.

skeleton, as most liches do. This means that any player characters encountering him are not subject to fear, which would normally be the case when encountering a lich. In fact, most characters may not realise he is undead at all. However, any cleric of 15th or higher level who makes a wisdom check will know that he is undead if they come within 30 feet of him. In addition, any cleric of 25th level or greater will not need to make the wisdom check – they will know Qisuk is undead as soon as they see him (just as they do with undead beholders). Please note that although Qisuk lacks the fear ability, he has all of the other generic abilities that liches do, including a paralyzing touch.

Qisuk's goals are quite straightforward. He wishes revenge on the shamans and tribesmen who banished him to the Isle, and he also wishes to amass as much magical power for himself as possible. He has no real interest in ruling lands, just merely acquiring powerful shamanistic and clerical rituals, as well as magical items. He is also currently trying to amass more minions, so he can attack his previous tribe and the shamans who banished him. However, it should take a number of years before Qisuk has the resources to make him confident enough to put his plan of revenge into action.

His statistics (BECMI) are as follows: AC -9/-6, HD 9+14*****, hp 59, AT 2 or by spell, Damage 2d4 + 8/1-10 + paralysis or by spell, Int 18, Morale 10, Save as C23, Alignment Chaotic (Neutral Evil), XP 15,500

Qisuk can cast spells as a 23rd level shaman (cleric). In addition, he has acquired the weapon mastery level of master with the mace. When attacking in hand to hand combat, he attacks once with his mace, and simultaneously uses his other hand to try and touch an opponent in order to paralyze them. However, these attacks should use whatever rules are in place for player characters using two weapons at the same time, and therefore may incur a penalty to hit. Qisuk gets an armor class bonus of 3 against the first three hand to hand attacks against him in each round, due

to his weapon mastery. This bonus has been included in the AC -9 figure given in the statistics above.

He also has the following magical items: *bone armor* +2 which improves his AC by 6 (included in the stats above), a *mace* +4 and a *ring of spell turning* with 7 charges. Other magical items are at the discretion of the Dungeon Master. However, please note that Qisuk is weak for a lich (though still a powerful opponent), and has not been in existence for as long as most liches have, so he has therefore not amassed as much treasure as the rulebook indicates for this type of creature.

Qisuk currently has the following undead minions at his disposal: 30 skeletons, 8 wights, 6 wraiths, 4 barrow wights (see the new monster section at the end of this article) and 2 krattis (see the "[Kingdom of Kaarjala](#)" fan gazetteer for a description of this creature).

Adventure Hooks

The existence of the Shonak burial isle is not widely known, and rumors of its existence could normally only be found in Kaarjala, or from various Shonak tribes. However, a few other individuals know of it, such as the dwarf, Garren Rockhammer (see above).

Naturally, once adventurers hear about Shonaks being buried with all of their treasure, then their interest will probably be piqued (though any lawful clerics would object to unabashed grave robbing). The party could even be hired by Garren Rockhammer to see if they can discover what actually happened to his old party. Either way, it shouldn't be too difficult to get a party of player characters to travel there.

A barrow wight is quite dangerous, as unlike some other forms of undead, it can remember its previous existence and the skills it possessed in life. It will therefore usually have some levels of weapon mastery at its disposal, and all of the abilities that this entails. The statistics above have assumed a skilled level of mastery with the normal sword and that the barrow wight was a 7th level fighter in life, but this will obviously vary for each individual barrow wight. This creature is also imbued with an unnatural speed, which means it can chase down its victims most of the time, as well as being able to attack twice per round with savage ferocity.

The appearance of a barrow wight causes fear in anyone who sees it. A saving throw vs. paralysis must be made, failure of which will cause the victim to suffer from fear. Any individual suffering from this effect is unable to take any offensive action (but can still take defensive actions such as parry and deflect), and is also unable to cast any spell while stricken in such a manner. They will also try to flee from combat at the first available opportunity. A saving throw may be made every three rounds to overcome this fear.

The barrow wight will normally close in for hand to hand combat as soon as it is able, and cannot be made to leave combat once it is

engaged in melee, unless directly controlled or turned. It can attack twice per round with any weapon it has at its disposal. Its weapons are often dirty and rusty, which can cause infected wounds if a successful hit is made. The victim must make a saving throw vs. poison on each hit, the failure of which results in the prevention of any healing on the wound until the infection is removed. The application of either a *cure disease* spell or a *cureall* spell will remove any infection on an afflicted individual. Healing can then be applied normally.

A barrow wight can be hit by silvered or magical weapons, and can be turned as a vampire. It is immune to cold damage, but is susceptible to fire, of which it takes half damage from normal fire and full damage from magical fire.

Any fighter of level 7 or greater that is slain by a barrow wight will become one on the third night after his/her death, under the control of their slayer. Other people cannot come back as a barrow wight, but may come back as an ordinary wight (25% chance), if they are slain by this creature.

Once they arrive on the island, their approach will determine what they encounter. Qisuk does not want to be discovered – as far as his former tribesmen are aware, he is dead, and he does not want that illusion dispelled. His revenge plans include taking his former tribesmen by surprise, which will be far more difficult if they know he is still a threat. He will therefore only be encountered if the adventurers delve into the deeper caverns in search of treasure.

The upper caverns contain numerous lesser undead that are not directly controlled by Qisuk (and are therefore not included in the list of his minions given above). Any cleric turning undead that are controlled by a more powerful being usually become aware of this fact after the first turning attempt. Qisuk therefore does not control these lesser undead directly as he does not want his presence known, so any adventurers restricting themselves to the upper caverns will probably not become aware of his existence. In addition, he might order the krattis to try and scare off the adventurers with their shrieks, if they begin to get too close to the lower caverns.

Qisuk has lit the lower caverns with eerie blue continual light spells, which will be the first clue adventurers will see that indicates that something powerful may reside on this Isle. If any adventurers enter this part of the cavern network, then Qisuk will attempt to ambush the party together with his minions. It should be noted that many of the caverns are connected by tunnels, and Qisuk knows the layout very well, so orchestrating an ambush from all sides would not be difficult. This should surprise any adventurers, as up to this point, they would only have encountered scattered and weak undead who were without any strategy, as opposed to a well-coordinated and large attacking force led by Qisuk.

If the party manages to overcome Qisuk and his minions, then they can take whatever treasures they can find on the Isle. As much of the treasure was placed here by the Shonaks, then much of it will take the form of their cultural objects (such as sculpted walrus tusks, pearls and armor/weapons made from bone). Some of this will be of a good quality, and will fetch a decent price if sold in any city. Furthermore, treasure left by adventurers who died previously on this Island will be here, together with whatever the Qeodharian raiders left behind centuries ago. It should be noted that the Qeodharians were mostly killed in their last raid, and never survived to get back to their base in order to retrieve what was theirs. In addition, there are also the magical items that Qisuk possesses which could be claimed by any adventuring party that manages to defeat him.

If the final battle on the Isle goes against the party, then all is not necessarily lost. Qisuk would be interested to know why the party have come to the isle, together with what they already know about him, and may offer an unconditional surrender in order to establish this. Qisuk is quite open about his hatred towards his old tribe, and the party could offer to help Qisuk capture some of them (or to perform some other task), which Qisuk might accept as a service in exchange for their lives. It should be noted that Qisuk is quite naive, and would be subject to bluff attempts. He would consider the party to be making an offer of service they intended to fulfil, rather than to be lying in order to save themselves. To openly and knowingly lie in front of his or her own kin was almost unthinkable in Qisuk's old tribe, and the party could exploit this to their advantage in trying to negotiate their way out. Obviously, once it became apparent that

he had been tricked, Qisuk would then add the adventuring party onto the list of those he plans to take revenge on.

CAMP BRAVEFOOT

"I knew it! I knew the terms of the treaty King Ericall signed with the halflings of Leebea was a mistake, but he wouldn't listen to me. The trade concessions the halflings agreed to do not even equal what we could have gained by now in taxes if we hadn't allowed Leebea to stay autonomous. King Ericall's brain was addled with beer and smokeweed when he signed that blasted treaty, and to this day he still believes he got the best of them in the negotiations.

And now I hear that a trail route through the Icereach Range was discovered about six months ago. Apparently it leads to an old Thyatian Colony, and the Leebans have now managed to establish a trade route between that colony and Leebea. As the route does not cross the Kingdom of Norwold, we are unable to tax the merchants, and therefore, cannot make any profit from this trade route at all! The Halflings have even built a fortified camp along the trade route as a stopping point for the merchants and traders – Camp Bravefoot I think it's called.

I think I will leave this information out when I next report back to the Empress Eriadna's advisors. From what I hear, there is already concern over the lack of financial returns coming into the Imperial coffers from Norwold, and this news will only make matters worse."

– An extract from the journal of Mariella the Councillor, chief adviser to King Ericall of Norwold

General Notes

Far to the outh of Shardarath's lair, or the machinations of Qisuk, lies Camp Bravefoot. Nestled next to the White Bear River, it serves as a stop for merchants and traders travelling between Ghyr (a former Thyatian colony) and Leeha. A wooden palisade runs around the camp, as well as a ditch that has many wooden stakes driven into the ground, in order to deter raiders from attacking the camp. There is also a makeshift dock built here for the trading boats that arrive, as well as a few small warehouses. An inn has also just been built, which is called "Gateway to the West", and is run by a female halfling named Isolda Merrysmile. This inn serves both excellent food and drink, and allows travelers to rest in some comfort during their travels. The total population of the camp is about 500 at any one time, which includes guards, merchants and travelers, who are mainly either halfling or human. In this regard, the term "camp" is slightly misleading, as it has already changed from being a camp and into a trading village.

For those travelling from Leeha, the trade route begins by boat, sailing up the White Bear River. There is a dwarven settlement called Pumice some way along the river, which some merchants visit in order to trade and rest. The town itself is not on the bank, but instead is located in the foothills nearby – however, the dwarves have built a dock to allow boats to moor on the bank of the river in relative safety.

In any event, all boats dock once they reach Camp Bravefoot, as there are no established trading stations further up the river. Here, wares are unloaded from the boats, and are either sold at the market in the camp itself, or are transported overland to Ghyr via the route known as the "Leehan Trail". Most traders plying this route either make the boat trip to

Camp Bravefoot from Leeha (and vice versa), or the land trip between Camp Bravefoot and Ghyr, but not both the land and river journeys combined. This is due to the differing logistics in transporting goods by river instead of by land. In this regard, it is very common for traders to sell goods at Camp Bravefoot to other traders who will then make the second part of the journey to either Leeha or Ghyr.

The surrounding land around Camp Bravefoot is claimed by the Bear Claw tribe, which is one of the tribes that belongs to the White Banner Viaskodas. In response to this, some Leehan Halflings approached the Bear Claw's tribe's leader, Ulfric Stormstrider, and negotiated an agreement where trade caravans will be able to pass through his territory without fear of being attacked by his tribe. In return, Camp Bravefoot has to pay a tribute in gold to Ulfric every month, which he then uses to buy superior weapons and armour from the merchants based in Camp Bravefoot itself. This arrangement has boosted Ulfric's popularity amongst his own tribe, as numerous of his warriors now have better quality arms and armour than what they had before. The tribute paid to Ulfric is raised by taxation on the goods being transported through Camp Bravefoot. Any merchant who tries to avoid this tax runs the risk of being fined, or even having his goods confiscated for repeat offences. The Sheriff of Camp Bravefoot, Martis Nimblefoot, has hired numerous individuals, both halfling and human, to ensure that these rules are obeyed at all times.

Adventure Hooks

There are plenty of opportunities in this settlement for adventurers. Firstly, caravan guards are always needed to assist merchants

along this trading route, as bandits and monsters are likely to attack caravans that are not well protected.

Some barbarian tribes living near this area are also getting nervous at the fact that Ulfric's tribe is slowly acquiring better weapons and armor through trading with Camp Bravefoot, as this makes it more likely that any future tribal territorial disputes will be settled in Ulfric's favour. One or two of the other tribes might therefore attack random caravans to persuade merchants to ply safer trade routes instead. They might even try and frame Ulfric's tribe by attacking a caravan and leaving clues to suggest that Ulfric's tribe was behind the attack. Adventurers could be hired to investigate who was behind the caravan attacks and ensure that justice is served. It should also be noted that Ulfric would react angrily if he discovered that his tribe had been framed, and would go after the perpetrators and demand a payment in blood. Therefore, if a band of adventurers discovered that another tribe had framed Ulfric's tribe, then they would not need to confront the perpetrators just by themselves.

Rivalries between merchants and trading houses are also likely to cause trouble, as this new trade route should prove to be very lucrative in the future. There will almost inevitably be trading houses jostling with each other for position in order to maximize their own profits. This will result in various merchants being at each other's throats, sometimes quite literally. Assassination, arson and other crimes could end up being a reality, for which adventurers could be hired to investigate (or even perpetrate, if they are of evil alignment).



Northern Norwold

Then, there is also the matter of the red dragon. High in the crags of Skyspire volcano lives a large red dragon named Calor who has noticed the increasing activity of caravans in this area. It plans to attack the occasional caravan, and take what treasures it can to add to its own treasure pile. It does not plan to attack caravans too regularly, or attack Camp Bravefoot directly, as this could permanently disrupt the trade route, and stop its new source of treasure. However, Calor's attacks will become frequent enough to come to the attention of Martis Nimblefoot, who will then hire adventurers to deal with the problem.

Once hired, the adventurers would eventually need to make the dangerous trek to Skyspire volcano, defeat numerous fire loving creatures while ascending the mountain, and finally confront the dragon in its lair.

Any adventurers who help Camp Bravefoot to overcome some or all of the problems listed above would be rewarded in gold by the Sheriff, and given a medal declaring them to be "Hinfriends". This medal would give the wearer a significant bonus to any reaction rolls while travelling in Leeha or if visiting the Five Shires, far, far to the south.

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The Threshold editorial team invites all fans of the Mystara setting to submit contributions to the **fourth** issue of the magazine.

We are looking especially for contribution fitting the theme of that issue - **Davania**.

Proposal Deadline: February 28th, 2014
Manuscript Deadline: April 30th, 2014

Threshold accepts (and invites) the submission of extended or revised versions of works having appeared on The Piazza or the Vaults of Pandius.

Contributions may include, but are not limited to, articles (short stories, short adventure modules, NPCs, historical treatises and timelines, geographical entries, new monsters and monster ecologies, etc.) and illustrations (portraits, maps, heraldry, illustrations, etc.)

The Threshold editorial team strives for edition neutrality, but edition specific articles (e.g., conversions) are also accepted.

Statistics for new monsters and NPCs may be included in articles (e.g., adventure modules, new monsters or NPCs) in any version of Dungeons & Dragons. The editorial team also offers help in providing conversions to some specific rules set (including BECMI/RC, 2nd Edition, 3rd edition/Pathfinder). However, they should be limited to the minimum -- for most NPCs, it is sufficient to mention class, level, and alignment. For important NPCs, a one or two line stat block could be included.

See [inside back cover](#) for submission guidelines.

PATRES ET CONSCRIPTI: Characters and Factions of the Thyatian

by Giulio Caroletti
& Giampaolo Agosta



FROM
THE VAULTS
OF PANDIUS

INTRODUCTION

The Senate is one of the most important institutions of the Empire. It is probably right to say that Thyatis is not a monarchy, but rather a diarchy, in which Senate and Emperor are the two rulers. Whether the Senate or the Emperor is the true ruler, depends mostly on the individual strength of the Emperor and on the strength of the various factions inside the Senate.

The Senate is a very conflictual unit. In Thyatis, traditionally, there are no political parties in the modern sense of the term, however the rivalries among the noble houses, the churches and the fact that part of the Senate is elected by the common citizens of the Empire makes it important to forge bonds between groups and individuals with similar goals, and act together to achieve results.

Feudal Nobility and Senatorial Nobility

A unique feature of Thyatis is the presence of two different types of nobility, the feudal one and the senatorial one.

The most ancient nobility is the senatorial one. The first Thyatian Senate was founded in BC 297, before the Alphatian conquest of Thyatis. As part of the policy of appeasement devised by Empress Valentia, the Senate was re-created in AC 20, and it was open only to the descendants of these aristocratic families. There was no landed aristocracy, no land titles (nor were there democratically elected senators until AC 59). The only exception to the rule were the ruling houses of Hattias, Ochalea and the Pearl Islands – but Ochalea and the Pearl Islands had been independent kingdoms before the Alphatian invasion, and

Hattias after all had a separate culture altogether.

This situation changed in AC 59, when a revolt had Emperor Zendrol killed¹. The new Emperor Aemilius Scaurus and his supporters in the Senate introduced at the same time elections and the Hattian feudal system in the mainland, to weaken the ancient aristocratic families. Developed from ancient proto-Hattian inheritance laws², it was reproduced over parts of the Empire to weaken the control of the Senate over the land, and correspondingly the new dominion rulers got their own senators to represent them in the Senate. At the same time, the demi-human rulers got official recognition, although they had always been de-facto rulers of their lands.

These noble Senators, holding office by virtue of their families' prestige, are called "*Patres*" (*fathers*) or "*Matres*" (*mothers*), in reference to their being the household leaders.

The Conscripted Senators

A large number of Senators are either elected for a term (usually 4 to 6 years, depending on the Emperor's decision about when to call for a new election), or conscripted by the Senate. The latter option was established in the early years of the Empire as a way to include senior political and military officers, valued for their experience and competence, in the Senate, even though they were not the heads of noble families. These Senators were called "*Conscripti*", in reference to their being Senators by election rather than by right.

The Ecclesiastic Senators

There are 15 ecclesiastic senators: the 3 Flamines (the chief patriarchs of the cults of Solarios³, Tarastia and Valerias) and 12 Pontifices. The Pontifices are 12 priests, chosen among all the clerics, diviners and sages of the land. 6 are designated by the Church of Thyatis, which represents the priests of all main Immortals of Thyatis (Asterius, Diulanna, Halav, Khoronus, Korotiku, Odin, Protius, Tarastia, Thor, Valerias, Vanya), while 6 are elected for life by the population of the Mainland. They can be of all faiths. Among them is also the Emperor, the 13th Pontifex, that bears the symbolic title of Pontifex Maximus ("Greatest Pontifex").

In the early years of the Empire, Thyatians had three main deities: Solarios, Tarastia and Valerias. However, with the new feudal regime introduced by the Hattian ruling families, there was a great switch from the cult of Solarios to the more warlike and opportunistic cult of Vanya, that appealed more to the expansionistic and practical nature of Thyatians. The decadence of Solarios's cult increased during the events that led to the migration of ⁴ to the Savage Coast, resulting also in the expulsion of Solarios's priests from the Church of Thyatis. The slip in Solarios's cult was so great that in AC 1000, Solarios is not even included among the main Thyatian immortals and his cult is a minor one. However, an aspect of the Thyatian society is also its traditionalist nature, so the ancient seat reserved to the Flamen (patriarch) of Solarios is still present,

¹ See James Ruhland's "*History of the Thyatian People*"

² Analogous to the Salic law of the Frankish feudal system in the real world.

³ Ixion

⁴ See "History of the Savage Baronies", Tim Beach and Bruce Heard, in "[Savage Coast Campaign Book](#)".

Structure & Composition of the Senate

The Thyatian Senate is composed in the following way¹:

- 21 senators are direct representatives chosen by the Dominion Rulers². A Dominion Ruler with the status of Baron or Count can choose to be his own representative, but for practical reasons, only some Mainland rulers do so -- usually those whose fiefs lie within a day or so from the capital, or who have regular access to magical transportation.
- 11 senators are the Dukes and Arch-Dukes themselves. Some of them prefer to step down from this seat and leave it to their chosen heir. This is also the custom for the Emperor himself, who never takes the seat of the Duke of Thyatis, leaving it instead to his heir.
- 40 senators are members of the aristocratic families of Thyatis (traditionally, these were the original “*Patres*” and “*Matres*”). They have hereditary right to the seat, and if one of them is guilty of accusations that result in the stripping of title, then a member of the family inherits the seat. The Council of Inheritance, a Senatorial committee in charge of awarding senatorial seats to the aristocratic families, then proceeds to select the closest relative who is free of accusations, and awards the senatorial seat to him.
- 16 are ecclesiastic senators: 12 Pontifices and 3 Flamines from Thyatis (see above), 1 chosen by the Church of Karameikos (see below).
- 67 senators are elected, with elections called by the Emperor every 4-6 years. The constituencies that elect the Senators are distributed according to the following formula:
 - 1 senator from each Barony
 - 2 senators from each County
 - 3 senators from each Duchy except Thyatis.
 - 5 senators from each Grand-Duchy, plus Thyatis
 - 1 senator from any city, protectorate or alliance of towns/cities/protectorates which reaches at least 10,000 inhabitants and does not belong to a dominion³
- A varying number of senators are meritory persons, such as generals, diplomats, resigning rulers, etc; these senators are elected by the Senate (and therefore called “*Conscripti*”), receive their position for life, and their seat is personal; thus, at the death of one of them, the Senate elects one more; there cannot be more than 39, since, in the time when the first Conscripti were introduced, by law they could not outnumber the Patres. In AC 1000, there are 35 meritory Senators.

¹ In “Dawn of the Emperors” the Senate was said to have 200 representatives, but a system was presented that provided only 49 senators in all: “Each city (pop. 15,000 or more) elects two Senators (20 senators); each duke or count ruling a dominion chooses one Senator (18 senators); each alliance of ten or more towns (pop. 1,000 or more) not belonging to a dominion elects one Senator.”

² Originally, in “Dawn of the Emperors”, only Counts and Dukes sent representatives to the Senate. See also Note 5 above.

³ This includes: 1 senator for the Protectorates of Sclaras, Borydos and Carytion; 1 senator for the Western Imperial Territories; 1 senator for the Central Imperial Territories; 1 senator for Redstone & surroundings; 1 senator for West Portage & Central Isle of Dawn; 1 senator for the Shadow Coast; 1 senator from the Thyatian Hinterlands.

and the head of the cult of Solarios is therefore a member of the Senate.

Rumors say that Thincol's son Eusebius is devoted to Solarios. Although he has never dispelled the rumors, many think that this is a confirmation enough of his religious views.

Multiple Seats

If a Senator has access to more than one seat, he must select only one, and leave the other(s) so that each seat is held by a single person. The details vary depending on the nature of the seats.

If the senator is an aristocrat or a dominion ruler, he can resign his family or dominion seat for the benefit of his heir, and keep the other seat.

For example, an aristocratic cleric with a seat for his family becomes Flamen. He resigns the seat as member of the family to his first son and keeps the Flamen seat.

Another example is the Crown Prince, who traditionally occupies the seat of the Duke of Thyatis, while the Emperor is traditionally awarded one of the 39 seats reserved to the meritory Senators as soon as he is elected. At that point he resigns from his seat as Duke of Thyatis, which is awarded to his chosen heir. This is also done to give a stronger claim to the throne to the heir.

If the Senator is a *privateer* (has been elected by the Senate as a meritory member, or is a representative of the people), he must renounce one of his seats. If he renounces a representative seat, a by-election is held in the region he represents. If he renounces a meritory member seat, nothing happens, although the Senate might select a new meritory candidate if the number of meritory Senators drops below 39. However, a meritory

Senator usually renounces his other seat, since the meritory seat is for life.

Note that the same procedure also takes place if a senator loses his seat not due to having a choice between two seats, or resigning for other personal reasons, but rather because he has been stripped of the title by the Senate due to some major charge (betrayal of the nation, etc.). This is usually the way Emperors replace political opponents with more suitable senators, when they are especially displeased by the current ones.

But it is noteworthy that the Senate can also do this at the expense of the Emperor's loyalists, and thus collect enough votes to dethrone a weak Emperor.

The Karameikos Question

A dense population, in extreme distress, inhabit an island where there is an Established Church, which is not their Church, and a territorial aristocracy the richest of whom live in foreign capitals. Thus you have a starving population, an absentee aristocracy, and an alien Church; and in addition the weakest executive in the world. That is the Karameikan Question.

- Abbott **Teng Lee-Dai**, Senator of the Philosophers

The issue of the Grand-Duchy of Karameikos's status in the Empire is extremely controversial. The Grand-Duchy is a *de-facto* independent state, as is proven by the presence of ambassadors, especially of a Thyatian ambassador, at the court of the Archduke in Specularum. However, the treaties signed by the Emperor and presented to the Senate were especially vague in its phrasing. The Senate debate surrounding the approval of the Karameikos bill has gone

down into history as the most heated of Thincol's reign. In the end, the easiest solution was not to vote anything substantial, and to freeze the status of all Karameikos senators. Stefan, though Arch-Duke of an unresolved-status dominion (from the Senate's point of view), is not entitled to a Senatorial seat. Nor can he choose a representative as would be the right of dukes and arch-dukes.

However, Gens Aurelia managed to pass a bill (backed by Sergii, Zendrolian, Pure Ones and many Populares) by which the Church of Karameikos, although officially a different church altogether from the Church of Thyatis, might propose one of their members to the Senate. It is then up to the Church of Thyatis to approve of the suggestion, or to ask for

another name. The Church of Thyatis and Gens Aurelia try in this way to hold some control over its daughter Church. How all this will change in the future, when and if Stefan decides he is strong enough to declare himself King, is uncertain. But Gens Aurelia has done this also to separate the fate of Karameikos from that of its state Church. And to secure themselves an extra senatorial seat.

ORGANIZATION OF THE SENATE

When in session, the Emperor holds the position of *Princeps Senatus*; if he is not present, the Crown Prince acts as *Praesidens Pro Tempore* of the Senate (and holds the Emperor's vote in proxy). If neither are present, the most senior Senator present functions as *Praesidens Pro Tempore*. These officers function as speakers (*Dictators*) of the Senate, recognizing individual Senators in debate and scheduling topics of discussion (which gives them a great deal of influence over what is discussed).

Note that every Senator has the right to speak on every topic if he or she chooses, and so the Senate officers must be fair in recognizing those who stand to speak. However, the ability to guide the order in which topics are discussed and the order in which Senators are recognized to speak before the body can be critical.

While there are no true "political parties" in the Thyatian Senate⁵, there are a number of informal factions which cover a similar function.



The marriage of Thincol Torion and Gabriela Prothemian

⁵ With the exception of the Republicans, see below.

SENATORIAL FACTIONS

Ok Boy, here's the hall. What's troubling you, Boy? The seat? You wanna know where to seat? Nobody told you there ain't fixed places here in the Senate, huh? Well, well, you're really a green boy, Boy. Let me help you out, I've been an official here so long I can tell you the affiliation of any one senator just by looking how he or she walks around the place!

*Now, there you see that big mass of people seated at the center in front of the speaker? Those are the **Optimates**, the aristocratic faction. Many of them are rulers, like Callastian Retebius, see the guy with the symbol of the Knights of the Air on his cloak? He's one of the Emperor's main followers among the Optimates, those are called the **Gens Zendrolian**. At their right you see the **Aurelii**, the clerical faction among the aristocracy. See that grim man with the square jaw who seems like to swallow his teeth in a moment? He's Malderius Kerendas, the brother of Duke Maldinius. They'd like to swap the Senate with a religious council, and speak all the time of Immortals and vows and you-name-it. If you're a pious Boy, that's the place for you to sit, Boy. Next to big jaw Malderius.*

*Then... Let me see.. At the left of the Zendrolian you see there's two groups, one sits in the front and one on the back benches. Those in front are the **Aemilii**, they are the Senate's aristocratic champions. Speak all time of how the Senate is the true ruler, not Tbincol. Emperors like them not much - they tend to plot a lot when things get sour in the Empire, just as likely to overthrow an Emperor as they are to get all exiled or without a head. Backing them, in the literal sense of the word, are the **Sergii**. Those are*

nice chaps, they just want to get along well with everyone. Not possible in Thyatis and especially not in Thyatis, I'm afraid. You see that old woman who is scolding that man like he was her half-witted son? It's Aemilia Scaurus, spokewoman of the Aemilii, she's not happy with poor Lucinius, he's one of the Sergii. Probably she didn't feel the Sergii helped'em well enough in the opposition to the latest Arms bill presented by the Zendrolian.

*You wanna know who IS happy with the outcome of the bill? Look on the far right and you'll see the **Pure Ones**. Nasty, if you ask me. You're not Hattian, are you? You might well be, with that dark hair and blue eyes. Well if you are, that might be the place for you: Pure Ones always boast about how they want to increase army expenses and go out to conquer one place or the other. One day it's Helskir, the other one Aegos, or Selenica, or Tameronikas. They were bigger before half the Vanya madmen left for Heldann.*

*See how they're mocking those other fellas on the left to the Optimates? Those who seem most unhappy of all? They are the **Philosophers**, you see Samuel Puar, that thin pearl-islander there who stands up facing the Hattian who is mocking him? He's one of their leaders. Philosophers are pacifist eggheads, they like to use complicated words and to discuss bills about schools and universities. 'f you're a scholarly lad mighthaps they're the ones you'd like to work with.*

*To the left of them there's another big bunch, those there, you see that mixed-up collection of merchants, soldiers and commoners? Those are the **Populares**. They boast they're true representatives of the people. Surely they're friendly with a lot of merchant*

families, guild members and worker's unions. Not always easy to balance that, if you ask me, they quarrel a lot among themselves, they do! Especially the union people. See the last bunch on the left? Those are the **Republicans**. You're not one of them, Boy, are you? Troublesome guys.

Some of them got hung some years ago. Not good idea to try and turn Empires into Republics, if you ask me. And that's all... What? Those few up there squeezed between Populares and Philosophers, all looking very

dignified and detached from the others? They are the **Free Thinkers**. If you need their vote it's just as well you got some money or position to feed them with, and they'll vote with you, doesn't matter whether you're republican or clerical...

So, Boy. Have you chosen where to sit? There? Ah, Boy, I knew you were a good guy as soon as I met you... That's a nice, nice choice for a young lad as you... Welcome to the Senate!

Table 1: Senatorial Allegiances

	Aem	Aur	Serg	Zend	Phil#	Pop	Rep	Pure	Free
Aemilii		U	F	U	N	N	U	U	N
Aurelii	U		U	F	U	U	VU	U	N
Sergii	F	U		F	F	N	U	VU	N
Zendrolian	U	F	F		N	U	VU	U	N
Philosoph.	N	U	F	N		F	U	VU	N
Populares	N	U	N	U	F		F	VU	F
Republic.s	U	VU	U	VU	U	F		VU	U
Pure Ones	U	U	VU	U	VU	VU	VU		U
Freethink.	N	N	N	N	N	F	U	U	

VF=very friendly, F=friendly, N=neutral, U=unfriendly, VU=very unfriendly

Optimates

This faction is built up around the aristocratic ancient families and their followers (*Clientela*) and allies. It is a very large group, comprising 112 senators, but it is roughly divided in four smaller groups, called *Gentes* (“families”), which share different views on the political conduct of the Senate and the Empire.

The four *Gentes*⁶ are:

Gens Aemilia (25 senators)

We are the cream of the Senate. The top of the Empire. Thyatians have ruled these lands for over one thousand years. They can tell you it's thanks to the Emperor, they can tell you it's because of the troops. It's all true, up to a point. But the Emperor has only a lifetime before him, and if his heirs are not top-notch, they will go down as a footnote in history and be forgotten forever. On the other hand, the Senate will always be here as long as the Empire stands. And since the Aemilii are the soul and heart of the Senate, we are also the soul and heart of the Empire.

- **Aemilia Scaurus**, Senator of Gens Aemilia and *mater familias*⁷ of the Scaurus

Ideology: Expansion of Senatorial & Aristocratic Prerogatives

Gens Aemilia, led by the related families Paulus and Scaurus, represents the part of the Senatorial aristocracy that always tried to reinforce the Senate's power at the expense of the Emperor. Good examples of their

political practices are the politics of the Emperors of the Scaurus family (59-117).

The Aemilii have been particularly influential in the Duchy of Kantrium, where they possess vast estates and are an economic power. The Paulus family is now planning to send their younger members to the Hinterlands, to establish a personal dominion with strong ties to the Senate instead of the Emperor.

Allies:

They try to gather the support of the other factions, although they are not especially close to any of them -- actually, the policies they would implement are not too different from those of the Zendrolians, except for the balance of power between Emperor and Senate.

Enemies:

Gens Zendrolian, Gens Aurelia, Republicans

The Aemilii and their attitude are dangerous. They are trying to make the Emperor just a figurehead - and they are so stupid that they don't understand that they are just playing in the hands of those Populares and their scarecrow friends, the Republicans. Sooner or later there will be a war with Alphatia, and then we will see who is really a friend of the Empire and how many of them will turn out only as agents of the enemy or raving revolutionaries.

- **Kymon Cubitius**, Zendrolian Senator and staunch supporter of Emperor Thincol

The Gens Aemilia directly opposes the Gens Zendrolian and the Gens Aurelia, as they perceive the Emperor and the clerical establishment as the other two true powers in Thyatis.

⁶ Gens (family), plural Gentes. They can be called either “Gens Aemilia” or “Aemilii”, “Gens Sergia” or “Sergii”, etc.

⁷ The head of a family in Thyatis is called pater familias (“father of the family”) or mater familias (“mother of the family”).

Ties with ruler dominions:

Duke Maldinius Kerendas, Duke Tarik Ben Nadir and Baron Babrak Biazzan are ruling Senators of Gens Aemilia. Baroness Gilla Blyskarats also supports the Gens.

Important Senators:

In addition to the aforementioned rulers, prominent Senators of the Aemilii are Tiberius Paulus (head of the Paulus family), Aemilia Scaurus (head of the Scaurus family), Thrain Kalskirt⁸ and Helenites Osteropolus⁹.

Gens Aurelia (23 senators)

Politics without ethics is not politics. Without a spiritual guide, there is no rightfulness nor justice. All right and justice come from above, not from the hands of feeble humankind, and so comes the power of the Emperor - from the Immortals, and thus from the Church. The Senate is an old and honorable institution, we're agreed. It's just that it needs some revision. We do not mean to replace the Senate, much less the Emperor. We only mean to improve the Senate by increasing the role of the Church of Thyatis in it. How can there be anything wrong in this?

- **Gaia Ephore**, Flaminia Tarastiana
(Supreme Patriarchess of Tarastia)

Ideology: Theocratic Influence

This faction is represented by the Vorbian aristocratic family and is heavily influenced by the Church of the Trias. Members of the Gens Aurelia includes Adrian Aurelian, the most influential Pontifex of Thyatis, Werner Van

Holze, the lieutenant of the Flamen of Solarios, and several dominion rulers.

Their political goal is to support the Emperor through the organs of the Church, but they also use their power to strengthen the Church itself, and try to substitute the Church instead of the Senate in the role of the political counterpart of the Emperor. Many hands-off clerics of the Church do not like the machinations of the Gens Aurelia.

Allies:

Church of Thyatis, Church of Solarios, Thyarius Palykratidius¹⁰

I guess the Aurelii are the most close to our point of view, at least they are honorable and loyal enough that we can discuss with them and vote on military fundings and most administrative issues. They are just a bit too pompous with all their talk of religion. But as long as the Emperor can fund the religious ceremonies, they will stay true to the Crown.

- **Demetrior Karangeteropolus**,
Senator of Gens Zendrolian

Enemies:

Republicans, Gens Sergia, Populares, Gens Aemilia, Philosophers

Gens Aurelia is not corrupt, but that's probably the only compliment they can get. The Aurelii would like to change the Empire into some wretched clerical theocracy. Moreover, in Thyatis we have more deities than dominion rulers, and most of them are not even Thyatian in origin. If they had their way, we would probably end up in a civil war between exalted Patriarchs and Pontifices of one cult or another.

⁸ Representative of Gilla Blyskarats, Baroness of Burohur

⁹ Elected Senator from Thyatis City. See modules DDA1 and DDA2.

¹⁰ Commander of the Thyatian Cavalry Officers School in Kerendas.

- **Tiberius Paulus**, Senator of Gens Aemilia and *pater familias* of the Paulii

The Gens Aurelia, due to its closeness to the interests of the Thyatian clergy, has gathered a lot of opponents -- all those who have other social groups to support. Essentially, they are on good terms only with the Gens Zendrolian, on the basis that the enemy of their enemies is their friend. Indeed, the social classes that would benefit from a weakening of the Imperial power are the same that would benefit from a weakening of the clerical power.

Ties with dominion rulers:

Archduke Derentarius is a Senator and the most important ruler tied to Gens Aurelia.

Important Senators:

Kallistos Vorbian (head of Vorbian aristocratic family), Albrecht Reus (*Pontifex* and Patriarch of Vanya), Gaia Ephore (*Flaminia* (Supreme Patriarchess) of Tarastia)

Gens Sergia (19 senators)

Let our fellow Optimates say that we don't commit ourselves enough to the Senate or the Emperor; let the Populares say we don't strive enough for the good of the People. They are all stubborn partisans that forget how different situations require different responses, and not decisions clouded by prejudice and political hatred. The great thing about the Empire is its flexibility, provided by the many cultures and ideologies that have built it. We are the oil that keep all those different cogs and wheels well-lubricated - and we are those who enable the Empire to respond quickly and efficiently to any challenge or threat it might face.

- **Lucius Scaevola**, Senator of the Gens Sergia

Ideology: Moderate Conservatives

Both leading families of the Gens Sergia trace their origin back to Sergius Trenzantebium, cousin of Lucinius, the King of Thyatis during the Struggle for Freedom. Sergius had two sons, Lucinius and Mucius. Mucius was later nicknamed "Scaevola" ("Left-Handed") due to the loss of his right hand.

The two sons of Sergius gave their names to the two branches of the family that descended from him. Both families have distinguished themselves as moderate *Optimates*, far from the excesses of the nationalistic aristocratic families. They have supported the Empire but also strongly the rights of the Senate; this ambiguous position has resulted in several violent deaths and proscriptions at the hands of imperial usurpers or intransigent senatorial leaders.

Allies:

The Sergii are true aristocrats, a good backbone for the Optimates; most of them are scholars, diplomats, intelligent and capable, trustworthy in most administrative posts, but not as leaders. They are too soft, some of them outright craven, and content to leave to us the reputation of 'tough guys' - but as long as they vote our proposals and for our candidates at important posts, that's not an issue for us Aemilii.

- **Silenus Porpora**, Senator of Gens Aemilia

Ambassador Ettore Ottaviano, like several other members of the Imperial diplomatic corps, is a supporter of Gens Sergia. Many diplomats see the Sergii as true supporters of the Empire, rather than followers of individual Emperors, and appreciate their awareness of foreign affairs beyond their impact on senatorial bickering.

Enemies:

Gens Aurelia, Republicans

Never trust a member of Gens Sergia. They are just smiling hypocrites that spend their time switching sides and calling their policy 'moderate'. Half of them are just trying to stay out of trouble by refusing to take any stance, and the others are the most boney-tongued liars in all the Empire - and that's not a small accomplishment at all.

- Archduke Derentarius,
Senator and ruler of Terentias

The Gens Sergia has few enemies in modern times, thanks to its moderate stance. The Gens Aurelia is disliked for its focus on religion, whereas the Republicans are the more directly opposed faction -- but they are a shared enemy to all Optimates.

Ties with dominion rulers:

Count Geraldan Actavius, and more in general the Actavii family have been long time supporters of Gens Sergia. Count Baldassarre Patrizio is about the only other dominion ruler to support this Gens. The Furmenglaives' support to the Gens is almost only formal, as Count Phileus hasn't shown up in the Senate for several years now.

Important Senators:

Lucius Scaevola (head of Scaevola family), Julian Lucinius (head of Lucinius family), Geraldan Actavius (Count of Actius), Irene Pallathakis.¹¹

Gens Zendrolian (40 senators)

The mere fact that we have in the Senate someone like the Republicans is proof enough of how languid this institution has become. We don't need a majority and opposition, we barely need elections and surely we don't

¹¹ Representing Count Baldassarre Patrizio at the Senate.

need all this self-serving cronies and potential traitors. Bad or good, the Emperor is the incarnation of the Empire, and the only thing the Empire needs is good counseling and an united front against all of his enemies. That is why the Senate exists - and we are here to remember everyone of this FACT.

- Maria Evergetes,
Senator of Gens Zendrolian

Ideology: Support the Imperial Family

The Zendrolian faction takes its name obviously by the first emperor of Thyatis, and the Emperor's counselors, advisers and political allies (*Clientela*) represent it. Many heavy nationalists and imperialists list themselves in the Zendrolian gens, but so do such people as Demetron Karagenteropolus.

Allies:

Vivianna Romanones, Tredorian, Justin Karameikos, Demetius Vannopolis. The Zendrolians gather a wide support from outstanding individuals with personal ties to Thincol and/or Eusebius. Both the Emperor and the Prince have strong personalities and are competent individuals, who easily command the respect of people who they meet, even in unusual or awkward circumstances such as those of the Alphetian hostage, Tredorian.

Enemies:

Republicans, Populares, Gens Aemilia

Gens Zendrolian is a parasitic worm attached to the belly of the Emperor - whoever he or she might be. And if it is someone that doesn't buy them up well enough, they will conspire to replace him or her with someone fit to the task. They are cronicly corrupt.

- **Publio Kelophorios**,
elected Populares Senator from Actius

The Gens Zendrolian opposes directly those factions who would most weaken the Emperor's grip on the Empire's policies. The consider the Pure Ones as misguided, and the Hattian secessionists as potential traitors, but also as inconsequential due to their limited following.

Ties with dominion rulers:

The Gens Zendrolian enjoys support from several dominion rulers, especially those who, like Archduchess Triella Tien Tang and Archduke Donegal Firestorm, have been personal friends and adventuring companions of Thincol Torion.

Important Senators:

Emperor Thincol Torion, Prince Eusebius Torion (Duke of Thyatis), Demetrium Karagenteropolus¹², Archduchess Triella Tien Tang, Duke Callastian Retebius.

¹² Thincol's chief advisor in matters of magic holds a meritory seat in the Senate.



The Pure Ones

6 senators

The purpose of the Empire was to conquer other countries and bring enlightenment to those who knelt, and death to those who didn't. Not to be conquered by the soft and morbid doctrines of savages and barbarians. And now one of them even sits on the Imperial Throne! If things will not change soon, the Empire is doomed to crumble. Hattias will not stand and watch in astonished silence while the very root of our culture is eradicated from the Earth. We will secede and prepare the war against any menace that will threaten the true heartland of Thyatian ideology and culture.

- **Tobias Von Richter**,
Hattian Senator of the Pure Ones

Ideology: Ultrationalists and Hattian Secessionists

These senators believe that the conduction of the Empire is wrong. Either the Empire will reopen a conquest politics and put out the non-Thyatian elements of its culture, or Hattias will leave the Empire. Although the latter aspect of Hattian secessionism is voiced only by the Hattian senators in this faction, many ultrationalists agree on the baseline ideology of Thyatian supremacy.

Allies:

Extremist Hattians are the main allies of the Pure Ones. The Storm Soldiers, in particular, are close if secret allies. Hattian members of the faction also entertain cordial relations with the leadership of the Heldannic Knights, whom they see as having taken the flag of Hattian glory from the decaying Empire.

Enemies:

All other factions

The Pure Ones see all other factions as weak and untrustworthy. The Gens Aemilia and the Gens Zendrolian would be politically closer to the Pure Ones than others, but the Pure Ones see them as the primary culprits of the current state of the Empire. It is worth noting that most other factions consider the Pure Ones as inconsequential due to their unwillingness to deal with their potential allies.

Ties with dominion rulers:

Count Heinrich Oesterhaus is the only dominion ruler supporting this faction. His support is likely tied to Hattian secessionism, although it is not clear whether the Count actually supports the secessionists or merely wants to remain in their favour, as he actually does not publicly commit to their ideology.

Important Senators:

Tobias Von Richter¹³, Alkybiades Nemeicus¹⁴

¹³ Count Heinrich's representative at the Senate

¹⁴ A former general and meritory Senator



Philosophers

15 senators

The Empire is as good as the worst of its rulers. It is therefore our duty to improve on the quality of the Senate first of all. An Empire has no value in itself, no more than a box full of many things. The name "Empire" gives no clue on either the value of the box or of the things it holds inside.

- Archduke **Teng**,
Senator of the Philosophers

Ideology: Anti-interventionists, pacifists

The Philosophers faction is a pacifist group, led traditionally by the Ochalean ruling family. They oppose the traditional imperialist policies of the Thyatian Emperors, calling for the establishment of cooperation and alliance policies with foreign nations, with the aim of bringing them peacefully within the Thyatian sphere of influence. Some members of this faction also aim at obtaining more autonomy from central government for areas that have widely different culture, such as Ochalea, the Pearl Islands and the County of Vyalia. The Philosophers are opposed to political involvement of the Church of Thyatis, and more in general oppose the aggressive attitude of the Gens Aurelia. Their members range from moderate conservatives to moderate progressives.

Allies:

Internally, the Philosophers have few allies beyond Ochalea and the Pearl Islands, where they are the dominant faction. Abroad, they maintain cordial relations with nations and rulers allied with Thyatis, such as the Elven Kingdom of Wendar.

Enemies:

Gens Aurelia, Republicans, Pure Ones

They boast how they don't want religion meddling into politics. But it's just that they don't want OUR religion meddling into politics. If they had our power, they would use it exactly like us. It is not our fault that their ideas are not as popular with the citizens of the Empire. So they try and pretend that OUR religion has no place in the Senate, that WE shouldn't influence the Empire with the ideas of the Church of Thyatis. That is Koryis's philosophy - if you can't beat a chariot on the tracks, ask the referees to disqualify it!

- Archduke **Derentarius** of Terentias

The Philosophers oppose the Republicans for their destructive ideas, and the Gens Aurelia for their closeness to Thyatis' religious establishment. Their dislike of the ultra-nationalist and racist Pure Ones is all too evident. They are also on a cold neutrality with the Gens Zendrolian, due to their militant stance. Otherwise, they are friendly with the Populares, although their relations are occasionally strained by the Populares support of certain Republican elements, and with the Gens Sergia, which shares a similar moderate attitude, although the Philosophers tend to see themselves as moderate progressives rather than moderate conservatives.

Ties with dominion rulers:

Besides the Archdukes of Ochalea and the Pearl Islands, the Vyalia elves' and Countess Sabrina Andreana's representatives in the Senate generally support the Philosopher faction. In the case of the Countess, this is likely due to the wealth of her dominion and its proximity to the borders, which make the Halathians less willing to enter wars than the average Thyatian citizen.

Important Senators:

Arch-Duke Teng Lin Dieu, Arch-Duke Nurokidu Nuar, Baralidu Nuar

Free Thinkers (Independents)

7 senators

Today we want, with our vote, to set in history a choice painful yet full of righteousness and significance, which goes beyond the limits of the understanding of some citizens and senators in this hall. Our homeland, Thyatis, must take precedence over all personal or partisan interests!

- Senator **Canolocarius**, trying to justify a sudden change of opinions

Ideology: none.

These senators do not feel part of the other factions, but their support often proves critical in close votes, and thus they are influential beyond their apparent numbers. Canolocarius, the most prominent member of this group, likes to consider himself a power broker of sorts. Most of the members of this group are quite greedy, and ready to sell their votes to the highest bidder, or at the very least to negotiate their support in exchange for benefits to themselves (and their constituency, in the case of elective Senators).

Allies:

Free Thinkers' allies tend to change often, as the Free Thinker Senators avidly look for political support -- most of them are elective Senators, and must periodically face elections.

Important Senators:

Angelarian Canolocarius

The Free Thinkers are, by definition, neutral towards all other factions, although they usually side with the richest and more powerful while at the same time flirting with the underdogs.

Populares

38 senators

An honest, common citizen of the Empire who would like to help his or her country has only one means: get elected to the Senate. We Populares are not of a single mind, and it is for the best: among us there are men and women of every nationality, wealth, rank and position inside the Empire. We are those who best represent the Empire in all its aspects. Some of us are union workers close to the Republicans, others are scholars and enlightened rulers close to Sergii and Philosophers, others are close to merchant families and artisans. But we all share this view of the Empire: that the common citizen is the backbone of the Empire, not those stiff, powermongering aristocrats sitting at the other end of this Senate.

- **Publio Kelophorios**,
elected Populares Senator from Actius

Ideology: Progressivism

This faction is composed of the most influential "progressives" in Thyatis, and especially opposes interferences in the Senate politics by external forces (Church and Emperor); similar to the Philosophers, they do not favor expansion politics, and currently they want to open more friendly policies towards other nations, although they focus more on the respect of Thyatis' imperial rights, and most of them do not subscribe to the autonomist views of many Philosophers -- some of them actually push for greater integration of remote areas in the Thyatian culture. The Populares are a contradictory group, with some of their members bordering the Republican extremism, and others very close to the Gens Aemilia.

Allies:

Depending on their current policies, the Populares sometimes court Republicans, Gens Aemilia and Free Thinkers for support. However, most of their true allies come from the mercantile class -- rich merchants like the Viator family are the backbone of Populares strength. The Populares also have ties outside the Empire, mostly with trade partners of the Empire, such as the Minrothad Guilds.

Enemies:

Gens Zendrolian, Gens Aurelia

Well well, if the Populares are the future of the Empire, that shows why the future is not looking too bright. I've never seen such an opportunistic rabble. The aristocrats divide themselves on every small issue, that's true enough, and plain stupid, if you ask me. But at least it's honest, from an ideological point of view. The Populares stay close together - merchants and workers, guildmen and private entrepreneurs... But just in order to reap some benefit in the Senate for the groups that back them. And they are willing to go so low as to ask for help from the Republicans and so-called Free Thinkers to achieve their goals.

- **Duke Callastian Retebius**,
Senator of the Gens Zendrolian

The Populares oppose the conservative nationalists. Their relations with other parties vary depending on the current stance of the majority of the Populares, although they are usually friendly or neutral towards all except the Pure Ones, who are seen as ineffectual and useful only to draw some support away from the Gentes Zendrolian and Aurelia.

Ties with dominion rulers:

Although it might seem contradictory, several dominion rulers, such as Duke Leonidas Ruggiero and Duke Callastian Jowdynites support the faction. These are mostly *bomines novi* coming from the ranks of the military or wealthy businessmen who bought into dominion rulership after the Spike Assault crisis, so they feel no loyalty towards the Optimates. Besides, their own dominions are populated by hard-working folk who resent the overtaxation and exploitation imposed by the Emperor's war efforts, so supporting the Populares faction helps stabilizing their own rulership.

Important Senators:

Seline Valleides (taleswoman of the Populares), Corus Viator, Leonorius Kelophorios, Appius Glantri.



Republicans

5 senators

There is no need for an Emperor. No need for an Empire. The Senate is pointing the way to the necessary future of our country: a Republic, all of elected representatives. And there is nothing any of you can say to prevent us to bring this idea to the people, so long as we follow the letter of the law. Last time we needed a foreign mercenary to save the throne. But the next time, maybe, our time will come.

- Senator of the Republicans

Ideology: Republicanism.

The Republicans are extremist thinkers who want to drastically alter the Empire's government and substitute it with a Republic. Many are ideal disciples of Fabritius Luscinia, a subversive and political thinker of the X century who authored a seminal treatise, "The Republic of Thyatis", which sparked first a debate and later on a number of rebellions which ended with Luscinia's exile and then his death at the hands of the Phorsis Guard in the Marilenev Rebellion against Duke Stefan Karameikos III. At this point, the Republicans in Thyatis had morphed into a true political party, with an internal organization, a statute and a legal status.

All of the Republican Senators are elected, except the occasional eccentric aristocrat -- the Emperor would never select a member of this faction as a meritory Senator, and aristocratic families with similar tendencies were excluded from the Senate in Luscinia's times.

Allies:

They are often excessive, I know, but not everything they say is always wrong. You know, when the Republicans start to get too much support among the citizens, then it means that the aristocrats are getting too much power, or that the Emperor is thinking too little about the common citizens. And it's when that happens, that we Populares step in, and, taking the hint, if we make the right proposal we can save the situation. Only problem is, those Republican muttonheads end up complaining that we save the Empire when they'd prefer to have a revolution. But since they can't have a revolution, and know it, in the end we get along well.

- Senator of the Populares

None, although the Populares are sometimes close to the Republicans, especially when a weak Emperor seats on the throne. Outside the Empire, the Republicans have maintained some ties with the Traladaran insurgents, due to the involvement of Republican exiles in the

Marilenev rebellion. Also, several exiled Republicans live in Specularum, Darokin, and Glantri City.

Enemies:

Optimates, Philosophers

The Republicans oppose all Optimates factions, as well as the conservative Philosophers. They try to sway the Populares to their side, and have no special consideration of either the Pure Ones or the Free Thinkers.

Ties with dominion rulers:

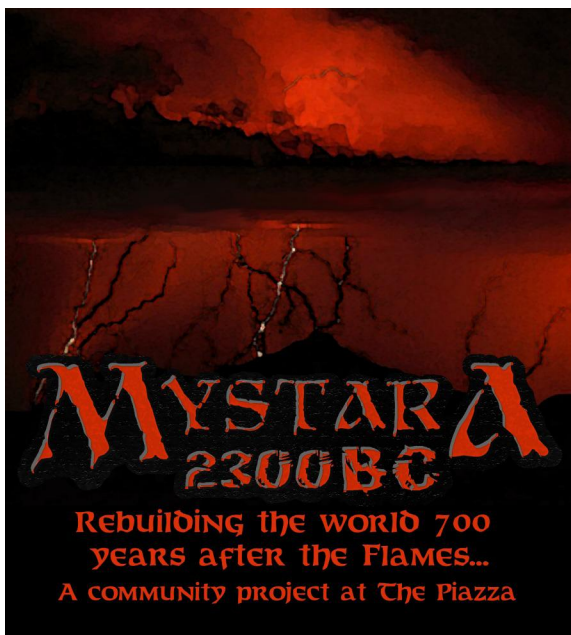
No dominion ruler sides with this faction, since one of the goals of the faction is to replace the Emperor and the dominion rulers with elected officials.

Important Senators:

Darian Lentulus¹⁵, Tiberius Traianus¹⁶

¹⁵ The odd noble-turned-republican from an old, impoverished and bitter family.

¹⁶ Secretary of the Kantrium Chapter of the Republican Party, one of the biggest in the Empire.



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New Blackmoor, 3050 BC

The KNOWN WORLD before the Great Rain of Fire



FROM
THE VAULTS
OF PANDIUS

by Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)

Foreword: This article gives some details about the area of the Known World as it could appear before the Great Rain of Fire. Most of the content of the article is partially inspired by [The Age of Blackmoor](#) (by James Mishler)], but it certainly has many differences from his original idea.

Both his article and mine, however, assume that the Hollow World boxed set pre-cataclysmic map is more or less correct, so the continent of Brun IS NOT the North Pole as several canon and fan sources assume, just tilted 40° to the right. (See the map on following page.)

Tagline: *New Blackmoor, a beacon of civilization in a still untamed continent, or the ruthless invasion of a once free land. See for yourself, and choose your side.*

The area of Mystara that is now the Known World was very different in 3.050 BC, at the height of Blackmoor's power. Once a land of fairies, giants, and brute-men, it changed first with the birth of two new races, dwarves and gnomes, and with the founding of the Draconic Empire. It changed again when waves and waves of humans came from the east and the south, and it changed dramatically when Blackmoorians came here for their crusade against the beastmen, establishing what should have been a temporary colony. Ancient and new people of the Sunset Land, the old name

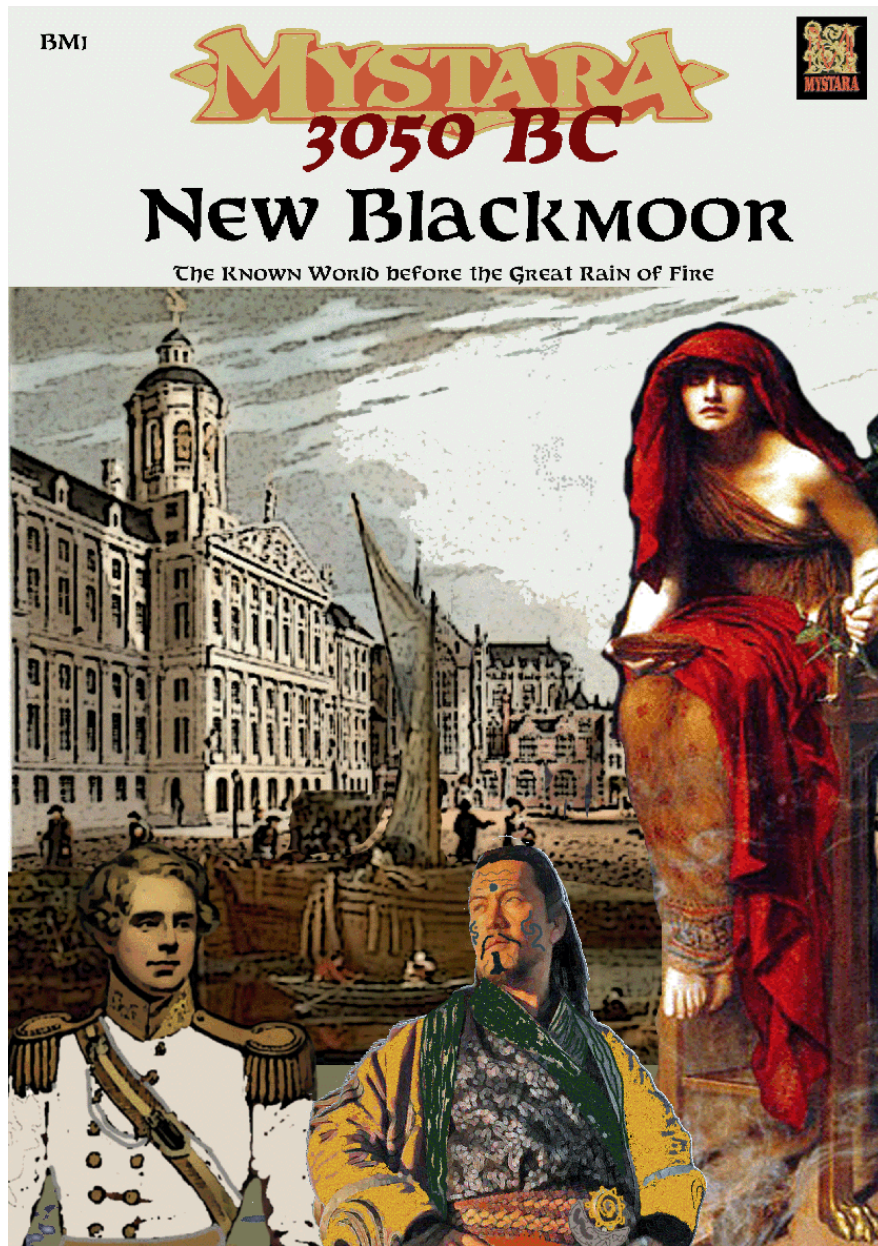
of the area, had been often bitter enemies, but they all agreed that Blackmoorians were invaders. Yet New Blackmoor proved always more powerful than anyone who tried to destroy it, and now the colony is the almost uncontested power of the land. From the fortress of Uthorrad to the shores of Tudaka the radiance lines run fast and strong.

A TECHNOMAGIC SETTING

The Known World at the time of Blackmoor is a technomagic setting, and that means that there is advanced and reproducible magic that can be used by people who haven't studied the arcane arts. Pure wizards are considered primitives among Blackmoorian humans, who prefer technomages or scientists. At this time, the cult of the Immortals is losing ground to rationalism. Carriage or radiance lines (i.e. trains) connect the major cities of New Blackmoor; radiance weapons are common, and the rich and powerful can also afford technomagic servants and implants, and several other toys. Despite all the power of Blackmoor, most of the people of the colony still live in destitution, and some of them in slavery, suffering in fields and mines. Technomagic is not available to everyone, and there is no mass industrial production as in the real

Map of New Blackmoor, 3050 BC





planets, and so it's not impossible to encounter in the colony beings from faraway places. Some important Mystaran people, however - like the hin and the Tangor men - are as exotic as aliens in the Sunset land, as they do not have a significant population here. Others, like beastmen, lizardmen, turtles, lupins, and rakastas, are historically persecuted and despised, and can still be killed on sight in New Blackmoor, despite being accepted in many other surrounding lands.

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SUNSET LAND

Traditionally the Sunset Land was inhabited by ancient races such as dragons, fairy folk, sasquatches, giants, and brute-men. Several millennia before 3050 BC, however, two other important peoples began to

world, so it's still a fantasy world, with many tech-like elements. Powerful mercantile companies based in Skothar wield huge power in the Blackmoor dominated Mystara. In the Sunset land, the Teigh-Mohr Co., based in Lowkeep, is the primary power in the south.

The flying techships can reach not only every area of the world but also other planes and

call this land their home: dwarves and gnomes, the sons of the earth, who spread over the mountains and the hills, sometimes in friendship with other races, sometimes in enmity. Other, stranger people came over the millennia: many lizard people from their powerful empires in the south, araneas from their kingdom in the west, all of them leaving



a lasting presence in the Sunset Land. The first humans to touch these shores were the Oltec men in remote times, and much later the Naq, a Lhomarrian-related people who inhabited the valley of the Nithus river. Around 9500 BC the first seed of the future Oltec Empire was already established in the Black Mountains. Oltec and Lhomarrian ships dominated the western sea and the eastern ocean, while other humans - the Valoins - came to northern Brun.

But from 8200 BC onwards a vast area of the world, Sunset Land included, was violently hit by the expansion of Y'hog. The carnifex even established a lasting colony, enslaving Oltec and Naq men, conquering several areas of northern Davania and pushing groups of Oltec survivors to the Sunset Land.

For a millennium, up to 7022 BC, Lhomarr and Y'hog fought many wars in Davania and eventually both were destroyed. The struggle impacted another Davanian power - the Serpentine Empire - and sent other refugees, in this case the reptilian lizard men and troglodytes, to the Sunset Land.

In the following millennium, from 7000 to 6000 BC, several different nations of Neathar humans came gradually into the Sunset Land from the north or the Dawn land; the pale and blonde Antalians, the red haired Dunharians and Vantalians, the darker Maharians and Toralai. At the end of the millennium in Davania the enduks, the elves, and the hin had established powerful empires, and their ships came as far as the Sunset land, where the Oltec nations and the dwarves grew more powerful every day. Dwarf and gnome colonists went toward Skothar and northern Brun at this time, and gnome colonists as far as Davania.

Attacked by dwarves and humans, the carnifex colony of Kha-reth near Anur lake was

destroyed around 5500 BC. The powerful sorcerer Akhor escaped the destruction and found refuge among the lizardmen of the Nithus valley. Shortly after, the dragons attacked and founded their empire spanning all the Sunset Land, overwhelming any resistance. Only the giants of Gandhar in the Dawn Land remained outside their rule.

Around 5000 BC Davania had three powerful nations: the Golden Empire in the northwest, the Elven Empire in the south, and the Serpentine Empire in the East. The Golden Empire started backing Oltec and Neathar rebellions against the Dragon Empire, freeing the southern and western parts of the Sunset Land. The lizardman nation of Mogreth maintained good relations with the Dragon Empire and the Serpentine, who were expanding in northern Davania and among the islands of the Sun Sea, up to Adhuz. In faraway Skothar the Skandaharian raiders grew powerful, their long ships attacking even the Dawn land and the Dragon Empire, while the Thonian Empire grew in the middle of the continent.

Around 4500 BC a vast movement of people brought to the Sunset Land elven colonists, the horse riding humans of Yali and Etesh, and the beastmen hordes, who were quickly used by the Dragon Empire against the rebellious dwarves, Oltecs, and Neathar. The Oltec Empire, however, successfully resisted and was even aided by others to fight against the dragons. Meanwhile, the Serpentine Empire of Davania was in decline under hin and elven attacks and internal rebellions, losing all its northern territories.

In 4000 BC the Kingdom of Blackmoor was founded in Skothar, and around 3900 BC the Thonian Empire fell. Thonian refugees came to the southern Dawn land and from there

into the Sunset Land, boosting the resistance of dwarves, elves, Oltecs, and Neathar against the Dragon Empire.

Around 3800 BC, the kingdom of Mogreth was destroyed by a combined assault of the Oltec Empire, Thonian colonists, and dwarves, but the area remained a battleground for many more years.

Around 3600 BC, the first Blackmoorian explorers came to the Sunset Land, and shortly after Blackmoor began to aid the dwarves and humans against the Dragon Empire.

Around 3550 BC, the Free Dwarven Principalities were founded and the Dragon Empire pushed north.

In 3450 BC, New Thonia was founded in the Dawn land, and more Thonians and Blackmoorians came to the Sunset Land.

In 3430 BC a major crisis fragmented the Oltec Empire, and its western half became the Azcan Empire. The Golden Empire of Davania continued to back the former, and the Dragon Empire began to aid the latter, with Blackmoor intervening on whichever side was most beneficial at the time.

In 3420 BC Blackmoor launched the First Beastmen Crusade, intervening in the Sunset Land as well. After the Treaty of Gandhar, they claimed huge territories in the northwest, formerly dragon lands, and to the south of the Dwarven Principalities, formerly free Neathar lands. Blackmoor colonization was slow at first, hindered by the Blackmoorian-Thonian war of 3370-3330 BC.

In this difficult time, the Serpentine Empire rose once again, expanding into Davania and reaching the Sun Sea again. The alliance with the Dragon Empire almost crushed the Oltecs, Azcans, and dwarves, who had to forge an

unstable alliance to resist. Aid came only in 3310 BC, when Blackmoor conquered the Paradise Islands and established a strong base there. In 3300 BC the Blackmoorians destroyed the Serpentine imperial city, finally breaking their power. In 3260 BC the Teigh-Mohr Company arrived in the Sunset Land, and every rebellion against the Blackmoorians was crushed.

To avoid colonization, in 3225 BC, the northwestern Neathar founded the Consolidated Tribes of Neathar, while in the conquered lands the Brotherhood of Freedom began to campaign against slavery, sometimes peacefully and sometimes not. The Dragon Empire tried vainly to fight back, encouraging beastmen attacks against the Blackmoorians, who between 3230 and 3200 intervened with the Second Beastmen Crusade, conquering all the land up to Uthorrad.

The last major expansions of the Blackmoor colony came in 3062 BC, when the Vantalian Kingdom of V'dar was annexed, and in 3057 BC, when the colony absorbed many territories of the eastern Azcan Empire after the destruction of Koskatepetl (see [Mirror of the Eternal Night](#) (by Francesco Defferrari in *THRESHOLD #1*) and the revolt of the Church of Ixion against the Azcan Emperor. The new governor, Moorkroft, is now trying to normalize the external and internal situation of New Blackmoor, after years of rebellions and wars.

GREAT COLONY OF NEW BLACKMOOR

Description: Stretching from the islands of the Dread Sea to Uthorrad, New Blackmoor is a huge colony that has subjugated or

absorbed almost all the inhabitants of the Sunset Land except for giants, dragons, dwarves, and the Azcan Empire. Yet for all its power, New Blackmoor is not as powerful as it would like to appear and be. Even after several crusades (i.e. campaigns of extermination) against beastmen (a broad category that often includes lupins, rakastas, and other non-human people) and several interventions (i.e. mass burning of communities and enslavement of all surviving inhabitants) against non-cooperative people of the colony (i.e. people unwilling to be enslaved), bandits and raiders (i.e. resistance groups) spring up everywhere. Some areas became a bit dangerous for travelers as the colony has little to no effective rule over them. New Blackmoorian society has become highly hierarchical as in Skothar, with politicians, scientists, technowizards, priests, and warriors at the top. Traders, artisans, free farmers, and specialized workers are in the middle, and slaves are at the bottom. Despite the harshness of Blackmoorian rule, outside the major cities among elves and Neathar humans, there are still many egalitarian villages and clans.

Ruler: Lord Uther Moorkroft, newly appointed Governor-General of the colony, is a young and ambitious Blackmoorian diplomat who, knowing almost nothing of the savage west, came directly from the motherland in Skothar to replace the assassinated and hated Lord Blackhill. He didn't like what he found as too many Blackmoorian petty nobles had alienated the local population. He is trying to improve things with the aid of his most trusted friends, general Hans Drachenfel and scientist Theodore Rafiel.

Population: 10 million inhabitants of which only 5% are Blackmoorian colonists. The rest are High and Low Thonians (5%), elves, and

several other human populations, with minorities of dwarves, gnomes, fairyfolk, sandfolk, dragons, and giants.

Capital and Other Cities: Redfen (modern Glantri City), is the capital of the colony with 500,000 inhabitants. Uthorrad (in the far north), Sunland (in modern Broken Lands), Blackpeak (in modern Lost Valley), Grassdale (in modern Ethengar), Lowkeep (modern Stronghold), Dawncity (modern Tel Akbir), and Southfall (just below modern Hattias) are the other major Blackmoorian cities, each with more or less 100-150,000 inhabitants. All these cities and two more in the Dwarven Principalities are connected by the technomagical radiance line, which moves people, wares, and armies throughout the colony.

Adventure Opportunities: New Blackmoor is huge, and opportunities are infinite. If working for the government, adventurers could be asked to explore remote and almost unknown areas of the colony, such as the Adris Plain or the Nithus Delta. They could contact or infiltrate rival neighbours, outlawed churches, or rebellious organizations. If working against the government, adventurers could free slaves, plan sabotages, attack the radiance line, defend rebel leaders, and much more.

Cities and Provinces

Highlands: Formerly inhabited by fairies, giants, and groups of Antalian and Dunharian Neathar, this land is the center of the colony of New Blackmoor. The capital of Redfen and the northern city of Rittenstad (modern Ritterburg) are the most important population centers, both along the radiance

line. Yet the high mountains of this region are still inhabited by wild monsters and obviously fairies, giants, rakastas, lupins and persistent rebels.

Alvanil: Highly technomagic elves of dark complexion live just south of Redfen and are perfectly integrated into human society, to the point that - while not cruel - they accept without too many problems questionable human customs, such as the exploitation of the natural world and fellow humans. This includes slavery and other things disapproved of and opposed by other elven clans.

Sunland: A unique case in New Blackmoor, this region (the modern Broken Lands) is governed by the enlightened High Thonian Count Ludwig Hatten, a former general who has freed all his Albai slaves of the Keres and Thays clans, and has called a group of Thonian elves - the Loshenalfen - to aid him in building a utopian and free nation. (These people will become Thyatians, Kerendans, Hattians, and Schattenalfen.) Hatten has good relations with Moorkroft.

Uthorrad: This northern keep watches over the savage lands beyond the Arctic Circle, where beastmen and wild giants still dwell, several campaigns of extermination notwithstanding.

Thonian province: Established by Lower Thonians, this colony to the west of Uthorrad is almost independent, has no slavery, and minimal technology. It also maintains good relations with the Neathar tribes and the Azcan

Empire. Blackmoorians tolerate them because they are the main avenue of land trade with the north and the west, and they pay rich taxes in precious minerals.

V'dar: This once independent kingdom north east of Uthorrad is inhabited by Neathar humans loosely related to ancient Thonians. (They will be the ancestors of the Vandars and Zuyevans.) They were recently conquered by the cruel Blackmoorian general Jon Sable, who was later killed by Ethesh rebels. The army and the royal family were exterminated and half the population was enslaved and deported to plantations in the Naqa valley. (They will become the Traldars.)

Adris: This huge and arid plain, the original homeland of the Azcans and - until a few years ago, mostly belonging to their empire - is also inhabited by the ancient sandfolk, deported from Skothar, and by humans of mixed Neathar and Oltec blood, known as the Mandra, who ferociously resist Blackmoorian colonization. (They will become the Oghriz after the Great Rain of Fire.) The recent Blackmoorian acquisition and the discovery of black oil in the plain has multiplied the colonization efforts.

Genalleth: Living in their valley (which will become Wendar), these elves use little or no technomagic and form an almost independent nation within the colony. They are ruled by a council of nine wise elves called the Korrigans, who - according to rumors - are not really elves but another, more ancient race, or perhaps even dragons. The public face of the council is a seemingly young female elf named Idris.

Officially in the best of relations with the Blackmoorians, there are factions among them that would like to aid the rebels and join their brothers, the Geffronell of the Draconic Empire, in a unified elvish kingdom. Several communities of Antalian and Dunharian humans also live in the Genalleth valley. The elves have vigorously and successfully opposed any attempts by the Blackmoorians to enslave them.

Ethesh: These people are related to the Peshwah of Skothar and came from there centuries ago. Conquered by the Blackmoorians, they rebelled several times and were punished gruesomely (as they stubbornly refuse to become good slaves). Now a mysterious new leader named Cretia is having more and more success in fighting off Blackmoorian forces. (They will become the Ethengarians.)

Antalia: In the area of modern Heldann, in a former territory of a Skandaharian colony absorbed by New Blackmoor. This small land has, incredibly, resisted systemic colonization thanks to the efforts of two mysterious leaders, brother and sister, and has therefore gained a status of semi-independence.

Toralai: These people in the modern area of Darokin and Alfheim have tried in vain to resist Blackmoor and now seem resigned to their fate. Some have escaped into the Azcan Empire, where traditional bison migration patterns have not been disrupted. From that border they conduct raids against Blackmoorian troops. Others have seen their

situation improve when the Kintanor Elves (see below) began to protect and aid them.

Celebryl, Porador, Felistyr, and Gelbalf: These four clans - also known as the Kintanor - love technomagic and live in the area that will become Alfheim. Moved by the plight of Toralai in the area, they have recently joined the abolitionist cause and have done everything in their power to aid the humans, who almost worship them. There is a growing faction eager to resort to violence in order to end slavery.

Eokai: Until recently this land was part of the Azcan Empire. It is now occupied by the Blackmoorians, but most of the inhabitants - unwilling to bow before them - have escaped into Azcan lands. Those remaining, in the modern area of the Fire Shires and southern Darokin, have been enslaved. After the Great Rain of Fire they will be absorbed by the Maharians and the southern Mawa and will form the Makai people.

Maharia: Once the most powerful southern Neathar kingdom of the Sunset Land, this matriarchal society in the area of modern Ierendi stubbornly resisted the Azcan occupation and was only recently "liberated" by the Blackmoorians. Even though not independent, it has instituted the prohibition of slavery within its territory. The result is that hundreds of people from other regions are now escaping here, creating several problems even though the Maharians are willing to aid them.

Albai: This is one of the most uncontrollable regions of the colony, because the Albai are a proud people who resisted the Blackmoorians from the start. Even though they have been massacred and enslaved by the thousands, resistance is still strong in the area which one day will become Karameikos, Kerendas, and Minrothad.

Tudaka: Living mostly on lands now under the sea in modern times, these southern Neathar build great megaliths with magical properties. They will survive the Great Rain of Fire but not the Taymoran conquest and the 1700 BC cataclysm, so they will be brought to Colima in the Hollow World.

Naqa: The valley of the rivers Dith and Nith was inhabited by humans of mixed descent - Neathar, Oltec, and Lhomarrian. Half of them live happily in dwarven territory, but the others suffer as slaves in the plantations with the recently enslaved V'dar. A part of the east, however, is inhabited by freemen of an earlier Thonian colony, mixed with the locals.

Hidden Mogreth: The lizardmen empire was destroyed centuries ago but the delta of the Dith and Nith rivers is still an untamed wilderness of mutated monsters that even Blackmoorian technology has not been able to subdue. The truth is that Mogrethians still hide here, and have serpentine magical aid, too.

Tjeset: A nation of Lhomarrian and Neathar humans that - after being conquered by New Blackmoor - has turned to piracy with great

efficiency. Wild rumors say that a true Immortal, The Sailor (aka Sinbad) is guiding them. The truth is that the Blackmoorians control the land, but not the sea.

SURROUNDING NATIONS

The Dwarven Principalities: Much larger than modern Rockhome, it includes all the Northern Reaches, the Oost Land Bridge, the west of Ylaruam and the east of Darokin. The land of the Kogolor Dwarves and the gnomes is divided into several autonomous principalities that maintain different customs but have good relations with one another. Several giants and fairies and other races - like humans - are recognized as citizens, too. The dwarves and the gnomes love technology but hate slavery so have a mixed relation with the Blackmoorians, yet they let the radiance line pass through their territory.

The Giant Realm of Tarsh: Officially a giant kingdom in the area of the modern Altan Tepes Mountains, this realm is also inhabited by dragons, fairies, and Albai humans, and was established in concert by Ghaudar and the Draconic Empire to limit Blackmoorian power in the Sunset Land. New Blackmoor has decided not to attempt a conquest of the mountains, in part because there is a thriving gem and ore trade with this nation.

The Giant Empire of Ghaudar: Ruled by wise and powerful King Hymir, this realm in the middle and upper Dawn Territories is ancient and, even in decline, still powerful enough to maintain its independence. It is inhabited by giants as well as fairies, trolls, aranea, humans (of Oltec, Lhomarian, Antalian, and Dunharian descent), dwarves, gnomes, and dragons.

New Thonia: Claiming a huge expanse of land in the lower Dawn territories and the peninsula of Tung (Ochalea), this colony really controls much less. Giants, araneas, rakastas, fairies, and wild human tribes actually dominate the interiors of this land. The rest is an enslaved nightmare where several revolts have been brutally suppressed.

The Draconic Empire: Controlling modern Norwold, Denagoth, and the endless north - partially a temperate area in this age - the Draconic Empire has for centuries been an enemy of the Dwarven Principalities and of New Blackmoor. Defeated but not conquered, it is still a great power in the world. The dragons have giants, fairies, beastmen, brutes (that according to some are an ancient human race; to others a bastard race of humans and beastmen), humans, and even elves as subjects. Emperor Mengul, a huge and ancient red dragon, is the wise and undisputed ruler of this land.

Geffronell Elves: This clan lives in the warm Mengul Plains, under the formal authority of the Draconic Empire. They are known for having established good relations with many races, including dragons, brutes and beastmen, and so have had misunderstandings with other elves. They do not like the Blackmoorians and are always willing to aid the resistance against them.

Azcan Empire: Once a part of the Oltec Empire, this nation is a militaristic society that no longer poses a threat to New Blackmoor. It is very busy periodically attacking the Oltec Empire, in vain attempts to conquer once and for all the rich Sinda Forest. Seven years ago

it fell into civil war and lost many territories to both the Blackmoorians and the Oltecs. The Blackmoor colony, however, has deemed it wiser to support the failing Azcan Empire against the Oltecs, after putting a more friendly *tlatoani* on the throne now that it is very probable that the Azcan - Oltec war will soon resume. Many other people besides Azcans populate the empire, such as the sandfolk and the Madra humans of the arid Adris Plain and the peaceful Oteino Oltec humans in the southwest.

Oltec Empire: Stretching east and west of the Black Mountains, this old empire would have already fallen into Azcan hands if not for the friendship of the powerful Golden Realm of Davania, which considers it very useful to keep Blackmoorian influence away from the west. Ten years ago the Azcans could have conquered the empire anyway, but a very powerful wizard general, Rathanos, was able to defeat the traditional enemy against all odds. Following the civil war among their enemies, the Oltecs have gained many territories.

The Consolidated Neathar Tribes: Ruled by Empress Djaea, this nation of Neathar humans of Antalian, Dunharian, Vantalian, and other ethnicities makes almost no use of technomagic and preserves nature instead. A growing number of elves who don't like technomagic have come to live among them. Many other races like fairies and gnomes are welcomed here.

Adhuza: This great island was once the domain of the Serpentine Empire, but after

their last defeat against Blackmoor the southern seas have become a domain of Skotharian ships. A newly formed government of the mysterious Empress Slizzark, however, has driven the Blackmoorians from some of the land but - much to the Empire's frustration - attempts to fully reclaim Adhuza have for now been unsuccessful. An incredible variety of races live in this land: sea creatures, brutes, rakastas, araneas, humans of several different stocks, and many other races, all strangely united in resisting - with their primitive weapons and odd magic - the most powerful empire in the world.

The Future of New Blackmoor

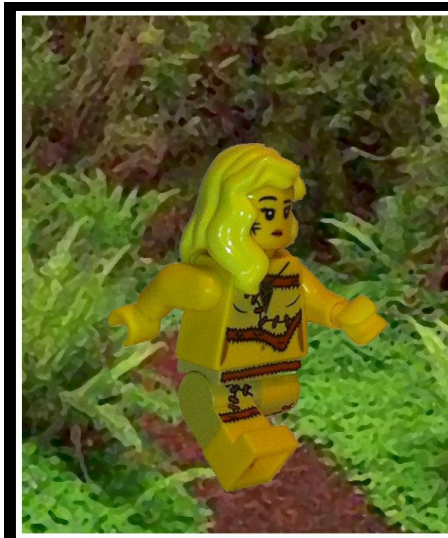
In the following 50 years the colony will further grow in power and technomagic, but will be hit heavily by the Great Rain of Fire. Many Blackmoorians of the Sunset Land will die or be killed by other survivors who will want revenge or will consider them responsible for the disaster. Some, however, will survive in the lands that will one day become Glantri, Darokin, the Northern Reaches, and other nations, contributing to the human population that will become the modern Known World, their remote and glorious past little more than an old and half-forgotten story to tell children during the coldest nights of winter.

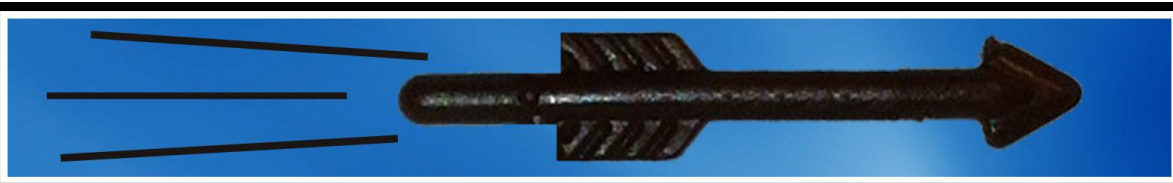


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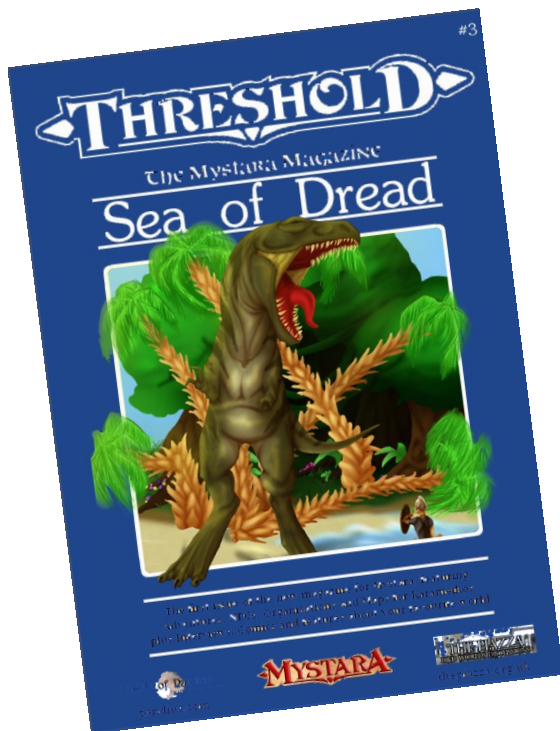
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NEXT ISSUE



Not final cover

Next time we're setting our sights on the horizon, and sailing into dark and dangerous waters. For years fans have imagined unspeakable terrors beneath the waves, islands inhabited by raving cultists, adventures, and treasures lost to the ravages of time. Grab a hold of your sea legs, mateys, for the dawn of the new year will take us to strange waters and far shores:

The Sea of Dread

Watch out for further announcements

Anticipated contents include:

- Ierendian Government and Aristocracy
- Return to the Hollow Moon: Nations of the Spindrift Sea
- The Raft City of Kron
- Adapting the Savage Tide AP to Mystara
- Darkness beneath - ancient Taymoran secrets in the Sea of Dread
- Demography of Minrothad

... and much more!



Submission Guidelines

Proposals

All proposal submissions can be sent by mail to the editors at the following address Threshold.Mystara@gmail.com, and must be received by the proposal deadline[†]. The Threshold editorial team will contact you within 7 days of the proposal deadline regarding the status of your proposal.

Submission proposals should be sent inline in the mail, using the following subject format: [ISSUE#][Proposal]<title of your article>

The mail content should include the following:

- Proposed article title
- The type of article being proposed (short story, adventure, geographical location, organization, etc...)
- A one paragraph description of what the article is about.
- An estimated word count of the article (articles should range anywhere from 1000 to 7000 words, depending on the type of article submitted).

Manuscripts

Manuscripts should only be submitted after you proposal has been accepted by the Threshold editorial staff, and must be received by the manuscript deadline[†]. When submitting a manuscript file, please use the following naming convention:

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(extension: see below for recommended file formats)

and the following subject format:
[ISSUE#][Manuscript]<title of your article>

The mail content should include the following:

- The article title.
- An attached document containing the article contents.
- The final word count of the article.

Other types of contributions: the editorial team will consider on a case by case basis other

types of contributions. Please contact us to inquire if and how we can accommodate unusual contribution formats.

The following guidelines apply to different types of submissions:

Illustrations: please submit art and maps in lossless format (e.g., PNG).

Articles: manuscript submissions can be sent by mail as plain text, doc(x) or odt, or shared as Google Doc. The issue editor will create a shared document (for each article) to allow the author and editorial team to work on it. Articles can be as short as a single page, or as long as 6 pages, depending on the specific content. The editorial team will do its best to accommodate the contributions, but especially long works may be split over several issues.

Tables: Tables should be numbered (Table X: Name of Table), and any references in the article should refer to that table number (and not to "the table below," for example).

Author Bios: Please include a short blurb (one or two sentences) biography/blurb about yourself for our "contributing authors" section. It can be serious or silly, but don't get too carried away with it, please.

Other types of contributions: the editorial team will consider on a case by case basis other types of contributions. Please contact us to inquire if and how we can accommodate unusual contribution formats.

[†]Refer to "Call for Contributions" (page [146](#)) for next issue deadline dates.

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THRESHOLD

The Mystara Magazine



From the Vaults

On the surface of Matora, the visible moon of Mystara, is a portal to a pocket dimension in which stands Pandius, the City of the Immortals. The Vaults of Pandius contain a wealth of information on the Mystara, its inhabitants, and history, as well as of the multiverse at large, for the use of any of the Immortals, titans and lesser fiends who pass through the city.

On the World Wide Web, the Vaults of Pandius is the official Mystara homepage. It is a repository of published information about Mystara created by fans across the world covering all aspects of this beloved D&D game setting.

This issue of Threshold, the Mystara Magazine, spotlights that repository of community lore that has helped to keep the flames of Mystara alive and well long after its discontinuation as a campaign world, to allow us to share the wealth of creativity of this international community, and which has served as a resource to fans new and old alike.

www.pandius.com



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