

GAZ 13

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®

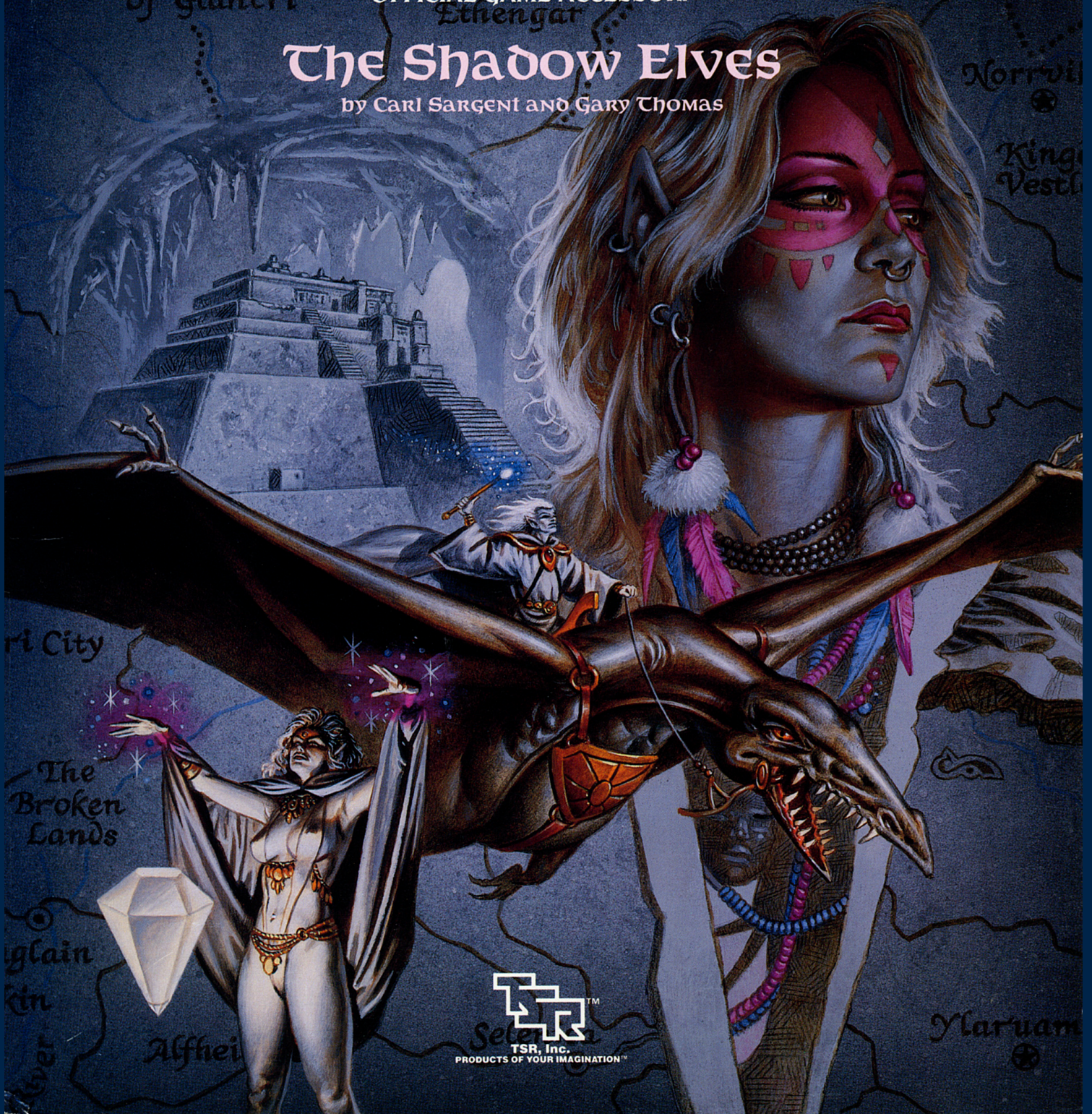
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GAZETTEER

OFFICIAL GAME ACCESSORY

The Shadow Elves

by Carl Sargent and Gary Thomas



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CITY OF THE STARS CAVERN

North Sojourn River

Thiel Canal

Mines of Torgard

North Shield

Ebon Woods

Dendromei

The Organ Pipes

Sulpher Springs

Thiel Road

Firemouth Road

West Gate

Stone Knolls

Ebon Lake

Nyniel's Geiser

Hills Peril

Nyniel's River

The Wastes

City of the Stars

Qebain

Phein Canal



North Gate

Cons Springs

Kuann Forest

Jeloen Road

Denars Outcroppings

Piliny

East Gate

Jorlinrath Road

Asterii Road

Hot River

Asterii Woods

Gate of the Ancients

City of the Stars (overhead)

Qedain Road

Ancient Footsteps

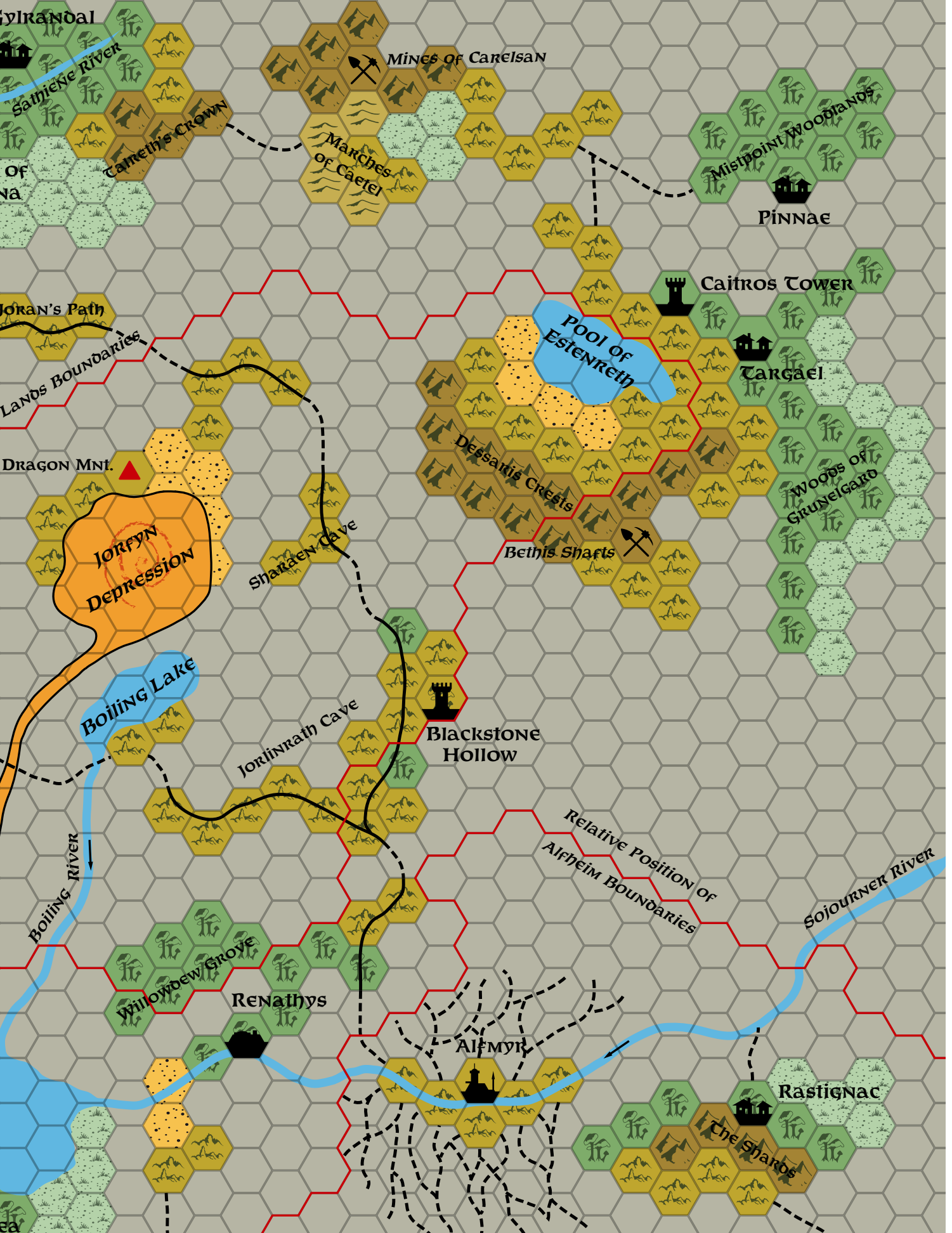
Hot Springs

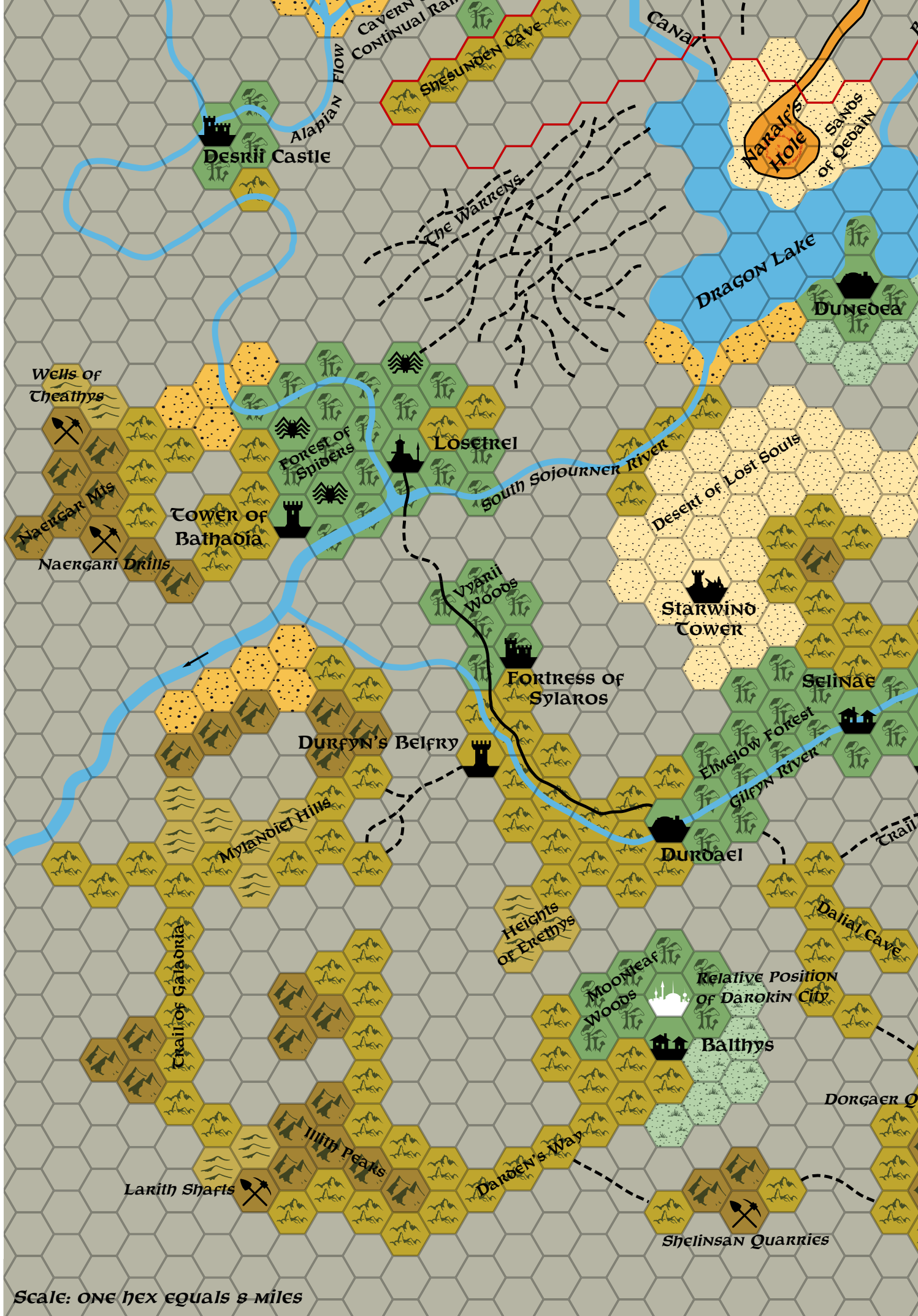
Scale: one hex equals 2 miles

SHADOW ELVES



YES TERRITORIES





Desriif Castle

Alapian Flow

Cavern
Continual Rain

Shesunoen Cave

Canal

Naralif's Hole

Sands
of Qebain

The Warrens

Dragon Lake

Dunedea

Wells of
Theathys

Forest of
Spiders

Losetrel

South Sojourner River

Desert of Lost Souls

Naergar Mts
Naergari Drills

Tower of
Bathadia

Vyaril
Woods

Starwind
Tower

Fortress of
Sylaros

Selinae

Durfyn's Belfry

Emglow Forest

Gilfyn River

Durdael

Trail

Myzandriel Hills

Heights
of Erethys

Daliai Cave

Trail of Galadria

Moonleaf
Woods

Relative Position
of Darokin City

Balthys

Dorgaer Q

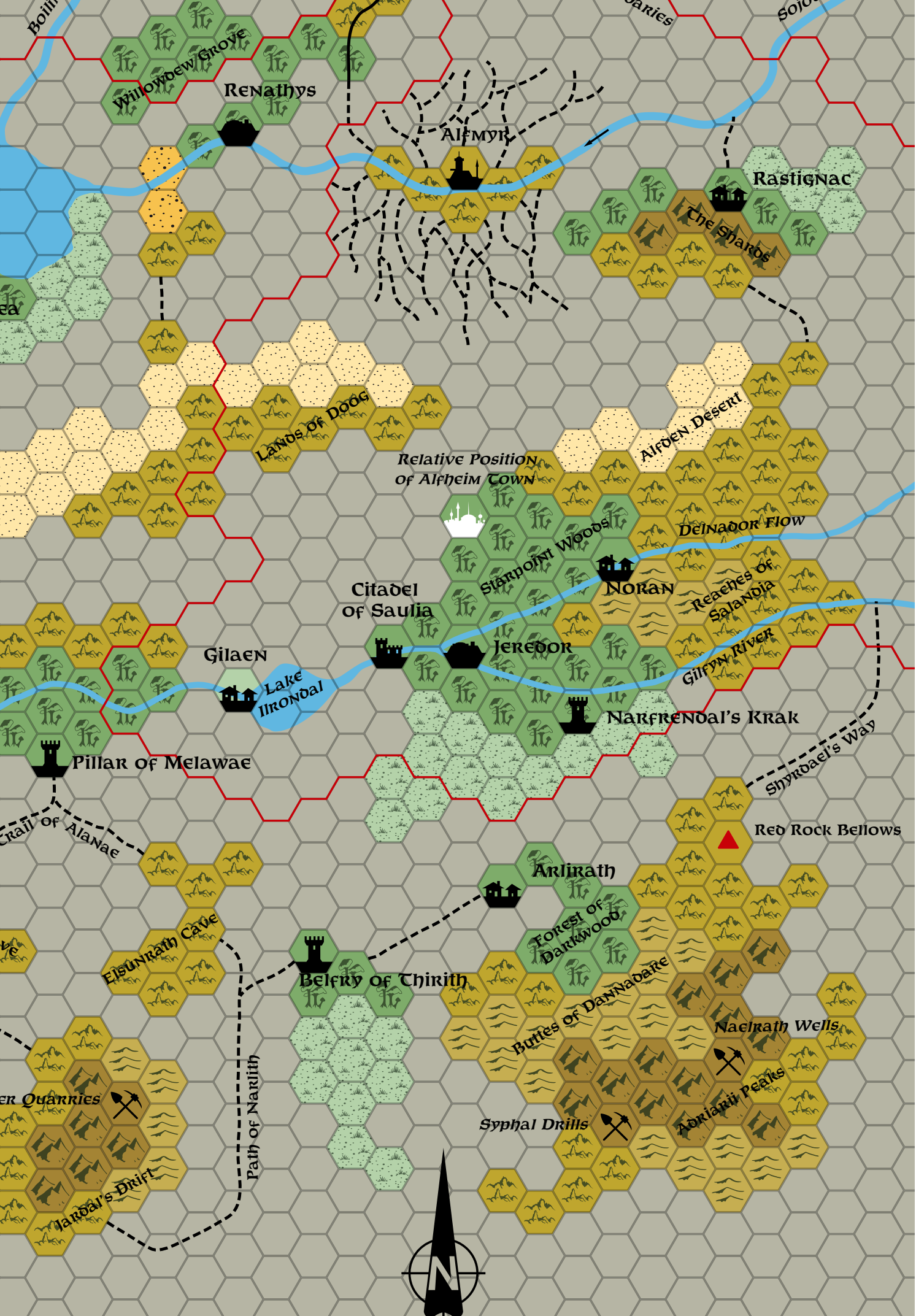
Larith Shafts

Ilith Peaks

Daroen's Way

Shelinsan Quarries

Scale: one hex equals 8 miles



Renathys

ALFMYR

Rastignac

Lands of Dooq

Relative Position of Alfheim Town

Aifoen Desert

Citadel of Saulia

Jeredor

NORAN

Gilaen

Lake Ironodal

Reaches of Salanola

Gilpyn River

Narfrendal's Krak

Pillar of Melawae

Red Rock Bellows

Arlirath

Forest of Darkwood

Belfry of Thirith

Burtes of Dannabare

Naelrath Wells

ER Quarries

Syphal Drills

Aokriari Peaks

Elsunrath Cave

Path of Narlith

Shyroael's Way

Craif of Alanae

Narboal's Drift



GAZETTEER

An Official DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Game Supplement

The Shadow Elves Players' Guide

by Carl Sargent and Gary Thomas

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Official text files (available at www.wizards.com) were adapted from D&D accessory GAZ13 *The Shadow Elves*. This PDF Version recombines the text files with the original book, restoring deleted sections and formatting.

Introduction



READ THIS BOOK FIRST! It is written especially for players. Before starting a shadow elf campaign, make sure that you, the player, are familiar with this guide. *The second booklet is for your DM's eyes only.*

This *Players' Guide* provides you with an overview of the mysterious shadow elves, and guidelines for creating shadow elf characters to use in their home deep beneath the Broken Lands of the Known World. In the *Dungeon Master's Booklet*, you can find a character sheet, a gamers' index, and a set of options and views on the shadow elves. Naturally, you have permission to photocopy the character sheet for your own individual use when you're ready to play a shadow elf character.

How to Use This Book —

The very best way to learn about the shadow elves is not to encounter them as a reader, but as a player character. In the *Dungeon Master's Booklet* are adventures for "ordinary" characters who happen to encounter shadow elves in the course of their lives; these adventures are tailor-made for this purpose.

The culture of the shadow elves is truly an alien one, quite different from life on the surface. It has many layers, and peeling off these layers, one by one, is a time-consuming process. Not even the shadow elves know why they do some things the way they do; so much is shrouded in history, or in their deeply held beliefs. Much enjoyment can come from learning about these underground elves in a piecemeal fashion, so the best way to experience this book is to let someone else "read" it to you, in the

course of a gaming session where your characters learn—perhaps incorrectly, at first—about the shadow elves.

When you are finally ready to play a shadow elf character of your own, this is where you'll return. About half of this book gives the cultural perspective of the shadow elves: history as they know it, general geographical information, a typical day, and some scattered details about the "Way of the Shamans."

The rest of this book details creating and playing a shadow elf character, with an extensive list of skills and spells.

For those players who want an extra challenge—at the cost of slower advancement—the last seven pages of this book tell you how to create and play a shaman, or ritual spellcaster, among the shadow elves. Shamans dedicate their entire lives to Rafiel, the Immortal, and to the shadow elves as a whole. In return for their service, they gain additional spells, as well as the respect of the shadow elves for their wise leadership.

Other Books of Use —

Besides the rules for the D&D® game, you may be interested in perusing GAZ5 *The Elves of Alfheim* and GAZ10 *The Orcs of Thar*; both of these books pertain to the "friends and neighbours" of the shadow elves. The perspective of these books, of course, is different, and a few "well-known facts" in them might not be entirely correct—but a character who wants to know the whole truth about the shadow elves must travel to their underground dominion and live among them.

Are you ready? Then let's begin...

Welcome to the Home of the Shadow Elves —

Adventurers know the Broken Lands as a rugged, forsaken area of burning sunlight and dry, dusty rocks. Merchants who have business on the other side of the Broken Lands, along with mercenaries hired to protect them, are typically the only outsiders willing (or foolish enough) to enter this barren place.

Some adventurers also know that the Broken Lands are not as deserted as they appear, for below them are the caverns that serve as homes for many humanoid races: orcs, bugbears, goblins, hobgoblins, kobolds, ogres, gnolls, and trolls. The orcish king, Thar, claims the Broken Lands as his, and together with his hordes threatens any on the surface above who trespass his domain. Indeed, the Broken Lands are quite inhabited, for the vicious and ugly humanoids who live beneath its surface are still not as deep as possible. Beneath the orcs and their allies live a race never meant to inhabit the bowels of the earth, but lost to depths eons ago and now accustomed to life below ground: the shadow elves.

Only a handful of the humanoids above the shadow elves know of their existence, and almost no surface dwellers are aware of them. Yet the shadow elves have knowledge not only of the orcs and their kin, and the Alfheim elves and other demihumans farther above, but also of lands and races never dreamt of by any of these: the area known to the shadow elves as the Land of the Red Sun.

Rafiel Will Guide Him

The cavern was cold and humid, a contrast from the usually warm and dry abodes that the shadow elves inhabited. But this group was not at home: they had travelled some distance in order to participate in a ritual as old as their race, a ritual handed down from the Immortal Rafiel, a ritual ordained in the Refuge of Stone.

No torchlight nor candle flame reflected off the shaman's pale, mottled face, for this was a ritual of darkness, as were all of the rituals of the shadow elves. Still, the small group huddled in this cave could see through the blackness as well as any surface dweller could see in daylight, and their large, pointed ears could easily pull in the whispering of the shaman's chanting voice as she recited the history of the Four True Clans.

"Once, long ago, before the Great Rain of Fire even before the shamans discovered the secrets of the Earth Fire, we lived on the surface, as did all of our brothers and sisters. Deep in forests green did we dwell, a happy people in a happy land. We were a fertile race, living at peace with all in a fertile land. Our elders brought us up wisely, teaching us all those things that we needed to know, and we in turn brought up our children so that they could preserve the best of all of us.

"And so life went on for so many years, until humans caused the Great Rain of Fire, the day that the sun and the moon moved suddenly across the sky, and our fair land was lost in snow and ice."

The shaman paused in her recital, a tear rolling slowly down her cheek. She turned to the mother and father standing there, staring intently at each. The mother's eyes had already begun filling with tears hours ago, as the shadow elves were making their pilgrimage to this lonely spot. Somehow the little bundle in her arms knew not to cry.

The shaman reached out her hand to pull the blanket back from the baby's grotesque face, then continued her soft chanting.

"But all was not lost for our people. Those at home in the south were mostly destroyed, frozen by the bitter cold and unable to find food anywhere. Fortunately,

though, our elders had visited Blackmoor, and even as it was burnt to a cinder, this remnant found the Refuge of Stone.

"The fathers of the Four True Clans dug deep beneath the surface, finding incredible caverns that hid them from the Rain of Fire. All of Blackmoor was lost, but the elves were safe.

"Travelling onward, always deeper, after many years the leaders of this remnant found a large cavern where they settled. Etched on its walls, touched by the hand of Rafiel, were the sacred words of the Refuge of Stone. It was there that our ancestors built a great temple, and it was there that the City of the Stars grew up. Rafiel had not yet taught us the Way of the Shamans, nor the secret of the soul crystals."

The shaman looked down at her breast, where hung a large, clear stone, which even in the pitch darkness of the passageway seemed to glow with its own light as she spoke. Holding tightly to the crystal with her left hand, she put her right hand on the forehead of the tiny sacrifice she was about to offer to the Way of the Shamans.

"The Way of the Shamans was there, in the Refuge of Stone, but our elders could not see it, for Rafiel did not want them to see it. The secret of the soul crystals was there, in the Refuge of Stone, but our elders could not see it, for Rafiel did not want them to see it. But Rafiel was good, and Rafiel was wise, and the Refuge of Stone caused our people to grow in number.

"Life in the City of the Stars was hard, with little food, and many of us hungered for many years. Rafiel was testing us, tempering his people as a smith tempers his sword. After centuries, Rafiel was convinced that this sword was true; he knew its hardness and its sharpness. With this sword, Rafiel could smite any enemy, and so it was that Rafiel revealed to us the Way of the Shamans, hidden within the carvings of the Refuge of Stone.

"Light brings forth shadow, and only shadow can bring forth light. May this soul bring forth light, and return together with others to lead our people."

So saying, the shaman took the baby from its mother's arms and set it gently on the cavern's floor. "Rafiel in the rocks can guide this one's path now. Strengthen him, help him to find a clear crystal, lead him as you led us to our Refuge of Stone. We will watch for him, just as you patiently watch over us."

The shaman started back down the cold passageway, leading the party home to the City of the Stars, while the crystal on her chest glowed brightly. The dwindling sounds of the baby's whimpering matched his mother's silent tears.



History as the Shadow Elves Know It

The elves who had led the Blackmoor expedition were caught unawares by the Great Rain of Fire. They fled into the Broken Lands, finding caves there that promised to protect them from the scorching flames on the surface. Deep within the ground, they found a vast cave with unusual properties: one could stand on its ceiling as easily as on its floor. On that ceiling they settled, attracted by mysterious carvings, and founded the City of the Stars.

The City of the Stars was not the only city of the shadow elves, but it was the largest, and it did manage to survive—something difficult considering the circumstances. The catastrophe on the surface continued in the depths of the earth and utterly destroyed one city, Aengmor, when it was surrounded by lava after an earthquake. Even so, after centuries, the elves had started to rebuild civilization, and centuries after that, they dared to travel to the surface again.

The elves had by now forgotten the way to the surface, but the bravest among them were sent to seek it out. On their first journey, a small party of elves found

the land as inhospitable to them as it was when they left it: the sun burned a fiery red, and refused to set at night. The pale skin and eyes of the shadow elves were little match for the sun's brightness; many members of this group were blinded after only the first day, and all of them died shortly after returning to the City of the Stars.

A second expedition was sent out about a hundred years later. The shadow elves emerged in the Broken Lands near what is now called the Sun's Anvil, and needless to say, the expedition leader decided that the surface was still not habitable. Meanwhile, the shadow elves had occasionally encountered other denizens of the Broken Lands. These humanoids in general found the shadow elves delicious; none of them was able (nor did any try) to correct the shadow elves' false impression of conditions on the surface.

Eventually, shadow elves in some cave or other came upon a party of human adventurers. These humans scarcely recognized the shadow elves as elves, so much had their appearance changed over the millennia. The shadow elves learned

from these humans that the devastation from the Great Rain of Fire had ended long ago, and even more astonishing, that an entire nation of elves had established themselves on the surface—Alfheim. (In fact, several nations of elves had formed, including Wendar, Shiye Lawr in Alpha-tia, and two principalities in Glantri, but the shadow elves did not learn of these until later.)

The shadow elves, unskilled in the arts of diplomacy (for such had never before been needed by their kind), hastily sent a group to Alfheim, on the surface, but peace was not to be readily had. The surface elves, who had somehow survived the ice age in their homeland and travelled here, were not interested in sharing their bounty with their lost cousins. A series of overtures and counter-overtures finally ended with Cledryl, then king of Alfheim, ordering that all shadow elves found within his realm be immediately killed.

The shadow elves hardened their hearts at this. This was against their code as elves: Never would they treat another of their kind so shamefully. They now understood why Rafiel had prepared them so well for



History as the Shadow Elves Know It

the hardships of cave living, for it was evidently their fate to live forever in the City of the Stars and its environs.

Still, some shadow elves are yet hopeful that they may be able to return to the surface some day, and certain envoys have quietly been sent to different nations to investigate this eventuality. Meanwhile, the shadow elves are not friendly to any visitors to their realm: the approved policy is to shoot these enemies first, and ask questions later.

The Four Lost Clans —

In relation to the elves of Alfheim and other surface lands, the shadow elves make up all that is left of four clans lost when Blackmoor was destroyed: the Celebryl, the Porador, the Felestyr, and the Gelbalf. Elves are not a solitary people; they enjoy the company of others of their kind. Thus, it is not surprising that these four clans have gathered into four cities underground.

These four cities are connected by a warren of tunnels, opening out into caverns large enough to hold each of the cities. The tunnels connecting the cities are not of uniform size, and so most tunnels are designated as allowing travel in only one direction. In this manner, groups seldom need to pass by each other in the narrower passageways. The elves have a certain amount of specialization, so trade between cities is a common activity. Travelling the wrong direction is seen as a breach of good manners. More about the tunnel networks connecting the cities can be found below.

While members of a clan live in the city to which they belong, it is ordinary practice to marry a shadow elf from a different city. The new couple then sets up their home in the bride's home city, usually living near her parents, and sometimes sharing quarters with them. The new husband is considered to belong to his wife's clan after the marriage.

Geography in General —

The domain of the shadow elves covers one of the greatest regions of any country covered in the Gazetteer series. If it were suddenly moved to the surface, it would extend from Belcadiz in Glantri, east to the regions of the Ethengarian Yakuts and the Dwarfgate Mountains, then south to the Cruth Mountains and west in a line below the city of Darokin as far as Lake Amsorak.

The shadow elves, spread out over their underground expanse, number about 550,000, with more than half of these concentrated in the clans' four major cities.

The City of the Stars —

Population: 250,000

Clan: *Celebryl*

The City of the Stars is the capital and largest city of the shadow elves, and an architectural marvel, for it is built on the ceiling of the largest cavern known to them. The elves thought it a miracle that gravity acted in the way that it did in this cavern, and the fortunate discovery of the Refuge of Stone on a cavern wall further guaranteed its value as the site for a city.

The gravity is in general uniform for anyone standing in a particular spot: he feels firmly attached to the floor below him, and anything he throws up into the air falls back down to the ground as expected. But there are areas of sudden gravity shifts along the walls, and a careful climber will discover that he can ascend to what he thought was the ceiling and then stand upon it, looking "up" toward the "floor" he was standing on before. It is on this ceiling that almost a majority of shadow elves makes their home.

The name of the City of the Stars derives from its appearance from the floor of the cavern in which it is built. The unusual gravity of the cavern allows a visitor to stand on the floor of the cavern and look up at the city, miles above, so far away that its streetlights and windows appear to be stars. Somewhere, deep in the shadow elves' racial memories, they recall the beauty of stars under a summer sky,

so the City of the Stars holds a particular emotional appeal. Indeed, the infravision of the elves leaves little need for lights—the main reason they are kept is so that the city deserves its name when viewed from the floor of the vast cavern.

The City of the Stars, however, does not always deserve its name, for its cavern is so large—and so warm—that the centre of the cavern often fills with clouds, and rain falls about once a week. Because of the peculiar gravity of the place, this rain falls both directions at the same time. Thunderstorms occur less often, but are quite dramatic and seen as a good omen from the Immortal Rafiel.

The principal feature of the City of the Stars is of course the Temple of Rafiel, built against a face of the cavern on which is carved the Refuge of Stone, the religious text upon which the Way of the Shamans and all worship of Rafiel is based. The Temple of Rafiel almost entirely fills this niche, with stalactites hundreds of feet long hanging down nearly to the steps of the temple.

The temple is built as a series of concentric rectangles, with walls sloping in toward the centre. Any shadow elf is free to worship at the shrine on the very top of the temple, but entering inside is allowed only to shamans. Only the highest-level shamans have access to the innermost sanctum of the temple.

The Celebryl Air Force is of course based in the City of the Stars; its troops practice manoeuvres daily, swooping their large skinwings—tremendous flying reptiles similar to winged reptiles of the age of dinosaurs—through the air.

The City of the Stars is directly underneath Trollhattan, in the Broken Lands; the water from the city's wells, in fact, is filtered down from Troll Lake more than a thousand feet above.

History as the Shadow Elves Know It

New Grunland

Population: 40,000
Clan: *Porador*

The city of New Grunland is located about 100 miles north of the City of the Stars, a good twelve-day journey through twisting tunnels that connect the two caverns. New Grunland's cavern is about half the size of the capital's, but is considerably warmer.

The Grunlanders take advantage of this heat by growing and processing food, trading it with the other three cities of the shadow elves. A "Porador breakfast"—only a single mouthful—can last an elf all day long, because of the way it is compressed and preserved. Foodstuffs such as these are particularly useful for travelling through the caves; no one wants to be burdened with extra weight.

Alfmyr

Population: 25,000
Clan: *Felestyr*

Alfmyr boasts the largest vein of soul crystals of any of the cities of the shadow elves. Mining these crystals is tedious, exacting work—it can take several years to extract a single crystal—but is considered rewarding by the elves because of the religious significance of the crystals. The crystals, of course, are not traded with other clans, but are shared between shamans, who are considered clanless, belonging to all of the shadow elves.

Alfmyr does profit financially from its mining, though, often finding precious metals near the pockets of soul crystals. The smoke of smithies can be smelled in Alfmyr, as these metals are fashioned into fine armour and weapons.

Geographically speaking, Alfmyr is the city farthest from the rest of the shadow elves, being located almost directly under the Canolbarth Forest in the kingdom of Alfheim.

Losetrel

Population: 17,500
Clan: *Gelbalf*

The smallest of the four main cities, Losetrel is known for the bravery of its tailors. Spider silk, gathered from the webs of giant shroud spiders, is carefully cured to remove its paralysing features, and is then woven into cloth and cut and sewn into white garments of considerable beauty.

The shroud spiders are not domesticated in any sense of the word. Their bite is poisonous, but it is considered unprofitable to kill a spider, as they take years to grow to a size at which they can spin usable silk. This means that the webbing must be "stolen" from the spider, usually accomplished by having one tailor lure the spider away from its lair by feigning to be trapped while another tailor grabs up the silk. This is a dangerous manoeuvre, since anyone within 30 feet of the spider can be hit by a paralysing strand of web.

Webbing is also made into ropes that retain their property of paralysis for several months; these are often used as lassos by skinwing troops, or by ground forces travelling through tunnels near humanoid settlements.

The techniques first developed in Losetrel have since been adopted in other cities and settlements of the shadow elves.

The Tunnels of the Shadow Elves

Shadow elves are as adept at mining and tunnelling as the dwarves of Rockhome are, but for the most part the shadow elves have not had to create their own tunnels. Indeed, the area that they inhabit is riddled with literally thousands of caves and tunnels, with some passageways being hundreds of miles long.

Not only do these passages lead between the four cities of the shadow elves, but they also lead to many of the realms of the humanoids, as well as to the surface in various locations, including Glantri, Darokin, and even Thyatis and Alphatia.

Naturally, the endpoints of these tunnels are carefully guarded by the shadow

elves, even though visitors through them are rare. The most common (after ordinary animals and other monsters) are humanoids from the Broken Lands above, but the occasional human or dwarf party is not unknown.

Interestingly enough, there is a tunnel that is purported to lead to the fabled "Land of the Red Sun". It is guarded just as any other tunnel would be, although none of the shadow elves use it. Being posted here is considered a demotion.

The shadow elves have spent—and continue to spend—considerable time working on these tunnels. If one didn't know better, one perhaps would suspect that the shadow elves were related to dwarves, because of the enjoyment and skill they have with mining.

Tunnels are widened where necessary to provide proper passage. Where stalagmites and stalactites prevent wheeled carts or pack animals from moving through, these natural features are removed by work crews to provide a path. Some areas need special shoring up along walls and ceiling to insure safety.

Not all the tunnels are filled only with air—some are considerably more hazardous while offering other benefits. Many tunnels are flooded with underground rivers, and several of these rivers are navigable, allowing the shadow elves to travel in boats from city to city. Extensive work has been done on several of these water tunnels, because a boat can't just duck its head when the ceiling is lower. The erosion along these tunnels also requires the constant attention of shadow elven miners. Some large caverns contain gigantic underground lakes; some of these have shadow elf cities and settlements along their banks.

A few tunnels are "wind shafts", with air blowing fiercely in one direction or the other, depending upon the pressure of the caves that are interconnected. These insure that the shadow elves have fresh air to breathe, besides allowing smoke to be carried off safely. For the most part, these passageways are not further excavated by the shadow elves, lest they interfere with the natural wind.

History as the Shadow Elves Know It



Finally, a few tunnels are filled with molten magma, on its way to becoming lava once it reaches a surface and spews forth from a volcano. Tunnels only partially filled afford opportunity for the shadow elves to vary their diet, for many of them contain lava fish, a succulent food prized not only because of its rarity but also because of its piquant flavour. Lava rivers frequently become the homes of

blacksmiths and other metal workers, as well as other types of businesses that need a high heat source. Explorations of these tunnels, when possible with the assistance of magic, show that most of them end in great lava whirlpools, some leading to the surface—presumably to a volcano or future volcano—and some leading back down into the depths of the world.

As can be expected, different types of

tunnels can converge more or less in one spot. Thus, for example, a wind tunnel, lava tunnel, and underground river might create a great quantity of steam that is blown off to some other cave.

Finally, it must be emphasized that these tunnels are quite variable in size—some can barely be squeezed through by a young shadow elf, while others can be several miles wide.

A Day in the Lives of the Shadow Elves

1 a.m.: Swooping through the black sky, Teledriel kept his eyes sharp, scanning this way and that, hunting for his deadly prey. Teledriel belonged to Clan Celebryl, and had earned his post as captain of a patrol after 19 years of service. Above him, stars twinkled—the lights of the City of the Stars. His skinwing mount knew this cave as well as he did. The great beast flapped its leathery wings only occasionally, otherwise catching the warm air currents that lifted off various rocks, hot from the energy in the bowels of the earth.

This whole area underground was riddled with tunnels; the major ones were well guarded by troops on the ground, but there were not enough elves to protect all of them, and some of these tunnels led to the Broken Lands above. It was a full-time job for many, protecting the habitations of the shadow elves from the marauding humanoids. Whenever possible, it was standard policy for the shadow elves to kill any unwanted visitors, completely to the last soldier. If any happened to escape, or if a raid was considered not accidental—not just a party of trolls who were lost in the tunnels—then the shamans needed to be called in, to use their magic to reroute the tunnels, so that the orcs and their kin would not be able to find the shadow elves that way again.

For the most part, humanoids were too stupid to attempt attacking the shadow elves—and those with enough intelligence to accomplish it were smart enough not to try. Tonight, Teledriel hoped that all would be quiet.

2 a.m.: In the city of Losetrel, in a quiet little house, in a small room, an elf lay in painful struggle—the struggle for life. She and her husband had waited for this moment for 28 weeks now, the moment when she would give birth to their first child. The pains were coming more regularly now, and Faengloar knew that the time was close.

Her husband, Poponel, was worried, as worried as any husband would be at such an occasion. He loved his wife, but was frightened of her frailty. He glanced at the midwife hovering nearby, and wondered if

his child, whether son or daughter, would be born healthy. Faengloar was only 141 years old, quite young to be having a child.

3 a.m.: The town of Porador was quiet at this time of day, but Dilgar liked it that way. He was already up and busy tending his charges. “My beasts want to be milked reg’lar,” he liked to say, and he prided himself on the fact that he had not missed a morning or evening in 22 years on the farm.

The giant slugs—not the wild variety, but a species domesticated by the shadow elves millennia ago—waited patiently in their stalls, growling softly when Dilgar poured the slop in their feed troughs. This was Dilgar’s favourite part of the job, when the beasts’ eager natures showed through. Dilgar liked his slugs to show some spirit.

4 a.m.: Faengloar’s cries had grown louder over the last hour, as her pain had intensified, and Poponel had been ushered from the room by his sister-in-law. Now Poponel had only to do what every father had to do at some time in his life—to wait by himself, with his fears, while his wife bore his child. It could be hours yet, he thought to himself. He hoped that he could endure the wait and wished that he had a treltilan to smoke while he paced back and forth.

5 a.m.: Seladir set down her towel; she was dry enough now, and combed through her damp white hair with quick, eager strokes. Seladir had much to do today—she had been up for an hour already—for Seladir was a shaman.

She picked up the small copper pitcher and poured a few drops of holy water on each hand. Barely audible, she asked that Rafiel would guide her this day and keep her heart and body clean, so that she could better serve him. This ritual completed, she hurriedly dressed, finishing her outfit with a large white gem that hung from a gold chain around her neck. “May Rafiel guide these to us,” she solemnly intoned, and then walked from her tiny

room toward the main chamber of the Immortal’s temple.

6 a.m.: Mardaniel continued along his way, quietly taking step after step as he had for the last three hours. To another shadow elf, keeping such hours would seem unusual—but Mardaniel no longer had the right to call himself a shadow elf. Mardaniel was a *wanderer*, forced to leave his city after a shaman determined that he was too old to stay any longer. “Too old!” he thought to himself—“as if I was any spryer at 700 than 800.”

Mardaniel chuckled to himself at this thought, then sucked in his breath lest anyone hear him. This cavern was one he had never entered before, of course, for it was ordered in the Refuge of Stone that wanderers never retrace their steps, and Mardaniel was not one to tempt Rafiel’s justice over so inconsequential a matter.

7 a.m.: Teledriel was pleased with the night—everything so far had been quiet, and only two more hours on his shift. The sturdy beast under his saddle showed no signs of tiring, but Teledriel would be glad to land and crawl into bed.

His stomach reminded him that it was time for his meal. He whistled twice to his skinwing as a signal, then tied the reins off to the saddle-ring while his mount flew steadily on. The pouch hanging from Teledriel’s belt held his meal for the day, and he opened it gingerly, pouring the brownish lump into the palm of his hand. He offered a silent prayer up to Rafiel, bit into his breakfast, and swallowed the whole in two gulps. Teledriel would not be hungry again until the following morning.

8 a.m.: Seladir felt entirely at peace with herself, as she did each morning after the adulation of the Refuge of Stone. The worship chamber of Rafiel’s temple was huge, and the back of the largest chamber was built into the face of the cliff. No wall was added, for here was found the Refuge of Stone, the instructions for the shadow elves, drawn by Rafiel’s own finger into the rock.

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Those gathered there this morning had read out the 14 verses of the Refuge of Stone, following the letters carefully even though each had memorized the entire text long ago. Most of the congregation were shamans, wearing soul crystals, and these gems shown the brighter while the holy words were recited.

Seladir wished that she could stay in this place for a while longer, but knew that she had other duties to keep her busy today in the temple.

9 a.m.: Teledriel was putting his great beast away, rubbing his back with a stiff brush where the saddle had been strapped for the past 12 hours.

Suddenly, both beast and rider bristled at the faint sound of a horn being blown from some distance away. Every shadow elf in the City of the Stars knew this sound, for there was only one reason that horns were blown—an attack from outside!

Teledriel grabbed the saddle back from its rack as a boy came running to help. Within moments the great straps had all been made fast, and Teledriel was winging his way back across the sky. His ears picked out the direction of the horn, and he guided his mount higher and higher, soon reaching the gravity shift point where he swung the skinwing over and began the rapid descent toward the opposite floor of the cavern.

10 a.m.: Dilgar had finished milking his slugs, and even now was pouring the last bucketful of their yellow-brown milk into a large vat. The evening before, he had picked a handful of lermon (a kind of fungi) and now tossed it into the vat and stirred briskly with a large wooden paddle. While the milk was curdling, he rinsed off his leather apron—slugs *can* be a little messy at times—and headed off to the “north 40,” where his fungi needed tending.

11 a.m.: Poponel’s mind jumped back and forth from a mood of hope and ease, to one of excitement and eagerness, to one of doubt and worry, and back again. He tried sitting, he tried pacing, and he even tried lying down. None of this was able to settle him—but would anyone expect it to?

From time to time he could hear his wife’s groans of pain from the next room, which only made him feel even more powerless. The midwife didn’t really help when she stepped out for a moment and asked how he was—he felt embarrassed for being nervous, and felt further embarrassed for feeling embarrassed.

Noon: On the surface, the sun would be at its highest point in the sky at this time, but in the City of the Stars it was, of course, still as dark as ever.

Seladir’s noontime meditation was interrupted, as she knew it would be when she first heard the horns, by the arrival of injured troops from the battle across the gigantic cavern. One of the worst injuries was a skinwing rider—probably an officer, to judge from his clothing. The military healers who brought him in said that he had been ambushed by two trolls who jumped out at him when he dived toward a regiment of orcs. His skinwing had been killed—and half eaten!—by the trolls. If their hunger had been less, they might have paid some attention to this flyer and he would have returned to a soul crystal; as it was, he lay on the ground unconscious while other shadow elves laboriously defeated the humanoids all around him.

Seladir looked at this specimen of bravery now. He would live, but it would be some time before his left leg regenerated, and that required the care of a shaman. Blessed by Rafiel, she thought to herself, this man would fly again in a few months.

1 p.m.: Reginal had stared at the wall of this cave for over two hours now, and he felt ready to take the next exacting step. The pick in his hand looked like a child’s toy, small as it was, but it was of the finest shadow elven craftsmanship. Further,

it had been blessed by the shamans at the Temple of Rafiel. No other tool would fit the bill for the precise work he was doing.

Reginal was no ordinary miner. He was not digging a new passageway to some cavern, or widening some tunnel so that carts could pass, or even raising the ceiling of some underground river—a dangerous job, but necessary for navigation in many cases.

No, Reginal was mining soul crystals, and he knew that damaging the gem in any way meant many deaths, for these multifaceted stones held within them the past and future members of his race. This was Rafiel’s gift to his kind, he thought, the secret of the soul crystals.

Tap! Tap! His pick struck the rock wall in two places; then Reginal stood staring again. This one would require a few more hours of study before he could continue his excavation.

2 p.m.: “Liar! I touched you before you found refuge, you know I did.”

“Did not, green elf!”

“Did so, wanderer!”

“Did not!”

“Did so!”

Two shadow elf children were enjoying another day of play, at games that reflected the concerns of their parents long ago. The archetype was the early wanderings of the shadow elves, before Rafiel revealed the Refuge of Stone and the race founded the great City of the Stars. “Green elf” was a free insult, comparing the companion with those surface elves that had neither the courtesy nor kindness of accepting their deep-dwelling siblings. This childhood squabble would end in a moment or two, and play would continue, but the disagreements the playmates’ parents had with the elves of Alfheim was a more serious matter—outside the realm of childhood frivolity.

3 p.m.: Seladir was finished with her patient, the skinwing rider whose name she still did not know. The bleeding from his leg had stopped, thanks to her powers as a shaman of Rafiel. She felt glad that the wound that amputated the leg was

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sharp and clean, for she hated having to cut away dirty injuries. If the rest of the leg had been found at the scene of the battle, she could have tried to put it back on, but evidently one of the trolls had consumed it. As it was, she exerted the utmost of her powers to cause the missing limb slowly to grow back.

4 p.m.: Poponel was no happier now than he was 12 hours before. The midwife had left, relieved by another midwife who took her place at Faengloar's bedside. Poponel harboured a secret desire that some other husband, some other father-to-be, could come and relieve *him*, waiting for the inevitable while Poponel got some sleep, or took a walk, or—anything but this!

5 p.m.: Mardaniel was almost 900 years old, but still had his faculties. He knew what the rock surrounding a vein of soul crystals looked like, and this was it. In his youth, this would have been a lucky find, but now it was valueless to his race. Rafael knew where it was, and would reveal it in due time, but all Mardaniel could do was to pause here, reverently, and wonder who might someday be born after these gems were unearthed.

Would Rafael look kindly on his own soul, he wondered. When he breathed his last breath, would he travel to a soul crystal hanging around a shaman's neck, or resting on an altar? Or would his travail be to abide in an unmined vein, such as this one, to wait—possibly for centuries, or even millennia—until he was dug out and could be born again?

Mardaniel's reveries were interrupted by a sudden sound from the passageway ahead of him. He could hear his heart pounding in his ears as his eyes scanned this way and that, looking for any suitable hiding place among the rocks. He was a wanderer, and forbidden by the Refuge of Stone ever to retrace his steps, so he could not turn and run. But who was ahead of him, coming this way? Perhaps a band of goblins, hunting for food... even worse, it could be a group of his own kind—and Rafael had strictly forbidden contact

between wanderers and city dwellers. Mardaniel pulled himself into a niche in the wall, crouched down, and hoped that he wouldn't be spotted.

6 p.m.: Miles above the City of the Stars, the sun was going down in the western sky, but there was no change here. Rafael's kindness did not extend to creating giant lights in the sky to see by. Shadow elves had other gifts from the Immortal: Their clear eyes could see in the dark for almost a hundred feet, and their oversized ears enabled them to zero in on the tiniest sound.

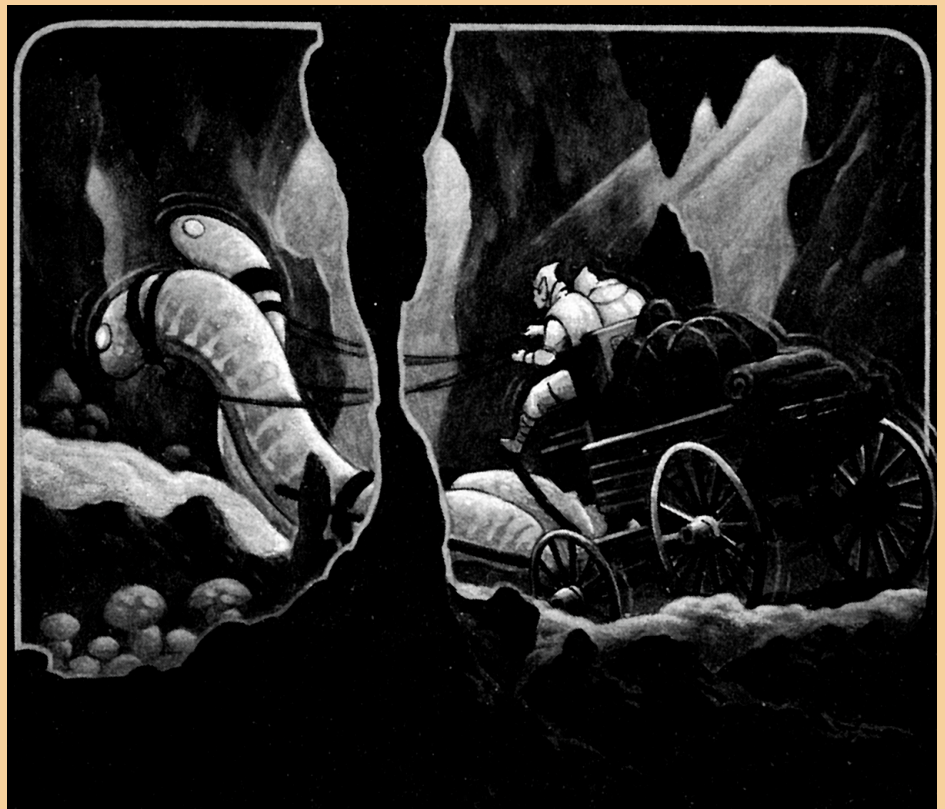
7 p.m.: Dilgar wouldn't trade his life with that of anyone else in Porador—or even anyone in the City of the Stars, even the king himself. He liked getting up early, and he liked settling down to an evening of peace and quiet after putting the animals to bed.

The slugs needed little tending, other than their milking twice a day, but the spiders were something else. These fearsome

giants were naturally territorial, but even so if one got too hungry it was liable to roam, and Dilgar's neighbours wouldn't appreciate that at all.

Once a week, Dilgar had to give the spiders meat—fresh meat. He had only two spiders on his farm, and he was fortunate that there had been an attack by kobolds a few days ago. Kobolds always attacked in large numbers, but were usually incapable of being more than a nuisance. Dilgar had purchased four of the dead creatures from the troops' quartermaster after the battle, and he now approached the spider webs with the bodies loaded in a wheelbarrow.

His farm was laid out in a clever fashion. The spiders lived in a cul-de-sac; Dilgar had fitted out the passageway leading into them with a slingshot made from the outer skin of a particular giant fungus. One by one, he loaded up the slingshot with the cold bodies of the kobolds, firing these morsels into the spider webs at the back wall of the cave. He liked the little chattering sound the beasts made when he fed them.



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8 p.m.: Mardaniel should have felt tired, but his excitement was still high from the conversation he had been having with his new friend. The footsteps he had heard did not belong to a humanoid raiding party, nor to city-dwelling shadow elves, but to another wanderer like himself.

This was allowed, but necessarily temporary: Rafiel's code did not allow either of them to accompany the other, for that would require him to retrace his footsteps, and such a thing a wanderer never could do. The two old men had just talked for a while, reminiscing about mutual acquaintances years before in the City of the Stars.

Mardaniel brought up the subject of the hidden city, a tale he had heard as a child, but his new acquaintance knew nothing of it. Was there really a great cavern, inhabited by wanderers? Did Rafiel allow such a thing? Would Mardaniel ever find this city?

The two wanderers swapped information on what each would find farther along the tunnel, then they parted. Neither would ever see the other again.

9 p.m.: Telemon Celebryl was king of all the shadow elves, by the grace of Rafiel and his shamans. His palace was in the City of the Stars, of course. Ordinarily, a king would not be working this late, but it was not every night that a spy brought back a new report from Glantri.

Telemon knew that his subjects deserved better than these hollow spaces underground, even if this was Rafiel's will for them. Telemon knew that life on the surface was sweeter than this, and that the elves of Alfheim could be forced to share their bounty with the shadow elves. Telemon knew that he had the strength, cunning and will to bring these things to pass.

With this latest report, his plot to take over Alfheim was proceeding according to plan.

10 p.m.: Seladir enjoyed this flyer's company. His optimism in the face of hardship and suffering was contagious, reminding her of what her father was like before he became a wanderer.

She learned the name of the captain—for she had guessed rightly, he was an officer—the name of Teledriel, who would rest here in the temple's infirmary overnight, and then report back to his camp in the morning. His leg had grown back entirely by now; he would walk with a limp for a few weeks while it gained its strength anew.

11 p.m.: Poponel could not believe that he had fallen asleep. He woke up now with a start, and wondered what time it was. He could hear his wife's piteous cries from the bedroom intermingled with the midwife's orders: "Push!" the woman cried "Push harder! Everything is well, Faengloar, but you must work now to see your new baby born!"

The fact that in a few moments Poponel's wait would be over was no relief to him. He found himself pacing back and forth across the room, wanting to be with his wife but knowing that he would only be in the way. At this final moment, his thoughts turned to fear: The shadow elves were more prolific than their surface cousins, but a painful price was paid for this. Will my baby be healthy, he wondered, or will it, like so many others, be deformed—he could not get his mind to finish the word. He had a brother whose second child was returned to Rafiel, as was the custom in such cases, and Poponel knew that he thought of it with sadness each time he went to the temple.

The sudden sound of a baby's cry brought Poponel's thoughts back to the present, but the shouts of the midwife did nothing to soothe him. "Faengloar! Your son! Look at his face! He has the marks—send someone to the temple immediately!" Poponel noticed, rather detached, that the room seemed to be getting darker, and that there was a rushing sound in his ears—then he fainted and collapsed to the floor.

Midnight: Seladir was in bed, and had pulled the blanket tight up under her chin. It had been a long day, and she certainly deserved her rest, which made her wonder all the more why she could now hear voices clamouring in the hallway outside her door. A knock convinced her that she would not soon be sleeping. "Come in!" she called.

A servant girl stepped through the doorway and bowed her head once in respect to the shaman. "Pardon the intrusion, your reverence, but there is a man here who needs you to look at his newborn. He says that the baby has the marks—"

Seladir was already up out of the bed and pulling on her day-clothes. She followed the girl out into the lobby to meet this father. Poponel saw her coming, and thought how poised the shaman looked. He studied the purplish marks around her eyes, and proudly remembered those same marks on his first son's face, the marks that forever branded him as one of Rafiel's chosen, the marks that qualified him to enter the temple's school, the marks that showed every shadow elf that here was a shaman!

The Way of the Shamans

The shadow elves are a quite religious race, feeling as they do that the continued existence of their people intimately depends upon the quality of their relationship with the Immortal Rafiel. It was Rafiel, they believe, that led them to the City of the Stars and revealed his scripture, the Refuge of Stone. Nor is Rafiel any one-shot leader: He has continued his mystical presence throughout the history of the shadow elves, teaching and empowering shamans, leading miners to new veins of soul crystals, and in every way ensuring that the shadow elves do not become extinct.

Birth? Not Quite Yet! —

Life begins at birth—or so believe the surface dwellers. The shadow elves know better, for Rafiel has taught them his secrets, the Way of the Shamans. In fact, the soul of the individual is immortal, and dwells in a physical form only temporarily—at most a thousand years.

Where is the soul, then, before it is born into the body of a shadow elf? And where does the soul go after apparent death? The answers to these two questions give the shamans incredible power.

Soul Crystals —

The rocks surrounding the habitat of the shadow elves infrequently yield forth a particular sort of gem—a gem found nowhere else in the world. Rafiel has taught his shamans that these gems are “soul crystals”, the holders of the race of shadow elves.

Each soul crystal, depending on its size and quality, can contain from one to 100 souls. These souls lie dormant as long as the gem is contained in its original rock formation, but after it is excavated these souls are free to be born.

When a shadow elf becomes pregnant, a soul from a nearby soul crystal enters into the woman to await its imminent birth. Which soul? From which soul crystal? These are decisions for Rafiel himself to make, and those who revere him must of course respect his judgments in all such cases.

Special Souls —

In Rafiel’s wisdom, he has selected out certain souls as special. When these are born, their uniqueness is immediately apparent.

Some souls are weaker than others, or misbehaved in earlier lives, and must be kept apart from the shadow elves or properly punished to guide them along the path that leads to proper behaviour. These souls are born with tragic, atrocious deformities as a sign of their past misdeeds.

In such a case, a shaman leads the parents, together with the infant, on a journey that might take several days or weeks. Rafiel guides the shaman on this circuitous route, that eventually ends up in some little-travelled underground corridor. There, a short ceremony is held, and the baby is abandoned into Rafiel’s care. The parents mourn for the expected death of their infant, but they know that Rafiel is just and that its soul will someday return in another crystal, for no shadow elf ever truly “dies”.

How exactly do these infants die? A few might linger for a few days before passing away from exposure, but this is rare—after all, a tender young baby might hit the spot for some wandering monster. Cruel? No, for as the shadow elves say, “Rafiel will guide him.”

The Mark of the Shaman —

The second case of unusual birth among the shadow elves is considered much more auspicious—the parents in this case have an opportunity to rejoice over their good fortune with considerable pride.

These babies show a purplish discoloration of skin—a birthmark—around their eyes and extending up the forehead into the hairline. Many of these infants also show additional mottling on other parts of the face, or other parts of the body, most often the backs of the hands or tops of the feet. These birthmarks are almost always symmetrical in design, a definite proof that these disfigurements have not occurred randomly.

These birthmarks are known among

the shadow elves as the “mark of the shaman”. When such a baby is born, the closest temple must immediately be notified, and a shaman is sent out to verify the facts of the birth. The child is taken away from the parents at the age of 10, and reared from that time on in the clan’s Temple of Rafiel.

Temple training is quite effective in bringing about a proper attitude of worship toward Rafiel; he in his turn rewards the student with such blessings as are deserved: a strong body, a quick mind, an eagerness to learn, and the will to survive against overwhelming odds.

In the rare case that a youth with the mark of the shaman does not enter temple training, or is not consecrated by another shaman, the birthmark fades away when the shadow elf reaches adulthood.

The Power of Souls —

Full training in the Way of the Shaman includes many powers that can only be hinted at here. One of these powers is the ability to use soul crystals as material components of a spell. The shaman, casting his magic, can intensify it by drawing upon the power of all of the souls contained within the crystal. Considering that virtually all elves have some inherent ability at magic, and further considering that there might be as many as 100 souls in a crystal, it is easy to imagine the power that the shaman has in this regard.

Death and the Next Life —

When a shadow elf dies, his soul returns to a soul crystal to await a new birth some time in the future. This temporary resting spot for the soul is determined in whole by the actions of the individual while alive.

The shadow elf who is diligent in obeying the shamans and the revealed truths of the Refuge of Stone will most likely end up in a soul crystal currently in use, that is, as a shaman’s amulet or kept carefully in a temple. Such a soul is liable to be born again soon thereafter, and again live out the hard life of a shadow elf.

The Way of the Shamans

A shadow elf who does not live up to the standards set by Rafiel, on the other hand, will be sent to a soul crystal still deep within the rock. Here he must wait, unconscious of his surroundings, until the soul crystal is tediously and painstakingly removed by a shadow elf miner. Only after the soul crystal is excavated and then blessed at the Temple of Rafiel do its souls become eligible for birth.

It is widely believed by most shadow elves that shamans can communicate with those departed souls residing in soul crystals, but the shamans do not speak of this publicly. “The Way of the Shamans is not for every ear to hear,” according to the elves.

The Refuge of Stone —

The core beliefs of the shadow elves are enumerated in the 14 verses of the Refuge of Stone, the original of which can be found at the Temple of Rafiel in the City of the Stars. From this basis, the organized priesthood has developed a number of subsidiary rules and regulations, all of which must be carefully followed if a shadow elf wants to live out his life in the best way possible.

The calendar of the shadow elves is also based upon this text, with 14 months of 24 days, each month representing the truth of one particular verse. Naturally, there are special feast days and holidays in each of these months, and the shadow elves are careful to celebrate these in a fitting manner.

More importantly, many days of the calendar are considered unlucky, typically because of some earlier tragedy falling upon the day in question. No official business (and no important business if one is extra careful) is transacted on these “bad” days.

More details of the shadow elf calendar can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*; the calendar itself is printed inside the outer cover.

More About the Shadow Elves

First Comes Love, Then Comes Marriage —

Shadow elves form families much as surface elves do. Many marriages are arranged by the parents, with a goal of increasing the family's wealth or influence. All marriages are *exogamous*—that is, the bride and groom must belong to different clans. The new home is then set up in the clan of the bride; the groom is considered from that point on to be a member of his bride's clan.

If the wife died early enough for her widower to remarry, he might then choose a new bride from the clan in which he was originally born—for he would not at that time belong to that clan, so the marriage would be proper.

As can be expected, this “back and forth” between clans has many cultural and societal benefits for the shadow elves. No city suffers from inbreeding—other than the usual two types of defects encountered by the shadow elves. What technological innovation there is can spread more easily by the intermarriages of different clans, and the natural desire to see one's relatives increases the amount of intercity travel and trade.

Then Comes Baby in the Baby Carriage —

The shadow elves are more prolific than their ancient cousins, the surface elves, but are still nowhere as prolific as the humanoid races that surround them. Furthermore, the incidence of babies born with disqualifying marks is high enough to prevent the shadow elf population from growing too rapidly. Current growth rates are 1% per year, with an expected average of four children per family, and a maximum effective lifespan of 800 years.

Still, the total number of shadow elves is currently about triple the number of elves in Alfheim.

Food for the Body, Food for the Soul —

The Refuge of Stone doesn't teach anything like “give us this day our daily bread”, but it does mention food, and the habits of the shadow elves in this regard are different enough to bear mentioning.

The Way of the Shamans teaches several different techniques for food preparation and preservation; this is seen as Rafiel's way of protecting the nascent shadow elves from newly-encountered poisonous substances and also his way of allowing the elves to travel far on slim supplies.

The typical shadow elf eats only one meal a day, and that meal usually takes the form of an egg-sized, dark brown ball of compacted foodstuffs. So proficient are the elves at this science that this *trania* also supplies the elf with the water he needs for the day. Eating more than one ball of trania is considered not only rude but also irreverent, a sin against the Way of the Shamans.

The exception is on the elven feast days. On such occasions, wine flows freely and succulent delicacies of every variety are prepared in abundance. A typical meal on a holiday will consist of 14 courses, representing, of course, the 14 verses of the Refuge of Stone and the 14 months of the calendar. The symbolism of these dishes is exquisitely bound up with their preparation and the way they are served, making the meal a delight not only for the shadow elf tongue but for the shadow elf spirit as well.

Working for a Living —

The typical shadow elf learns a trade from his father, or perhaps from an uncle, and practices that profession for his entire life. About one out of three shadow elves will change occupations at middle age—say, 500 years old—but this is often looked upon by neighbours as a symptom of laziness. After all, if one persists at a craft, one will reap the enjoyment of it,

More About the Shadow Elves

so if someone takes up a new trade, this proves he was not diligent enough in the earlier one.

More on the typical occupations of the shadow elves can be found below. A player character, of course, might very well have learned more than one trade even in his relative youth—as evidenced by the number and choice of his skills.

The Strength of Rafiel -

The shadow elves do not live at peace with their neighbours; no, far from it. The constant raids from the Broken Lands would be too much for any weaker race, but the shadow elves view this interference as a way for Rafiel to test his people, and they seem to do well at the test.

All shadow elves are expected to serve in the military for at least 10 years once adulthood is reached at the age of 120. Many find that they enjoy the excitement and challenge of this mode of life, and stay in the military as a permanent career. This does not preclude adventuring; valiant expeditions into unexplored tunnels are as important as standing guard near the City of the Stars.

Travel and Trade

Travel and trade between the four tribal cities of the shadow elves is, in fact, relatively common, thanks to the network of tunnels that interconnects the four cities.

The principal and most common method of travel is on foot. A journey might take up to several weeks, but is not particularly arduous. One simplification is that the shadow elves can carry trania, their compressed food, minimizing the amount

of weight in packs. At least one member of a travelling group stays on guard at all times when the group is resting, so that unwelcome visitors can be detected early.

When a great quantity of goods is to be transported, carts are used. Many of these are ordinary hand carts, pushed by one or two individuals over the entire distance to be travelled. Other carts are attached to beasts of burden and pulled while the elves walk alongside, or even ride in larger wagons.

Going by boat is another possibility, as underground rivers travel between many areas. While none of the ships of the shadow elves can match the size of those found on the surface seas, some are as large as a longship: 80 feet from bow to stern, with a crew of 75 elves and capable of carrying a cargo of up to 40,000 cn weight.

Finally, if one wants only to travel from one side of a large cavern to another, one can fly on a skinwing. While these are normally used only by skinwing patrols (a branch of the shadow elven military), a few of these gigantic beasts are in private hands. A few tunnels are large enough that skinwings could fly through them—if not the entire distance, then most of it, with the remainder covered on foot.

Before Death—the Wanderers

The shadow elves have another custom that might seem cruel, but could not be—or Rafiel would not have ordered it. When an elf is fortunate enough to live to be 800 years old, he no longer has the right to live among his people.

In a special ceremony held in his clan's

temple, he bids farewell, with well-wishers all around. This is not a solemn occasion, but rather is celebrated with good food, strong drink, and singing and dancing well into the night—or what *would* be night if the shadow elves lived on the surface. This festivity is always held on a holiday, as described above.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, two shamans escort their elder into a tunnel. Again, Rafiel guides their steps for some distance. When the shamans reach their random destination, the old shadow elf is left behind. He becomes a “wanderer”, cursed to live by himself, never allowed to retrace his steps, and never to come into contact with other shadow elves.

How long do these wanderers live? No shadow elf knows, for contact is forbidden. Most are frail from age, and not suited to a solitary “wilderness” existence.

Legends speak of an entire city of wanderers, hidden somewhere among the regions of the shadow elves, but how could this be? No sensible shadow elf believes in this tall tale.

By the way, it is a matter of some speculation among the shadow elves as to why Rafiel commands that wanderers leave. Many shadow elves believe that this teaching is a holdover from the earlier days underground, when food was scarce and the elderly were often too weak to contribute their share to the community. Indeed, when life was most harsh, few shadow elves reached the venerable age of 800, so there were few wanderers. In any case, the practice is carried out by the shadow elves with no exceptions, as any command from Rafiel would be.

CREATING AND PLAYING A SHADOW ELF

Into the Fray

Playing a shadow elf character can be exciting, for these underground magicians have different reasons for doing what they do—these are not just wood elves dropped into a cave! Still, as far as game rules go, some similarities are found, along with some differences. Look over this material carefully if you want to play a shadow elf.

To create a normal shadow elf player character, you need only follow the elf-generation rules from the *Basic Set* or *Rules Cyclopedia*, noting the following differences:

Physical Description: While popular art often depicts surface elves as having a faint greenish cast to their skin, it would be more accurate to say that they are fair-skinned. The shadow elves are even paler, with white hair and very clear eyes, usually a sparkling blue or gray colour. The shadow elves are somewhat smaller and thinner than their surface cousins, standing about five feet tall and weighing about 100 pounds. Their ears are larger than those of wood elves, giving the shadow elves a sort of “walking radar” underground. Shadow elves have high-pitched voices—almost squeaky to human ears.

Minimum Scores and Experience Bonuses: An adult shadow elf character must have a minimum Intelligence score of 9. If both his Strength and Intelligence are 13 or more, he gains an Experience bonus of 5%. If his Intelligence is 16 or more, and his Strength is 13 or more, his Experience Bonus is 10%. Different minimums and bonuses apply to shamans; these are described below.

Hit Dice and Levels: Elf hit points are determined on one six-sided die for each level, with the normal additions allowed for high Constitution. Ninth level is the last level in which an elf gains another Hit Die. From there on, he gains 2 points per level with no additional Constitution bonus.

Unlike normal elves, shadow elves *can* proceed higher than 10th level in fighting and magical ability, without having training from humans or becoming Treekeepers (cf. *The Elves of Alfheim*). A shadow

elf character who gains the higher level of Experience Points must choose whether he wants to specialize as a fighter or as a magic-user. Virtually all such fighters belong to the shadow elf army; magic-users may belong to the army, may be shamans, or may be free lances, working for themselves or for whomever might wish their services.

As fighters, shadow elves progress past 10th level with *attack ranks* (described in the *Companion* rules/*Rules Cyclopedia* p. 106). As magic-users, they may attain new spells of higher levels. (See Table 1.)

Table 1 combines information for both fighting and magic-using shadow elves, as the experience points are the same for both. However, after 10th level, remember than a character can be progressing only in one, not the other! If your character is progressing as a fighter, you should disregard the new spells listed past 10th level; conversely, if your character is a magic-user, you should disregard attack ranks; your shadow elf will forever fight as a plain, 10th level elf.

Special Abilities: Besides their ability to operate as both fighters and magic-users at the same time, elves have natural infravision with a range of 90 feet in the dark. Also, they cannot be paralysed by ghouls or other undead, although other types of paralysis are potent against them.

As far as languages go, the shadow elves know their own tongue, their alignment language, and the languages of three of their nearby underground enemies: gnolls, orcs, and hobgoblins. The language of the shadow elves is a dialect, of course, of the language of the surface elves. Your DM has more information if your character wants to learn the surface language or communicate with the elves of Alfheim or other regions.

Just like their surface cousins, shadow elves have keen vision, so they are quite adept at finding hidden doors and other objects. Whenever an elf tries to find something, the DM rolls 1d6 and allows the elf to find the object (assuming the elf is looking in the right area) on a roll of 1 or 2. This applies to any shadow elf's searching for anything—not just a hidden

door.

Names: Names for shadow elves are similar to the names of surface elves. The names of various characters mentioned in the book can give you a start; other examples of names can be found in B10 *Night's Dark Terror*; CM1 *Test of the Warlords*; CM7 *The Tree of Life*; GAZ1 *The Grand Duchy of Karameikos*; GAZ3 *The Principalities of Glantri*; GAZ5 *The Elves of Alfheim*; GAZ9 *The Minrothad Guilds*; M2 *Vengeance of Alphaks*; M5 *Talons of Night*; and X11 *Saga of the Shadow Lord*. Shadow elves do not follow the custom of “use names” as described in GAZ5 *The Elves of Alfheim*.

Clan and City: Every shadow elf character has to belong to a specific clan, which usually determines the city where the elf lives. The clan your character belongs to will change if your character gets married—and could change for other reasons as well.

Strongholds: When a shadow elf reaches 9th level, he may build a stronghold in a cave near the shadow elf's domains. Your DM will tell you how to do this when your character reaches this level. When a shadow elf does this, he starts a new settlement that would be considered to belong (ultimately) to his particular clan.

Special Attacks: Shadow elves who belong to the army continue to improve in combat ability for their entire careers. Refer to the table below for details. When the character's XP total reaches 850,000, the Combat Options for Fighters (see *DM's Companion/Rules Cyclopedia* pp. 103-105) are gained. For multiple attacks (if an attack hits with a Hit Roll of 2), two attacks are possible at 850,000 XP, and three attacks at 2,600,000 XP. Four attacks per round are never gained by shadow elves. Smash, Parry, and Disarm options are usable, as described in the *DM's Companion/Rules Cyclopedia*.

Skills: The optional use of skills, if allowed by your DM, is described in complete detail in the following section.

Magic Levels: It should be pointed out here that the spell levels described in this book correspond to the system first

described in *GAZ5 The Elves of Alfheim*. It is a different system from the “normal elf” in the rulebooks, with higher possible levels of spells, and more spells to choose from. When rolling up your shadow elf character, be sure to check with your DM that he allows this modified magic system for elves.

Skills for Shadow Elves

Skills are a handy and optional addition to the D&D game rules. They help to define a character and add considerably to the role-playing possibilities available. Ask your DM whether skills are being used in your campaign.

Initial Skills

All beginning (1st level) shadow elves start with four initial skills. All shadow elves have the Orientation in Caves skill. One other skill must be chosen from among the craft and profession skills; this skill represents the character’s trade. A character can also choose two additional skills from the list below (including more crafts, if the player wishes).

Bonus Skills: Beginning characters know more skills if they are particularly intelligent, exactly as characters know more languages if they are intelligent. A character with an Intelligence of 13-15 knows one extra skill (for a total of five). With an Intelligence of 16-17, a character knows two extra skills (for a total of seven).

How Skills Are Used

Each skill is based on one of a character’s ability scores (Strength, Intelligence, Wisdom, Constitution, Dexterity, or Charisma).

During a game session, the DM may decide that a character’s skill could help him in a situation. Also, the player may ask the DM to consider whether his character’s skill might be applicable, but it’s up to the DM to decide whether or not this is the case. If the DM decides that the use of the character’s skill is appropriate to a situation, the player is asked to roll 1d20

Table 1: Shadow Elf Experience, D&D® Game

Level	Experience	Attack Rank	Spells by Spell Level								
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	0	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	4,000	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	8,000	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	16,000	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	32,000	-	2	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	64,000	-	3	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	120,000	-	3	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-
8	250,000	-	4	3	2	2	-	-	-	-	-
9	400,000	-	4	4	3	2	-	-	-	-	-
10	600,000 (a)	C	5	4	3	2	1	-	-	-	-
11	850,000 (b)	D	6	5	3	3	2	-	-	-	-
12	1,100,000	E	6	5	4	3	2	1	-	-	-
13	1,350,000	F	7	6	4	4	3	2	-	-	-
14	1,600,000 (c)	G	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	-	-
15	1,850,000	H	8	7	5	5	4	3	2	-	-
16	2,100,000	I	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	-
17	2,250,000	J	8	8	6	6	5	4	3	2	-
18	2,600,000 (d)	K	8	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
19	2,850,000	L	8	8	7	7	6	5	4	3	2
20	3,100,000	M	8	8	8	7	6	5	4	4	3

Notes to Table 1

- (a) Same as a Fighter of levels 22-24.
- (b) Gain the Combat Options for Fighters. Two attacks per round possible at this level.
- (c) Automatically takes half damage from any breath weapon.
- (d) Same as a Fighter of levels 25-27. Three attacks per round possible at this level.

against the current score of the ability the skill is based on. If the roll is equal to or less than the ability score, the skill has been used successfully.

Guidelines for Skill Use

In most circumstances, skills cannot be used against other player characters. Certain skills, particularly Charisma skills, can only be used against NPCs. A roll of 20 always fails. The higher the successful roll (so long as it is successful!), the more effectively the skill has been used. The more difficult the task, the more modest the benefits of a successful check.

A roll of 1 is not an automatic success. When a very difficult task is attempted, the DM may assign penalties to the roll to reflect the increased difficulty of the task. If the task is exceptionally difficult, the DM may rule (before the dice are rolled) that, although success is remotely

possible, it is incredibly unlikely. In such a case he may require the player to roll two consecutive 1s. A character pulling off such a feat can make a good case for having been divinely inspired!

The DM may decide that use of a skill when carrying out an easy task is automatic, or that the PC receives a bonus to the roll.

The DM determines the amount of time required for a successful use of a skill. Building a cart may take several days, while identifying a fungus may take only seconds.

The DM determines the effects of the successful use of a skill. Your DM may rule that successful use of the Boating skill will give advance warning of rapids in the tunnel ahead, or that it only permits the character to deal with the rapids when they are reached, according to circumstances.

The DM’s ruling is final. If, as a player,

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you think a judgment was unreasonable, discuss it with your DM after the game, with the hope of avoiding misunderstandings in the future.

Improving Skills

A character's skill score may be raised above the ability score that the skill is based on. To improve a skill score, you must trade in one ordinary skill choice to increase a different skill score by 1 point.

Such an improved skill is indicated on a character sheet by marking the number of additional points with a "plus" sign after the skill name (i.e., Acrobatics +1, Nature Lore +2, etc.). Improving a skill increases the chance of a successful check against that skill.

Other benefits conferred by that skill are not affected. These are permanent choices; you cannot shuffle skill scores after the character starts adventuring.

Learning More Skills

As time goes by, your character may gain more skills or improve existing ones. All characters get a new skill choice

every four experience levels. Thus, they get their first skills at 1st level, then a new skill at 5th level, another at 9th level, another at 13th level, and so on.

Each additional skill choice may be used to acquire a new skill or improve an old skill in the manner described earlier. New skills may be drawn from the general skill list or from the craft and profession skills.

Table 2: Maximum Skills Known, by Character Level

Level 1:	7 skills
Level 5:	8 skills
Level 9:	9 skills
Level 13:	10 skills
Level 17:	11 skills
Level 21:	12 skills
Level 25:	13 skills
Level 29:	14 skills
Level 33:	15 skills

Skills and the Character Sheet

Record your skills on your character sheet in the following fashion. First fill in the "Number of Skills Choices:

_____” blank, recording on the line the number of starting skills choices your character received.

Below this, write down your character's skills. Record the name of the skill, the abbreviation of the ability the skill is based on, any permanent modifier you have obtained for the skill by devoting extra skill choices to it, and the correct skill roll you have with the skill.

Example: Fortanor, a shadow elf of the Gelbalf clan (Str 13, Int 16, Wis 9, Dex 9, Con 11, Cha 10) begins his adventuring career. His Intelligence of 16 gets him two extra skills, for a total of seven. He desires to explore the environs of his city by means of the waterways nearby, so he chooses ship building as his craft skill, and his DM rules that this skill depends on Fortanor's Intelligence. In order to serve better, he opts to apply two skill choices to Helmsman/Captain skill, giving him a +1 on his skill checks. He similarly chooses other skills that he thinks would be useful to his character, and tops off the list with Singing, just because he thinks this would be fun. His character sheet looks like this:

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Number of Skill Choices: 7
Ship Building (Int): 16
Helmsman/Captain (Int+1): 17
Know Terrain (Int): 16
Danger Sense (Wis): 9
Rope Use (Dex): 9
Singing (Cha): 10

Skill Descriptions

Following are the skills particularly appropriate or useful in a shadow elf campaign, listed according to the ability score they are based on. This is not a complete list of all possible skills. You may suggest other skills to your DM, and he may have other skills available for campaign use.

Do not overlook the possibility of skills that are entertaining but “useless” in the traditional adventurer’s way of thinking. Skills can be useful to characters for in-session problem-solving, but a skill doesn’t have to be useful to be desirable—it can just be fun. Don’t hesitate to ask your DM for a skill that might not be very useful, but which perfectly fits the personality you’ve imagined for your character.

Craft and Professional Skills

Every shadow elf must have at least one skill with which he can earn a living; even a shaman must specialize in some trade, just as any other citizen. Different skills make use of different abilities, and some can even be variable, depending on the ruling of your DM. For example, many crafts can be seen as based on either Intelligence or Dexterity, depending upon the degree to which the craftsmanship approaches the level of artistry.

The craft skills may be included among the Dexterity-based skills because manual dexterity, patience, and practice are important in learning the basics of any craft. Alternatively, they may be included among Intelligence-based skills because training, attention to detail, and proper planning are important to the end result. DMs may decide to use both designations in the same campaign. The Intelligence-based crafter may make the lovelier products, while a Dexterity-based crafter

makes solid, serviceable goods.

Use of these skills presumes adequate time and access to appropriate tools and materials. Otherwise, penalties may be assessed, or a DM may rule that the task is impossible.

Craft

The ability to make and repair items associated with your craft, and the ability to evaluate the worth of such items.

Craftsman skills include Armourer, Blacksmithing, Brewing, Bricklaying, Bowyer, Building, Carpentry, Cobbler, Cooper, Draying, Engraving, Farming, Fletching, Glassblowing, Leatherworking, Metalsmithing (gold or silver), Mining, Pottery, Sculpting, Ship Building, Smelting, Stonecutting, Tailor, Tanning, Tinkering, Weaponsmithing, and so forth. Some crafts are described in more detail below.

Armourer: The ability to make and repair leather armour. Higher skill levels enable the character to make and repair chain mail (+1 skill) and lamellar armour (+2 skill).

Bowyer: The ability to make bows and arrows.

Ship Building: The ability to build boats and ships, and to keep them in good repair.

Profession

These skills are usually based on Intelligence, requiring “book learning” to become an expert in them. Choose one among the following, or invent a new one not on this list and convince your DM to allow it: Architecture, Banking, and Engineering.

Strength Skills

Brawling: This skill allows you to fight crowds using furniture pieces, knocking attackers off-balance, swinging down chandeliers, and so on. Brawling damage is not lethal, it just knocks victims unconscious when reaching 0 HP.

A successful check allows you to double damage for each +1 in Strength bonus your character has. Damage is spread

among attackers in the same group, up to 10 attackers.

Muscle: The knowledge and experience of heavy lifting and hard labour. Your character knows how to direct groups of labourers to make their efforts most effective. He understands the use of simple machinery like wedges, pulleys, and levers. Your character gains a +2 bonus to Strength Checks for difficult tasks like bending bars or smashing through doors and walls.

Intelligence Skills

Acting: The ability to pretend to be someone else or to show false emotions. Successful use of this skill enables a character to tell lies over a period of time. This is not the same ability as the Charisma skill of stage acting.

Alchemy: The ability to recognize and identify common alchemical substances and potions.

Alternate Magics: Basic familiarity with those magics that are not directly related to standard spellcasting. Includes knowing magical abilities of well-known Prime Plane and extraplanar monsters, and of Immortal beings.

Ancient History: Detailed knowledge of the shadow elves’ history. General knowledge of the history of the nations of the other races inhabiting the Broken Lands and the surface elves. Vague knowledge of the history of other surface peoples.

Artillery: Your character understands and knows how to operate artillery pieces, including the special gravity artillery in the City of the Stars. A successful check gives a +2 to hit with such weapons.

Boating: The ability to handle small boats and barges. Also includes fishing skills. Simple tasks are automatically performed with this skill; check only in dangerous or unusual situations.

Disguise: The ability to make oneself look like someone else. A successful Disguise Check by your character is required for each character or group of characters that the disguise must fool.

The roll is modified according to the viewer’s Wisdom bonus or penalty. There-

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fore a character with a high Wisdom score has a better chance of penetrating a disguise.

Helmsman/Captain: The ability to handle a larger ship and direct a competent crew. This doesn't include handling challenges to a captain's authority—a mutiny, for example—which would be decided by a Charisma check or use of some other appropriate skill (Leadership, Persuade, etc.).

Know Terrain: The knowledge of the land, water, and environment conditions of a region, such as the underground realm of the shadow elves. This includes knowing the safest or fastest travel routes, pathfinding, local tunnels and waterways, and dangerous environmental conditions. Use of this skill in the character's home dominion receives a +2 bonus. Use of this skill in an unfamiliar but similar setting is at a -2 to -4 penalty. A beginning shadow elf character cannot take this skill for any surface region—such knowledge must be gained in the course of adventuring!

Mapping: Your character does not necessarily know how to read and write, but he is capable of understanding and making maps. A check is needed for complicated three-dimensional layouts, or to map an area from memory.

Nature Lore: Knowledge of common plant and animal life of a familiar locality, both domestic and wild. This includes knowing such things as edible and poisonous plants, healing fungi, or signs of unnatural danger like absence of normal plant life, atypical animal behaviour, etc.

Use of this skill in the character's home dominion receives a +2 bonus. Use of this skill in an unfamiliar but similar setting is at a -2 to -4 penalty. A beginning shadow elf character cannot take this skill for any surface region—such knowledge must be gained in the course of adventuring!

Navigation: The ability to guide a boat or ship to an unfamiliar destination or in unfavourable circumstances in the underground waterways of the shadow elves. Use of this skill presumes possession of a map or equivalent knowledge of

an area. If any of these are not available, a penalty of -4 to -8 may be imposed.

Non-elvish Cultures: General knowledge of non-elvish races of the Broken Lands. Includes incomplete knowledge of non-elvish customs, methods of warfare, skills with magic, and a very basic vocabulary.

Orientation in Caves: Used underground, when moving on long distances. It prevents becoming lost when exploring caverns, tunnels, and underground rivers. Orientation in a maze requires a skill check.

Read/Write Language: Knowledge of a written language, either human, demihuman, or humanoid. An Intelligence Check is required each time an attempt is made to read or write this language.

Signalling: Enables your character to leave messages that can be understood only by another Signalling specialist. For example, unobtrusive stacks of stones may be left to warn friendly followers of an impending danger. A skilled shadow elf can also leave simple messages, such as, "troll patrol arriving from north," "safe place to camp", or "go back and warn the shadow elf army."

Communication is also possible using horns, flags, and light signals. All shadow elves are familiar with the signals sent by the army's horns.

Snares: Building traps to capture animals, monsters, or unwanted visitors. A successful check means the trap functions properly.

Survival: This skill enables a shadow elf character to find food, shelter, and water in the underground realm of the shadow elves.

A successful check indicates that your character has found sufficient food for himself and several companions (fungi, insects, etc.). Another skill choice is required to find food in a different terrain type, including surface areas.

Tactics: The ability to use troops in the best possible way. A successful check means your DM will modify the outcome of a confrontation in a reasonable (and favourable) way.

Tracking: Your character can follow tracks. The DM is free to increase or decrease the chances of success depending on the circumstance (age of the tracks, type of terrain, number of fugitives, etc.).

This skill can also be used to obscure tracks made by your character and any companions. The difference between the number actually rolled and the number needed to make the test is used as a negative penalty on Intelligences for Tracking Checks made by anyone trying to follow your character.

For example, Farneal is a wanderer, and fears that she is being followed by a band of hungry orcs. She tries as best she can to hide her trail through the passageways she visits. She has Tracking skill of 15 and rolls a 5, a successful check. Any tracker following her trail has a -10 penalty to his Intelligence for Tracking checks.

Wisdom Skills

Animal Training: Choose a particular animal. Your character knows how to raise, train, and care for this type of animal. The animal can be taught some very simple tricks or simple orders. A check is needed every time the animal is used for any significant purpose, with a penalty to the check of -1 per HD of difference between the trainer and the animal (if the animal is tougher than the trainer).

Bravery: This enables your character to resist the effects of any magical fear.

Codes of Law and Justice: Knowledge of the laws and moral codes that govern shadow elf society.

Cooking: Your character is capable of preparing *trania*, the specially compressed and reserved food of the shadow elves. On special feast days, this skill also gives the ability of cooking up special delicacies.

Danger Sense: An aptitude for sensing danger or odd situations. A successful check means you have detected an imminent danger, magical or physical, directed at you. You will not know the nature or the source of the danger. The DM will make this check in secret, informing you of the result.

Detect Deception: The ability to recognize deceptive tricks or behaviours in an NPC. This does not reveal the truth or falsity of specific statements nor the motivations of the speaker, nor does it reveal the exact nature of the deception. Unlike the *detect lies* spell, this skill only warns the character to distrust the NPC who is trying to deceive him. The character gets no clues about which statements are true or untrue. Successful use of this skill just indicates that the speaker is intentionally trying to deceive the character.

First Aid: The ability to perform simple medical aid. A successful check enables a character to restore 1d4 hit points to any wounded character or creature. This skill may not be used on a wounded character or creature more than once per injury. If the character is subsequently restored to full hit points, and is then wounded again, first aid may once again be applied. If a 20 is rolled when using this skill, 1d4 points of damage are inflicted on the patient.

Natural Healing: Your character is knowledgeable in the use of herbal and fungal cures. If you roll a successful Healing Check, any character who has been poisoned is allowed a second Saving Throw with a -2 penalty. On a successful check you may also allow characters to naturally heal damage at the rate of 2 hit points per day of total rest.

Teaching: The ability to teach a skill most efficiently. A successful check means the apprentice learns the skill with a permanent +1 modifier, as long as his final skill score remains at best equal to his teacher's.

Dexterity Skills

Note on Thief Skills: Among the dexterity skills listed below are several based on the abilities of the human thief class: Escape Artist (similar to Pick Locks), Find Traps, Hear Noise, Hide in Shadows, and Move Silently. This is to allow similar types of characters to develop in shadow elf society (though, obviously, not to the level of specialization and skill found among humans).

For these skills, do *not* use ability score

checks as you normally would. To do so would mean, absurdly, that a first level shadow elf with a high dexterity could be better at a particular task than a full-time human thief—with the same dexterity—who had years of experience! Instead, consider the shadow elf to have the same percentage chance of success using that skill as a thief of the same level. If a shadow elf allots an extra skill slot to the skill (e.g., “Find Traps +1”), treat him as one level higher for the purpose of determining his percentage chance of success.

Alertness: Enables your character to draw a weapon without losing any time, or to avoid the effects of surprise. A successful check means your character wakes up at the slightest odd noise—not necessarily a useful ability for spellcasters.

Blind Shooting: The ability to shoot at a target without seeing it (infravision has a limited range, after all!) Your character must be able to hear the target so its position can be evaluated. A Hit Roll is needed to hit the target but without the normal penalties due to darkness.

Among shadow elves, this skill trained for and is best used with a light crossbow. Other weapons (bows, daggers, hand axes, artillery, stones, etc.) require a Skill Check (some with varying penalties, at the DM's discretion); if it is failed, the character suffers the usual penalties for darkness. Blind Shooting can be used in conjunction with the Hear Noise skill (see below).

Climbing: Can be used to climb underground terrain with appropriate gear. A check is needed to climb more dangerous surfaces, with penalties varying with the degree of difficulty (see DM's book).

Dancing: Just like their surface cousins, the shadow elves are superlative dancers. This skill confers the ability to move rhythmically and gracefully to accompanying music.

Evade: The ability to elude a pursuer. This skill reflects experience in running away from dangers. Successful use permits (where appropriate) a movement bonus of +10 feet per round for 10 rounds, giving the evader a chance to hide or throw the pursuer off his trail. If

the situation is one of hiding, dodging, or outguessing a pursuer, a successful check allows the character to find some way to be overlooked.

Find Traps: The ability to detect traps after observing a corridor or a room; see the note at beginning of this section. A failed check means none of the traps are discovered. The extent of the success indicates how many traps could have been found. Another check is needed to set or disarm each trap.

Hear Noise: The aptitude of perceiving faint noises, or some detail among a multitude of different sounds, knowing their source and nature (see the note at beginning of this section). This skill improves the Blind Shooting skill (above) by granting a +1 bonus on a skill check; or by granting a +1 on THAC0 for a character shooting in the dark who does not have Blind Shooting.

Hide in Shadows: As the Thief's ability (see note at beginning of section).

Horsemanship: Knowledge of basic care and feeding of horses, and the ability to control a horse under difficult circumstances. A character can easily recognize a nag, but buying a suitable mount for a reasonable price requires a minimal skill check, as will attempting to perform various activities from the saddle. For example, most folk can stay in a saddle while a horse is walking, but staying there during a gallop or a combat is a whole different story. To use a weapon, spell, or skill while on horseback, a character must succeed in a horsemanship check, with penalties as the difficulty increases.

Note: No beginning shadow elf character can have this skill—it can be gained only on the surface, in the course of adventuring!

Juggling: A shadow elf with this skill can juggle three objects of similar shape and size. A skill check is required to juggle more objects, with a -1 penalty for every object more than four, or objects of varying weights.

Jump: The successful use of this skill enables a character to leap over obstacles and leap distances of up to 10 feet, increased by 10 feet with a running start.

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Ledge Hopping: Common in underground settings, this skill lets your character safely hop from one rocky ledge to another within six feet, and with reasonable encumbrance. The skill also enables your character to find the safest, most stable ledge on your path. Circumstances may require a check.

Martial Arts: Choose one style.

Offensive: Allows a PC to add Strength bonuses to open hand or natural attacks. A successful check doubles damage (bonus not included).

Defensive: Permanently improves AC by one, and allows a check to dodge non-magical projectiles.

Move Silently: As the Thief's ability (see note at beginning of section).

Quick Draw: The ability to notch and fire an arrow with a +2 bonus to Initiative.

Rapid Fire: A successful check enables a character to fire a bow twice instead of once. Each shot is made with a penalty of -3 to hit. The first arrow is fired according to which side wins initiative, the second arrow is always fired at the end of the round.

Rope Use: The aptitude for making knots and nets. A check is required to throw a net, a lasso, or a grapple to get a solid hold on an object or creature.

Skinwing Flying: A shadow elf with this skill is able to control and ride a skinwing. Skill checks are required to control the monster in dangerous situations or if it gets hit in combat. Failure results in the skinwing spinning out of control until a successful Skill Check is made (check each round).

Sound Imitation: Your character can emulate animal or monster noises to deceive someone. This skill can be used to communicate at short range without being noticed when used with Signalling.

Weapon Mastery: This enables a character to become skilled with a weapon, as described in the *Master Players' Book* under Weapon Mastery (pp. 16-17). A skill choice must be traded in for each subsequent Weapon Mastery level.

Constitution Skills

Drinking: A talent for absorbing alcoholic beverages without being affected. The first failure means your character is drunk; he passes out on the second failed check.

Slow Respiration: A successful check means your character survives in a reduced space after a cavern exit collapses. A check is needed for each day of imprisonment, with a cumulative penalty of -1 for each day the character has been trapped. The same could be applied to water, with a penalty of -1 for each minute of immersion. A failed roll means the character suffocates and dies.

Stamina: The ability to continue arduous physical activity for long periods, and to endure physical hardship. Character can run twice as long—40 rounds, 10 minutes—without becoming exhausted (see Movement, *Basic Player Manual* p. 56/*Rules Cyclopedica* pp. 87-88). He moves as though encumbered at one class lower than his actual encumbrance (see the Encumbered Movement Rates Table, *Basic Player Manual* p. 30/*Rules Cyclopedica* p. 88), and receives a +2 bonus on any Constitution-based checks concerning resistance to effects of adverse weather or resistance to fatigue from extended periods of exertion.

Charisma Skills

Bargain: A successful check enables a character to get the best deal available for goods, services or information. If two characters with this skill bargain against each other, and both made successful skill checks, whoever made the lowest roll wins. The DM may give bonuses or penalties to either character to reflect the difficulties in the bargain to be made.

Deceive: The ability to persuade a listener of the sincerity of what is said, despite the fact that the speaker is lying through his teeth, being insincere, or both. Successful use of this skill causes an NPC to believe an untrue statement or to accept a misleading statement as honest and sincere. Failure indicates that the character stumbles over words or otherwise sounds unconvincing. This skill will not stand up to the application of a *detect*

lie spell.

Gain Trust: The ability to gain the trust of an NPC through a combination of courtesies, respect for traditions, knowledge of human and demihuman nature, and honourable behaviour. Successful use of this skill causes an NPC to accept the character as a trustworthy person until given solid evidence to the contrary.

In routine situations, a successful use of this skill is sufficient. This covers situations like an overnight visit to a roadside inn, seeking food and shelter at a farmstead, etc. In dangerous or threatening circumstances, or if the NPC listener is hostile or already has reason to distrust the speaker, the DM may assess penalties to the check. The DM must examine the situation, and may require opposed Charisma checks between the PC and the NPC, or opposed checks between the Gain Trust skill and the NPC's Wisdom.

Leadership: Successful use of this skill adds a +1 bonus to the morale of any NPCs under the character's control. It may also be used to convince other NPCs to follow commands.

Music: Choose one group of related instruments; groups include stringed instruments, brass, percussion, etc. Like their surface cousins, the shadow elves are skilled musicians.

Persuade: The ability to prove your sincerity to NPC listeners. This skill cannot be used to deceive a listener; the speaker must always believe the truth is what he says. If the NPC is hostile, or has a reason to distrust the speaker, the DM may assess penalties of -1 to -8 to the skill check.

Singing: The shadow elves have a rich oral history, with many of their legends and sagas committed to music. The ability to sing well is highly valued among the elves, and is a useful skill to make friends of strangers in public settings. Related to the Storyteller skill, below.

Storyteller: The ability to captivate an audience when telling stories. It is also an ability of shamans versed in the history of the shadow elves.

Magic Among the Shadow Elves

Millennia ago, the surface elves developed their first civilization upon their skills with magic and combat. Elves learned magic easily, and all elves knew at least some magic. It is said, even among the shadow elves, that humans first learned the disciplines of magic from elves, though this may be simply self-serving legend-making.

Over the years, the shadow elves have expanded upon the relatively simple spells that they knew when they first travelled underground. Because of the subterranean environment in which they were developed, these spells often have differences from their surface counterparts.

There is no limit to the progress in magic that a shadow elf can make, if he elects to be a magic-user rather than fighter—a shadow elf can exceed the 10th level of experience and accordingly gain in power. For more information, see **Hit Dice and Levels**, earlier in this booklet.

The Spells

The shadow elves have their own higher magical system which is similar to that of human wizards, but reflects their habitat of living underground—some spells are useless in the environment of the shadow elves, and so were never discovered.

The use of numbered levels can be confusing here. A 20th level shadow elf has three 9th level spells, while human magic-users do not gain 9th level spells until they reach 21st level. However, an examination of the Experience Points involved shows that a shadow elf of the 10th level has to have earned almost as many XP as a human wizard of the 28th level—a level which has four 9th level spells and many more lesser level spells.

Spells in italics have detailed descriptions below; others are identical to the magic-user spell of the same level and can be found in the various D&D rulebooks.

The shadow elves live in an underground environment, and their available spells reflect that fact. Detailed spell descriptions explain many of the restrictions imposed by the underground environment, but many spells are so like surface spells that they are not fully described here.

Where these spells have underground restrictions, the restriction is noted with a plus sign (+) next to the spell name. An asterisk indicates a reversible spell.

First-Level Shadow Elf Magic-User Spells

Analyse
Charm Person
Detect Magic
Faerie Fire
Faerie Lights
Fellowship
Locate
Longstride
Magic Missile
Precipitation+
Protection from Evil
Read Languages
Read Magic
Ventriloquism
Watcher

Second-Level Shadow Elf Magic-User Spells

Detect Invisible
Entangle
ESP*
Invisibility
Levitate
Locate Object
Mirror Image
Phantasmal Force
Produce Fire
Web

Third-Level Shadow Elf Magic-User Spells

Clairvoyance
Dispel Magic
Fly
Haste*
*Hold Underground Animal**
Hold Person*
Invisibility 10' Radius
Protection From Evil 10' Radius
Protection From Normal Missiles
Speak with Underground Animals
Water Breathing

Fourth-Level Shadow Elf Magic-User Spells

Charm Monster
Confusion
Dimension Door
Enchanted Weapon
Fear
Growth of Underground Animal
Hallucinatory (Underground) Terrain
Massmorph
Polymorph Others
Polymorph Self
Remove Curse*
Summon Underground Animals
Wizard Eye

Fifth-Level Shadow Elf Magic-User Spells

Conjure Elemental
Contact Outer Plane
Dissolve*
Feeblemind
Magic Jar
Pass-Wall
Rock Door
Telekinesis
Teleport
Transmute Rock to Mud
Wall of Stone

Sixth-Level Shadow Elf Magic-User Spells

Anti-Underground Animal Shell
Anti-Magic Shell
Geas*
Lower Water
Move Earth
Pass Rock
Projected Image
Stone to Flesh*
Transmute Rock to Lava
Weather Control (City of the Stars only)

Seventh-Level Shadow Elf Magic-User Spells

Create Normal Creatures
Lore
Lower Lava
Magic Door*
Mass Invisibility*
Reverse Gravity

Magic Among the Shadow Elves

Rock
Teleport Object
Transport Through Rock
Turn Rock

Eighth-Level Shadow Elf Magic-User Spells

Dance
Force Field
Mass Charm*
Metal to Rock
Mind Barrier*
Permanence
Polymorph Any Object
Symbol
Travel

Ninth-Level Shadow Elf Magic-User Spells

Contingency
Gate*
Heal
Immunity
Maze
Shapechange
Sword
Timestop
Wish

New Shadow Elf Spell Descriptions

First-Level Spell Descriptions

Analyze
Range: 0 (Touch only)
Duration: 1 round
Effect: Analyzes magic on one item

A shadow elf using this spell can handle one item and learn the enchantment on it. Helms must be put on, swords held in hand, bracelets put on wrists, etc. Any consequences of this action fall upon the elf, as usual, though he or she gets the usual saving throws. The elf has a chance of 15% plus 5% per magic-user level of determining one characteristic of the item, or of whether the item has no magic at all. The determination is not exact. Pluses on weapons can be characterized as many or few, charges can be estimated within 25%

of the actual number, etc.

Faerie Fire
Range: 60'
Duration: 1 round per level of caster
Effect: Illuminates creatures or objects

With this spell, the shadow elf can outline one or more creatures or objects with a pale, flickering, greenish fire. The fire does not inflict any damage. The objects or creatures need only be detected in some way (such as by detect magic) to be the object of this spell. All attacks against the outlined creature or object gain a +2 bonus to Hit Rolls, as it is more easily seen. The elf can outline one man-sized creature (about 12' of fire) for each 5 levels of experience. Thus, at 20th level, 48' of fire can be produced (outlining one dragon-sized creature, two horse-sized, or four man-sized creatures).

Faerie Lights
Range: 40' plus 10' per level
Duration: 2 rounds per level
Effect: Illuminates an area

This spell creates from one to four lights which resemble either torches or lanterns and cast up to the same amount of light. The actual intensity of the light can be varied by the caster at any time he spends a round concentrating. The caster must create the lights where he can see them; he can then move the lights anywhere within his range, even if they pass out of his vision (such as around a corner). He cannot move them through solid objects.

This spell is frequently used by shadow elves to mislead parties of orcs who come too close in a cavern or passageway.

Fellowship
Range: 0 (shadow elf only)
Duration: 1 round per level
Effect: Increases charisma

This spell causes the shadow elf to gain either a temporary increase of 2-8 points in charisma in the eyes of the target, or a loss of 1-4 points if the target makes a Saving Throw versus Magic. All those failing the Saving Throw are very impressed by the caster and desire greatly to be his

friend and assist him in any way they can. Those who do not fail the Saving Throw are uneasy in the caster's presence and tend to find him or her irritating. This spell has no effect on creatures of animal intelligence or lower. It also has no effect on Charisma-based skills.

Locate
Range: 0 (shadow elf only)
Duration: 6 turns (1 hour)
Effect: Detects one animal or plant within 120'

This spell allows the shadow elf to sense the direction of one known normal animal or plant. The elf can locate (similar to the *locate object* spell) any normal or giant-sized animal, but not fantastic creatures, plant monsters, nor any intelligent creature or plant. He must name the exact type of animal or plant, but does not need to see the specific one he wishes to locate. The animal or plant gets no Saving Throw. (This spell is most often used to find special plants.)

Longstride
Range: 0 (touch)
Duration: 5-8 hours
Effect: Doubles normal movement speed

The *longstride* spell enables the shadow elf or other recipient of the spell to move at twice normal ground speed (walking) for 1d4+4 hours without tiring, or run normally for the same amount of time without tiring. However, after this the recipient must spend the same amount of time resting, as well as drinking plenty of liquids and eating heartily. If he does not rest, he loses 2-8 Constitution points. These are recovered by rest at the rate of 1d4 days per point, and only after he has spent time resting and drinking and eating, as noted above. Only bipedal humans and demihumans are affected by this spell.

Precipitation

Range: Special

Duration: 1 round per level

Effect: Creates light rain in 30' + 10' per level diameter area

This spell takes all the water vapour in the area of effect and turns it into a light rain. Note that a low-level shadow elf would be caught within the effect of his own spell because of the short range.

Except when used by high-level elves, the principal effect of this spell is to dampen clothing, film solid rock floors with water (making footing uncertain), water plants, and snuff out fires. The rain turns into obscuring fog of double its normal area when it hits fire magic (such as a *wall of fire*). If the weather is below freezing, the rain turns into sleet (between 31 and 33 degrees F) or snow (30 degrees F and below).

Magical cold (such as an *ice storm*) applied to the result of the precipitation turns it into ice.

Within the domains of the shadow elves, this spell can be cast only in the cavern which contains the City of the Stars; this spell cannot be used on the surface.

Watcher

Range: 10'

Duration: 2-8 turns plus 1 turn per level

Effect: Plants or animals give warning

When the watcher spell is cast, the shadow elf causes a specific plant or local animal to react to the presence of any living creature bigger than a rat, i.e., anything larger than about one-half cubic foot in volume or than about 3 pounds in weight. As soon as any living creature steps past the plant or animal, touches it, or otherwise disturbs it, the plant or animal emits a loud keening sound which can be clearly heard within a 60-foot radius (subtract 10' for interposing doors, 20' for thick walls). The sound lasts for one round, then subsides. Undead do not cause the spell to function, but invisible creatures do. Flying and levitating creatures attempting to pass over the watcher within the radius are also discovered.

Second-Level Spell Descriptions

Entangle

Range: 30'

Duration: 1 round per level

Effect: Controls ropes

This spell allows the shadow elf to use any rope-like object of living or once-living material (roots, vines, leather ropes, plant-fibre ropes, etc.) to behave as he orders. About 50' of normal 1/2-inch diameter vine plus 5' per level of caster can be affected. The commands to be given under an entangle spell include: coil (form a neat stack), coil and knot, loop, loop and knot, tie and knot, and the reverses of all the above. The vine or rope must be within 1 foot of any object it is to coil around or tie up, so it must often be thrown at the target. The affected vine can be handled by the target as it would any other entangling object.

Produce Fire

Range: 0 (shadow elf only)

Duration: 2 turns per level

Effect: Creates fire in hand

This spell causes a small flame to appear in the shadow elf's hand. It does not harm the caster in any way, and sheds light as if a normal torch. The flame can be used to ignite combustible materials touched (lantern, torch, oil, etc.) without harming the magical flame. While holding the flame, the caster can cause it to disappear and reappear by concentration once per round, until the duration ends. Other items may be held and used in the hand while the fire is out. If desired, the fire may be dropped or thrown to 30' range, but disappears 1 round after leaving the elf's hand.

Third-Level Spell Descriptions

Hold Underground Animal*

Range: 180'

Duration: 1 turn per level of caster

Effect: Paralyzes several animals

This spell will affect any normal or giant-sized underground animal, but will not affect any fantastic creature, nor one of greater than animal intelligence. Each victim must make a Saving Throw vs. Spells or be paralysed for 6 turns. The shadow elf can affect 1 Hit Die of animals for each level of experience, ignoring "pluses" to Hit Dice. For example, a 20th-level elf could cast the spell at 10 giant toads (2+2 Hit Dice each). Note that the spell can affect summoned, conjured, or controlled animals.

The reverse of the spell, *free underground animal*, removes the paralysis of up to 4 victims of the normal form of the spell (including one cast by a cleric). It has no other effect.

Speak with Underground Animals

Range: 0 (shadow elf only)

Duration: 6 turns

Effect: Allows conversation within 30'

When this spell is cast, the shadow elf must name one type of underground animal (such as normal bats, lizards, etc.) For the duration of the spell, the elf may speak with all animals of that type if they are within 30'; the effect moves with the caster. Any normal or giant forms of animals (including underground mammals, insects, birds, etc.) may be spoken to, but intelligent animals and fantastic creatures are not affected. When there exist both normal and giant forms, only one type (either normal or giant) may be named. The creatures' reactions are usually favourable (+2 bonus to reaction roll), and they may be talked into doing a favour for the shadow elf if the reaction is high enough. The favour requested must be understood by the animal, and must be possible for the creature to perform.

Magic Among the Shadow Elves

Fourth-Level Spell Descriptions

Enchanted Weapon

Range: Touch

Duration: 5 rounds per level

Effect: Makes a weapon temporarily magical

A weapon of any kind that this spell is cast on becomes magical for the duration of the spell. It has no bonuses to hit or for damage, but it can be used against lycanthropes, various undead, gargoyles, some non-corporeal creatures, and other creatures who are invulnerable to normal weapons.

This is a very popular spell among fighting shadow elves.

Fear

Range: 0 (Touch)

Duration: Instantaneous

Effect: Causes targets to run away in fear

The victim must make a Saving Throw vs. Magic or run away from the caster (at 3 times the normal rate) for 30 rounds.

Growth of Underground Animal

Range: 120'

Duration: 12 turns

Effect: Doubles the size of one animal

This spell doubles the size of one normal or giant underground animal. The animal then has twice its normal strength and inflicts double normal damage. It may also carry twice its normal encumbrance. This spell does not change an animal's behaviour, Armour Class, or hit points, and does not affect intelligent animal races or fantastic creatures.

Summon Underground Animals

Range: 360'

Duration: 3 turns

Effect: Calls and befriends normal animals

With this spell, the shadow elf can summon any or all normal underground animals within range. Only normal, non-magical creatures of animal intelligence are affected, excluding insects, arthropods, humans, and demihumans but in-

cluding mammals, reptiles, amphibians, etc. The shadow elf may choose one or more known animals, may call for specific types, or may summon everything within range. The total Hit Dice of the animals responding will equal the level of the caster. Treat normal small creatures (frogs, mice, squirrels, small birds, etc.) as Hit Die each. Animals affected will come at their fastest movement rate, and will understand the elf's speech while the spell is in effect. They will be friends of and will help the caster, to the limit of their abilities. If harmed in any way, a summoned animal will normally flee, the spell broken for that animal. However, if the shadow elf is being attacked when a summoned animal arrives, the animal will immediately attack the opponent, fleeing only if a Morale Check is failed.

This spell may be used to calm hostile animals encountered while adventuring.

Shadow elves seldom use this while hunting normal food animals.

Fifth-Level Spell Descriptions

Rock Door

Range: 0 (shadow elf only)

Duration: 1 turn per level of caster

Effect: Opens a path through rocks

For the duration of this spell, no rocks can prevent the shadow elf's passage, no matter how dense. Even stalagmites will bend or magically open to allow the druid to pass. All equipment carried can also be moved through such barriers, but no other creature can use the passage.

Transmute Rock to Mud

Range: 160'

Duration: Permanent

Effect: Turns hard rock to soft mud

This spell turns natural rock of any kind into an equal volume of mud. The most that can be transmuted is a cube of 20' on a side per level. The depth of the mud can never exceed one-half its length and breadth.

Once the spell is cast, the resulting mud acts like normal mud in all situations.

Sixth-Level Spell Descriptions

Anti-Underground Animal Shell

Range: 0 (shadow elf only)

Duration: 1 turn per level of caster

Effect: Personal barrier which blocks animals

This spell creates an invisible barrier around the shadow elf's body (less than an inch away). The barrier stops all attacks by underground animals, both normal and giant-sized, as well as insects and all other non-fantastic creatures of animal intelligence or less. The caster cannot attack animals while protected except by use of magical spells; the animals are protected from the elf's physical attacks, just as the elf is protected from theirs.

Pass Rock

Range: 0 (shadow elf only)

Duration: Instantaneous

Effect: Short-range teleportation

With this spell, the elf can enter one large stone or stalagmite, teleport, and immediately step out of another stone of the same type. The stones must be large enough to enclose the elf; the wall of a cavern will *not* work for this use. The range an elf can teleport varies by the type of stone, as follows: stalagmite or stalactite: 600 yards metamorphic rock: 360 yards igneous rock: 240 yards sedimentary and other rock: 300 yards

Transmute Rock to Lava

Range: 160'

Duration: Permanent

Effect: Turns hard rock to hot lava

This spell turns natural rock of any kind into an equal volume of lava. The most that can be transmuted is a cube of 20' on a side per level. The depth of the lava can never exceed one-half its length and breadth.

Once the spell is cast, the resulting lava acts like normal lava in all respects.

Seventh-Level Spell

Descriptions

Lower Lava

Range: 240'

Duration: 10 turns

Effect: Cuts depth to 1/2 normal

This spell will affect an area up to 10,000 square feet. At the end of the duration, the lava moves back into the area, sometimes causing "lava waves" that otherwise would not naturally occur.

Rock

Range: 0 (shadow elf only)

Duration: 2 turns per level of caster

Effect: Allows caster to turn to stone

This spell allows the shadow elf to change into a rock, along with all non-living equipment carried, up to once per round (to or from rock form) for the duration of the spell. The caster can concentrate on other spells while in rock form. Although this spell does not give immunity to Turn to Stone effects (from the attack of a gorgon, for example), the caster may simply turn back to normal form one round after becoming petrified.

While in rock form, the elf is Armour Class -4, but cannot move. The rock cannot be damaged by cold or fire (whether normal or magical), or by normal weapons. The rock need not breathe, and is thus immune to all gas attacks, drowning, etc. Magical weapons and other spells (such as lightning bolt) can inflict normal damage. If a fire or cold spell is cast at the elf while in normal form, the character need only win the initiative (through the standard roll) to turn into a rock before the attacking spell strikes. The caster receives +2 to initiative if planning to change form that round.

Transport Through Rock

Range: Infinite

Duration: Instantaneous

Effect: Long-range teleport

This spell may be used once per day at most. The shadow elf must be near a rock of any size—not a cavern wall—and must choose either a general location or a spe-

cific known rock elsewhere. After casting the spell, the elf magically enters the nearby rock and steps out of a rock at the destination (the exact rock determined randomly if not specified). There is no limit to the range, but the rocks must be on the same Plane of Existence. The caster immediately appears at the new location.

The caster can transport two additional, willing creatures.

Turn Rock

Range: 30'

Duration: 1 turn per level of caster

Effect: Pushes all stone items away

This spell creates an invisible wave of force, 120' long and 60' tall. Its midpoint can be created anywhere within 30' of the caster. This wave of force then immediately moves in one horizontal direction, as specified by the caster, at the rate of 10' per round. If desired, the force wall can be stopped at any time, but cannot thereafter be moved.

All stone objects contacting or contacted by the wave of force become stuck to it and move with it. The wave of force continues moving until the maximum range (360') is reached, and stops there for the remainder of the spell duration. The items caught are not harmed by the effect, but cannot be used while trapped in it.

Once created, the wave of force does not require concentration. However, the caster may cause it to vanish before the duration ends by concentrating for one round.

This spell has many useful applications in cleaning up a cave area. However it will not move permanent constructions (such as buildings) or other secured objects (such as stalagmites or stalactites).

Eighth-Level Spell

Descriptions

Metal to Rock

Range: 120'

Duration: Permanent

Effect: Changes metal into rock

This spell can be used to change any metal item or items into rock. The amount that can be transmuted is 50 cn per level of the caster. Any magical item is 90% resistant to the magic. The effect is permanent, and cannot be changed back with a *dispel magic* spell. Any armour changed to rock falls off the wearer and any weapons affected turn to non-magical stone clubs.

Polymorph Any Object

Range: 240'

Duration: See below

Effect: Changes form of one object or creature

This spell is similar to the 4th-level *polymorph other* spell, except that any object can be affected. If the object is part of a greater whole (such as a section of wall), up to a 10' x 10' x 10' volume can be polymorphed. A creature may avoid the effects if a Saving Throw vs. Spells is made, but with a -4 penalty to the roll.

There are three basic "kingdoms" of all things—animal, vegetable, and mineral. If an object is polymorphed to one of a "nearby" kingdom (animal-vegetable, vegetable-mineral), the duration is 1 hour per level of the caster. If the change is from animal to mineral (or the reverse), it lasts for 1 turn per level of the caster. If no change in kingdom occurs (for example, if a creature is polymorphed into some other creature), the change is permanent until removed by a *dispel magic* spell at normal chances for success.

Note that creatures created by means of this spell are not automatically friendly. A polymorph cannot affect a creature's age or his points. (See the 4th-level *polymorph self* and *polymorph other* spells for other guidelines.)

Magic Among the Shadow Elves

Ninth-Level Spell Descriptions

Sword

Range: 30'

Duration: 6 rounds + 1 per level of caster

Effect: Creates sword of force

This spell allows the shadow elf to create a shimmering sword-like blade of force. The elf is able to wield this weapon as if he or she were holding it. An elf cannot both fight with this sword and fight with other weapons, but it will just hang in space if the elf must neglect it for a few rounds to handle something else. It has no bonuses, but can hit any sort of opponent, even those normally struck only by +3 weapons. It hits any Armour Class on a roll of 19 or 20. It inflicts 4-24 points of damage and lasts until the spell duration expires, a successful *dispel magic* is cast on it, or the caster no longer wants it. This sword can be used for any special manoeuvres, just as a normal sword can.

Creating and Playing a Shaman

Shamans among the shadow elves hold an elevated status, being the worldly representatives of the Immortal Rafiel. Being a shaman is no small task, so Rafiel chooses those souls he wishes to be his shamans, and marks them in his own special way. There is no other way to “become” a shaman—if the mark is there, the character is eligible for training, but if the mark is missing, the shadow elf is out of luck. If you wish your PC to be a shaman, then she has a mark like this.

Shamans are elves, so they have the normal abilities of fighting and spellcasting as other elves, but in addition they receive shaman spells much as human clerics do. Naturally, level advancement level takes longer for a shaman because of her extra responsibilities and powers.

Besides the special birthmark signifying the character's status, each shaman, before she is qualified to receive spells, must acquire a soul crystal. When your character is ready for this step, your DM will provide you—perhaps with other

players—with a quest adventure to realize this goal. Over a career, a shaman might acquire many of these holy gems—if the character is true to the Way of the Shaman, and if Rafiel guides her!

Details...

To create a shaman shadow elf player character, follow the rules for creating an elf given above, noting the following differences for shamans:

Physical Description: As already noted, all shadow elf shamans have the “mark of Rafiel”—a purplish birthmark that extends over the forehead and eyes, and sometimes other parts of the face, in a symmetrical design. Examples of these marks can be found on the cover of this book.

An unusually high percentage of shadow elf shamans are female—about 70%—so you might consider playing a female character, too, if you are interested in playing a shaman.

Minimum Scores and Experience Bonuses: Besides the normal minimum Intelligence score of 9, a shaman must also have a Wisdom score of at least 9. If both her Wisdom and Intelligence are 13 or more, the shaman gains an Experience bonus of 5%. If her Wisdom is 16 or more, and her Intelligence is 13 or more, her Experience Bonus is 10%.

Special Abilities: The main special ability of the shadow elf shaman (besides those abilities that all shadow elves have) is the powerful spells that Rafiel grants. These make the shaman a powerful force against those outsiders who would interfere with the happiness of the shadow elves. No spell can be granted, or subsequently cast, unless the character is in possession of a soul crystal of the appropriate size and quality. For example, some soul crystals are “first-level” crystals; a shaman having one of these could meditate and receive first-level spells, and cast these, but could not receive any higher spells. The first soul crystal your shaman finds will most likely be one of these. When you are ready to cast higher-level spells—time for another quest! (Other special abilities will be gained as the shaman advances in

level, and she is allowed into lower levels of the Temple of Rafiel. These will be revealed to you by your DM as the time comes.)

Clan and City: Distinctly unlike other shadow elves, a shaman is said to be clanless—she serves all shadow elves. In practice a shaman of course makes her home in a certain city, and typically that is the city of the clan of her parents. Shamans do not often marry, not because there is any prohibition against it, but just because their many responsibilities would get in the way of a settled, normal family life. In fact, because a shaman is “clanless” from birth, she may even marry someone from her parents' clan. If a male shaman does marry, he does not necessarily move to the city of his bride. Usually it is dictated by the needs of the shadow elf people (i.e., where he is needed for a temple, etc.).

Temples: When a shaman reaches 9th level, she may build a Temple of Rafiel in a cave near the shadow elf's domain. Your DM will tell you how to do this when you reach this level. When a shaman does this, she starts a new settlement that would be considered to belong (ultimately) to her particular clan.

Special Attacks: Shaman characters are not allowed to improve in combat ability past the 10th level of experience, nor are they eligible to use the Combat Options for Fighters or multiple attacks.

Level Advancement: The Experience Points gained by a shaman character must be split between her normal advancement and the additional XP needed to advance as a shaman. The player can divide these points as she wishes, but the level of shaman can never exceed the regular level. Also, notice that to become a 1st-level shaman requires 2,000 XP. The character must adventure for a while as a 1st-level shadow elf to earn these points; only after she has achieved them is she invested as a shaman of Rafiel.

Spells: Shaman spells are gained the way clerics gain their spells: The character meditates and Rafiel grants the spells that Rafiel thinks the character has earned.

Magic Among the Shadow Elves

Table 3: Shadow Elf Shaman Experience, D&D® Game

Level	Additional XP	Shaman Spells by Spell Level						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2,000	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	3,000	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	4,000	2	1	-	-	-	-	-
4	8,000	2	2	-	-	-	-	-
5	16,000	2	2	1	-	-	-	-
6	32,000	3	2	1	-	-	-	-
7	60,000	3	3	1	-	-	-	-
8	125,000	3	3	2	-	-	-	-
9	200,000	3	3	2	1	-	-	-
10	300,000	4	3	2	1	-	-	-
11	425,000	4	4	2	1	-	-	-
12	550,000	5	4	3	2	-	-	-
13	675,000	5	4	3	2	1	-	-
14	800,000	5	4	4	3	1	-	-
15	925,000	6	5	4	3	2	-	-
16	1,050,000	6	5	4	3	2	1	-
17	1,175,000	7	5	4	4	3	2	-
18	1,300,000	7	6	4	4	3	2	-
19	1,425,000	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
20	1,550,000	8	6	5	5	4	2	1
21	1,675,000	8	7	5	5	4	3	2
22	1,800,000	8	7	6	5	4	3	2

Notes to Table 3

125,000 XP per level after level 22.

Maximum shaman spell ability is gained at level 22.

Shaman Spell Lists by Level

First-Level Shadow Elf Shaman Spells

1. Ceremony
2. Command Word
3. Purify Food and Water
4. Resist Cold

Second-Level Shadow Elf Shaman Spells

1. Cure Light Wounds
2. Detect Danger
3. Know Alignment*
4. Predict Weather
5. Resist Fire
6. Silence 15-Foot Radius

Third-Level Shadow Elf Shaman Spells

1. Fire Ball
2. Heat Metal
3. Obscure
4. Protection from Poison

Fourth-Level Shadow Elf Shaman Spells

1. Control Temperature 10-Foot Radius
2. Cure Disease
3. Lava Breathing
4. Wall of Fire

Fifth-Level Shadow Elf Shaman Spells

1. Call Upon Souls
2. Cure Serious Wounds
3. Insect Plague
4. Neutralize Poison

Sixth-Level Shadow Elf Shaman Spells

1. Control Destiny
2. Cure Critical Wounds
3. Dispel Evil
4. Raise Dead
5. Stone to Flesh*
6. Truesight

Seventh-Level Shadow Elf Shaman Spells

1. Creeping Doom
2. Delayed Blast Fire Ball
3. Discharge Soul Power
4. Earthquake
5. Raise Dead Fully

New Shadow Elf Shaman Spell Descriptions

First-Level Spell Descriptions

Ceremony

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent

Effect: Consecrates one creature, item, or area

This is a multi-purpose spell that shamans perform as part of a process to guide another elf through some part of his or her life. The ceremonies involved include:

Adopt: A ceremony that transfers a shadow elf (and, on rare occasion, a human or other demihuman) from one clan to another. The shaman performing the ceremony must be of a level at least equal to the adoptee's. This ceremony is part of any marriage, moving the groom to the clan of the bride.

Anathematize: A ceremony performed when an elf has reached the age of 800 years and must now be banished as a wanderer.

Consecrate: This ceremony has two different uses among the shadow elves. The first allows the shaman to dedicate an area of ground to the building of a Temple of Rafael, and dedicates certain implements for that building.

Magic Among the Shadow Elves

The second use of this spell allows the shaman to dedicate an area of a cave for the mining of soul crystals, and dedicates certain implements for that mining.

Invest: A ceremony that is performed when a shadow elf becomes a shaman.

Command Word

Range: 10'

Duration: 1 round

Effect: One creature

This spell allows the shadow elf to utter a command of one word. The word must be in a language that the recipient is able to understand. The recipient obeys to the best of her ability as long as the command is clear and unequivocal. A command to "Die!" would make the recipient faint for a round, but there would be no other harmful effect (unless, of course, she was walking a high wire at the time). Typical command words include halt, back, run, go, surrender, etc.

Undead are not affected by a *command word*.

Creatures with an Intelligence of 13 or more and creatures with 6 or more hit dice or experience levels are entitled to a Saving Throw vs. Spells. Creatures who meet both qualifications do not get two saving throws.

Purify Food and Water

Range: 10'

Duration: Permanent

Effect: Makes food and water safe to consume

This spell will make spoiled or poisoned food and water safe and usable. It will purify one ration of food (either Iron or Standard rations), or six waterskins of water, or enough normal food to feed a dozen people. If cast at mud, the spell will cause the dirt to settle, leaving a pool of pure, clear water. The spell will not affect any living creature.

This spell is seldom used among the shadow elves, who have come to depend upon *trania*, their specially compressed and preserved food preparation.

Resist Cold

Range: 0

Duration: 6 turns

Effect: All creatures within 30'

When this spell is cast, all creatures within 30' of the shaman can withstand freezing temperatures without harm. In addition, those affected gain a bonus of +2 to all Saving Throws against cold attacks. Furthermore, any damage from cold is reduced by -1 per die of damage (but with a minimum of 1 point of damage per die). The effect will move with the shaman.

Second-Level Spell Descriptions

Cure Light Wounds*

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent

Effect: Any one living creature

This spell will either heal damage or remove paralysis. If used to heal, it will cure 2-7 (1d6+1) points of damage. It will not heal any damage if used to cure paralysis. The shaman may cast it on himself (or herself) if desired. This spell will never increase a creature's total hit points above the original amount.

Detect Danger

Range: 5' per level of caster

Duration: One hour

Effect: Reveals hazards

This spell combines some effects of *detect evil* and *find traps*. While it is functioning, the shaman can concentrate on places, objects, or creatures within range. A full round of concentration is needed to examine one square foot of area, one creature, or one small object (a chest, weapon, or smaller item). Larger objects require more time. After examining the thing, the shaman will know whether it is immediately dangerous, potentially dangerous, or benign (all strictly from a shaman's point of view). The precise nature of the danger is not revealed. Note that most creatures are potentially dangerous. This spell will detect poisons, while other spells may not.

The spell duration is a full hour when used underground in the areas inhabited

(or claimed by) the shadow elves; elsewhere, the duration is half normal (i.e., three turns).

Know Alignment*

Range: 10'

Duration: 1 turn

Effect: Tells alignment of target

This spell enables the shaman to exactly read the alignment aura of a person—human, demihuman, or nonhuman. Up to 10 persons can be examined with this spell.

The reverse of this spell makes another's *know alignment* spell react as if the target is the same alignment as the examiner; this effect lasts for one turn.

Predict Weather

Range: 0 (shaman only)

Duration: 12 hours

Effect: Gives knowledge of coming weather

This spell enables the shaman to learn the accurate weather to come for the next 12 hours. It affects an area 1 mile in diameter per level of the shaman; for example, a 20th-level shaman would learn the weather within a 10-mile radius. The spell does not give any control over the weather, merely predicting what is to come.

Resist Fire

Range: 30'

Duration: 2 turns

Effect: One living creature

For the duration of this spell, the recipient cannot be harmed by normal fire and heat. The recipient also gains a +2 bonus on all Saving Throws against magical fire (dragon's breath, fire ball, etc.). Furthermore, damage from such fire is reduced by 1 point per die of damage (though each die will inflict at least 1 point of damage, regardless of adjustments). Red dragon breath damage is reduced by 1 point per hit die of the creature (again to a minimum of 1 point of damage per hit die).

Silence 15' Radius

Range: 180'

Duration: 12 turns

Effect: Sphere of silence 30' across

Magic Among the Shadow Elves

This spell makes the area of effect totally silent. Conversation and spells in this area are impossible for the duration of the spell. This spell does not prevent a person within the area from hearing noises made outside the area. If cast on a creature, the victim must make a Saving Throw vs. Spells; if successful, the spell remains in the area in which it was cast, and the victim may move out of that area.

Third-Level Spell Descriptions

Fire Ball

Range: 240'

Duration: Instantaneous

Effect: Explosion in a sphere 40' diameter

This spell creates a missile of fire that bursts into a ball of fire of 20-foot radius when it strikes a target. The fire ball will cause 1-6 points of fire damage per level of the caster to every creature in the area. Each victim may make a Saving Throw vs. Spells; if successful, the spell will only do half damage. For example, a fire ball cast

by a 6th-level shaman will burst for 6-36 points of damage, or one half the total to those making the Saving Throw.

Heat Metal

Range: 30'

Duration: 1 turn per level of caster

Effect: Warms one metal object

This spell causes one object to slowly heat and then cool. It will affect one metal item weighing up to 5 cn per level of the caster. A 12th-level shaman, for example, can heat a normal sword, but a 20th-level shaman can heat a two-handed sword, and a 36th-level shaman, a lance. The heat causes no damage to magical items. Normal weapons or other items may be severely damaged, especially if made of wood and metal (as a normal lance), as the wood will burn away. If the object is held, the heat causes damage to the holder: one point during the first round, 2 in the second, 4 in the third, 8 in the fourth, and then decreasing at the same rate (for a total of 22 points of heat damage over seven rounds.) No Saving Throw

is allowed, but fire resistance negates all damage. The item may be dropped at any time, of course, and creatures of low intelligence are 80% likely to do so (check each round). In the fourth round, the searing heat will cause leather, wood, paper, and other flammable objects in contact with the metal to catch fire.

Once the spell has been cast, no concentration is needed; the heating and cooling proceed automatically. A dispel magic can stop the effect, but normal means (immersion in water, etc.) will not.

If used on an item imbedded in an opponent (such as an arrow or dagger), the creature may remove the item but loses initiative for that round (and takes the appropriate heat damage as well). Note that heat damage disrupts concentration; the victim cannot cast spells during any round in which damage is inflicted by this spell.



Magic Among the Shadow Elves

Obscure

Range: 0 (shaman only)
Duration: 1 level per turn of caster
Effect: Creates huge misty cloud

This spell causes a misty vapour to arise from the ground around the shaman, forming a huge cloud. The cloud is 1' high per level of the shaman, and is 10' across for each level. For example, a 20th-level shaman could cast an obscure 20' tall and 100' in radius. The cloud has no ill effects except to block vision. The caster, and all creatures able to see invisible things, will be able to dimly see through the cloud. All other creatures within the cloud will be delayed and confused by the effect.

Protection from Poison

Range: Touch
Duration: One turn per level of caster
Effect: Gives one creature immunity to all poison

For the duration of this spell, the recipient is completely immune to the effects of poisons of all types, including gas traps and *cloudkill* spells. This protection extends to items carried (thus protecting against a spirit's poisonous presence, for example). Furthermore, the recipient gains a +4 bonus on Saving Throws vs. Poisonous Breath weapons (such as green dragon breath) but not petrification breath (such as a gorgon's).

Fourth-Level Spell Descriptions

Control Temperature 10-Foot Radius

Range: 0 (shaman only)
Duration: 1 turn per level of caster
Effect: Cools or warms air within 10'

This spell allows the shaman to alter the temperature within an area 20' across. The maximum change is 50 degrees (Fahrenheit), either warmer or cooler. The change occurs immediately, and the effect moves with the shaman. The temperature may be changed by mere concentration for 1 round, as long as the spell lasts. The spell is useful for resisting cold or heat so the caster may survive any temperature extremes.

Cure Disease

Range: 0 (touch)
Duration: Permanent
Effect: One living creature

This spell will cure any living creature of one disease, such as those caused by a mummy or green slime. If cast by a shaman of 11th level or greater, this spell will cure lycanthropy.

Lava Breathing

Range: 30'
Duration: 1 day
Effect: One air-breathing creature

This spell allows the recipient to breathe while under lava. It does not affect movement in any way, nor does it interfere with the breathing of air. Note also that this spell does *not* afford protection from the intense heat of the lava.

Wall of Fire

Range: 60'
Duration: Concentration
Effect: Creates 1,200 square feet of fire

This spell creates a thin vertical wall of fire of any dimensions and shape, determined by the shaman, totalling 1,200 square feet (for example, 10' x 120', 20' x 60', 30' x 40', etc.). The wall is opaque and will block sight. Creatures of less than 4 Hit Dice cannot break through the wall. Creatures of 4 HD or more can break through, but take 1-6 points of damage in the process. Undead and cold-using creatures (white dragons, frost giants, etc.) each take double damage while breaking through. The wall cannot be cast in a space occupied by another object. It lasts as long as the caster concentrates on it, without moving.

Fifth-Level Spell Descriptions

Call Upon Souls

Range: 30' radius from soul crystal
Duration: 1 round per level
Effect: Increases spell effects

This spell enables the caster to increase her spell effects for one round per level. This requires the use of a soul crystal of the appropriate quality. The increase in level depends upon the soul crystal, and varies between one and seven levels of increase. If the level of spell casting does not substantially change the effect, the caster may instead choose to increase one of the following factors:

Range (except for permanent or instantaneous effect spells)

Duration (except for permanent or instantaneous effect spells)

Area of Effect (except for spells affecting only one person or target) The factor increases 10% (or one level) for each 10 souls within the soul crystal, to a maximum of 7 levels or 70%.

Example: A 36th-level shaman with the maximum soul crystal (i.e., 70% improvement) could cast a fire ball 408' away instead of 240', or cover a 68-foot blast area instead of 40'. (Damage does not increase since spells never cause more than 20d6 of damage, as per D&D Companion rules.)

Drawing upon the power of souls within a crystal weakens them, of course. The souls regain their strength only slowly, as they have no material bodies. Each soul drawn upon is unusable for one week. Other souls within the crystal are still available, however.

Cure Serious Wounds

Range: Touch
Duration: Permanent
Effect: Any one living creature

This spell is similar to a cure light wounds spell, but will cure one creature of 4-14 points of damage (2d6+2).

Insect Plague

Range: 480'

Duration: 1 day

Effect: Creates a swarm of 30-foot radius

This spell summons a vast swarm of insects. The swarm obscures vision and drives off creatures of less than 3 Hit Dice (no Saving Throw). The swarm moves at up to 20' per round as directed by the shaman while it is within range. The caster must concentrate, without moving, to control the swarm. If the caster is disturbed, the insects scatter and the spell ends.

Neutralize Poison

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent

Effect: A creature, container, or object

This spell makes poison harmless either in a creature, a container (such as a bottle), or on one object (such as a chest). It will even revive a victim slain by poison if cast within 10 rounds of the poisoning! It will affect any and all poisons present at the time it is cast, but does not cure any damage (and will thus not revive a poisoned victim who has died of wounds).

Sixth-Level Spell Descriptions

Control Destiny

This spell is described in the DM's Booklet.

Cure Critical Wounds

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent

Effect: Any one living creature

This spell is similar to a cure light wounds spell, but will cure one living creature of 6-21 (3d6-3) points of damage.

Dispel Evil

Range: 30'

Duration: 1 turn

Effect: Enchanted or undead monsters or one curse or charm

This spell may affect all undead and enchanted (summoned, controlled, and animated) monsters within range. It will destroy the monster unless each victim makes a Saving Throw vs. Spells. If cast at only one creature, a -2 penalty applies to the Saving Throw. Any creature from another plane is banished (forced to return to its home plane) if the Saving Throw is failed. Even if the Saving Throw is successful, the victims must flee the area, and will stay away as long as the caster concentrates (without moving). This spell will also remove the curse from any one cursed item, or may be used to remove any magical charm.

Raise Dead

Range: 120'

Duration: Permanent

Effect: Raises body of one elf

By means of this spell, the shaman can raise any elf from the dead. The body must be present, and if part is missing, the raised character may be disabled in some way. A 19th-level shaman can raise a body that has been dead for up to eight days. For each level of the shaman above 19th, three days are added to this time. Thus, a 22nd-level shaman can raise bodies that have been dead for up to 17 days. The recipient becomes alive with 1 hit point, and cannot fight, cast spells, use abilities, carry heavy loads, or move more than half speed. These penalties will disappear after two full weeks of complete bed rest, but the healing cannot be speeded by magic.

Stone to Flesh*

Range: 120'

Duration: Permanent

Effect: One creature or object

This spell turns any one statue (or quantity of stone up to 10' x 10' x 10') to flesh. It is usually used to restore a character turned to stone (by gorgon breath, for example). The reverse of this spell, *flesh to stone*, will turn one living creature, including all equipment carried, to stone. The victim may make a Saving Throw vs. Turn to Stone to avoid the effect.

Truesight

Range: 0 (shaman only)

Duration: 1 turn + 1 round per level of caster

Effect: Reveals all things

When this spell is cast, the shaman is able to clearly see all things within 120'. The spell is quite powerful; the shaman can see all hidden, invisible, and ethereal objects and creatures, as with the magic user detect invisible spell (including secret doors). In addition, any things or creatures not in their true form—whether polymorphed, disguised, or otherwise—are seen as they truly are, with no possibility of deception. Alignment is also "seen", as is experience and power (level or Hit Dice).

Magic Among the Shadow Elves

Seventh-Level Spell Descriptions

Creeping Doom

Range: 120'

Duration: 1 round per level of caster

Effect: Creates a 20' x 20' square insect horde

This spell magically creates a huge swarm of 1,000 creeping insects, appearing anywhere within 120' of the shaman (as chosen by the caster). They fill an area 10' x 20' at least, and can be ordered to fill any area up to 60' x 60' (at most). The creeping doom can move at up to 60'/turn (20'/round) if the caster remains within 120' of any part of the swarm. They vanish after the duration ends, or whenever the shaman is more than 120' from them. The insects always attack everyone and everything in their path, inflicting 1 point of damage per 10 insects—a total of 100 points per round per creature—to all within it (no Saving Throw). Normal attacks (such as fire) can damage the horde slightly, but even a fireball spell will only slay 100 of them (reducing the damage the horde can do accordingly). The creeping doom can be destroyed by a dispel magic spell (at normal chances for success), but it can penetrate a protection from evil effect, and can move over most obstacles at the normal movement rate.

Delayed Blast Fire Ball

Range: 240'

Duration: 0 to 60 rounds

Effect: Delayed blast fireball, sphere of 20-foot radius

As the name implies, this is a fire ball spell whose blast can be delayed. The shaman must state the exact number of rounds delay (from 0 to 60) when the spell is cast. A

small rock, very similar in appearance to a valuable gem, then shoots out toward the desired location, and remains until the stated delay elapses. The "gem" may be picked up, carried, and so forth. When the stated duration ends, an effect identical to a normal fire ball is produced—a sudden instantaneous explosion inflicting 1-6 points of damage per level of the caster to all within the area of effect (a sphere of 20-foot radius). Each victim may make a Saving Throw vs. Spells to take half damage. Once the spell has been cast, the explosion cannot be hurried nor further delayed, except with a wish. The "gem" created is pure magic, not an actual object, and cannot be moved magically (by telekinesis, teleport, etc.), though it can be dispelled.

Discharge Soul Power

This spell is described in the DM's Booklet.

Earthquake

Range: 120 yards

Duration: 1 turn

Effect: Causes earth tremors

This powerful spell causes a section of earth to shake, and opens large cracks in the ground. A 14th level caster can affect an area up to 60' square, adding 5' to each dimension with each level of experience thereafter. For example, an 18th level shadow elf affects an area up to 80' square; 19th level, 85' square; and so forth. Within the area of effect, all small dwellings are reduced to rubble, and larger constructions are cracked open. Earthen formations (hills, cliffs, etc.) form rock slides. Cracks in the earth may open and engulf 1 creature in 6 (determined randomly), crushing them.

Raise Dead Fully

Range: 60'

Duration: Permanent

Effect: Raises any living creature

This spell is similar to the 8th-level *raise dead* spell, except that it can raise any living creature. Any human or demihuman recipient awakens immediately, with no wounds (full hit points), and is able to fight, use abilities, spells known, etc., without any penalties—except those existing at the time of death. For example, a victim cursed or diseased at death would still suffer the affliction when raised fully. If any other living creature (other than a human or demihuman) is the recipient, the guidelines given in the *raise dead* spell apply (including time limitations, rest needed, etc.). A 22nd-level shaman can use this spell on a human or demihuman body that has been dead up to 4 months; for each level of experience above 22nd, 4 months are added to this time. Thus, a 24th-level shaman could cast *raise dead fully* on a body that has been dead up to 12 months.

GAZETTEER

An Official DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Game Supplement

The Shadow Elves DUNGEON Master's Guide

by Carl Sargent and Gary Thomas

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INTRODUCTION

Many folk think that the Shadow Elves are but a legend. They know better in Alfheim. The elves of that forested land were forced to ally with Darokin to put down shadow elf infiltration and a planned invasion just over three centuries in the past. To an elf, that's not even half a lifetime. Humans ignore the whispered stories and rumours, but the elves know better. Now their subterranean cousins are preparing for another invasion—and this time they may well be successful.

The Gazetteer

This Gazetteer describes the land of the Shadow Elves in the D&D® game's Known World: its geography, peoples, and history. In this package, you'll find the following:

- ♦ this 64-page *DM's Guide* to the shadow elf lands, including adventure outlines;
- ♦ a 32-page *Players' Guide* to the shadow elves, including many new skills and rules for shadow elf shamans and full guidance on creating shadow elf player characters;
- ♦ a full-colour, fold-out map sheet showing the shadow elf lands in full detail and in relation to the major landmarks of the surface lands above them;
- ♦ a three-panel inside cover showing details of the City of the Stars, the major settlement of the shadow elves, and the Temple of Rafiel within it.

Using This Gazetteer

If you haven't used a Gazetteer before, you're going to enjoy this one. If you have, you're going to enjoy it too, but you're going to find GAZ13 significantly different from its predecessors in some important ways.

In the *Player's Guide* there are several major sections. The history of the shadow elves is followed by a brief resume of their lands and cities. After reading about a day in the life of the shadow elves, the core of their beliefs and being—the Way of Rafiel—is laid out for players to digest and understand. This ethos is the heart and soul of a shadow elf. If you have already read the *Players' Guide* first as we

suggested, you know this, of course.

Players who have read other Gazetteers, and/or adventured in other lands of the Known World, will be surprised by what they read here. They may well have been told that shadow elves are Chaotic, and this alignment is given for them in the "monster" entry of GAZ5 *The Elves of Alfheim*. That just shows that even elves will promulgate untruths on occasion.

This is not to say that the *Player's Book* tells the whole truth and nothing but the truth. That is the purpose of this book, the *DM's Guide*.

Using This Booklet

This *DM's Guide* has many of the features you will expect from a Gazetteer, if you have used one before. It has profiles for major non-player characters, maps and descriptions for cities and important locations, some new monsters and spells and rules and much else. But there is something else you should be aware of from the outset.

Much of the history and background given in the *Players' Guide* is not entirely accurate. Quite a bit of it is, in fact, fundamentally *wrong* in very important ways. This is one thing that makes this an unusual Gazetteer. Don't worry about this. After all, other cultures have totally erroneous views about shadow elves (as a 4-page pullout section "What Everyone Knows About Shadow Elves" in the middle of this booklet shows). Why should it be surprising that shadow elves—including PC shadow elves—have some important misconceptions about themselves?

The important point here is that you have all the *correct* information within this book. It is revealed piece by piece until you see the whole picture. The fate of the shadow elves is one of major importance to all races of the Known World. They have infiltrated far, far wider than almost anyone imagines. Who can say where their webs of intrigue begin and end? You will be a lot better placed to know when you have finished reading this book.

Within this guide, a first section covers Time and History—the calendar of the

shadow elves, their festivals and special days, and the correct version of their history. A lengthy section follows on Shamans and their Soul Crystals, which gives more details of the truth of the religious path which is so important to these people. Following chapters lay out the geography of the shadow elf lands, including their spectacular and eerie City of the Stars. "Travel and Vigilance" explains how to get around these extensive lands and gives a rundown of the powerful shadow elf army and military patrols which so jealously guard the secrets of shadow elf life. "Flora and Fauna" describes some monsters, the skinwings which are such important riding beasts for the elves, and rounds up some of the more harmless—but important and sometimes bizarre—creatures which share the domain of the shadow elves.

Two lengthy chapters, "Among the Shadows" and "Shadow Elves in Other Lands," give profiles for many important personalities among the shadow elves. There are also some detailed rules here for handling the extreme auditory acuity and light-sensitivity of shadow elves which you may need for game play. These chapters also suggest important revisions which can be introduced into other Gazetteers without disturbing game play. The ways of shadow elves are rarely what they seem. Shadow elves are to be found in all kinds of places where they are unsuspected, often without the need for disguise or active pretence.

Of course, given that you will know so many secrets by the end of reading all this, you will need adventures and adventure outlines to put your players to work and get as much fun as possible out of this rich gaming setting. You want them out in the ever-dark tunnels and warrens, dodging skitterlings and darksnaps, watching the elf-artisans moving tunnels or soul mining; or maybe you want to send them out spider hunting or pursuing the horrific Boneless, or head them into a web of intrigue they do not even begin to suspect. Well, we wouldn't want to disappoint you. There are adventure outlines aplenty. We told you, you're going to enjoy this stuff.

The 14 Verses of the Refuge of Stone

Verse of the Gathering

Before the holocaust, I was Rafiel, and I watched over my people. I gathered them into the palm of my hand, and I guided them to this refuge of stone. I, Rafiel, will guide you.

Verse of the Name of the Shadow Elves

I am Rafiel, and you are all my shadow. As I move, so you move. As I stand, so you stand. As I live, so you live. Thus shall you be shadow elves, and I, Rafiel, will guide you.

Verse of the Refuge of Stone

Let all my children learn these words, the words that guide you and give you life. Daily honour these fourteen verses and I, Rafiel, will guide you.

Verse of the Shaman

I, Rafiel, mark with my own hand those whom I empower. Let all respect be accorded these, my chosen servants. They it is who will have the power of life and death over you. Follow their teachings, and I, Rafiel, will guide you.

Verse of the Crystals

In the fullness of time, I, Rafiel, will show my shamans the secrets of the crystals that have the power of life and death and life everlasting. Guard these crystals carefully, and I, Rafiel, will guide you.

Verse of Birth

If any child be born among you that is not whole, let them be brought before me, and I, Rafiel, will guide their path.

Verse of the Wanderers

Keep the strength of the shadow elves, and let none who is weak remain among you or follow after you. Turn these to me, and I, Rafiel, will guide their path.

Verse of the Temple

Here build before me a city, and a great temple, and within it offer up to me all good things, and I, Rafiel, will guide you.

Verse of Food and Cleanliness

Let your food be pure and clean. Keep also yourselves pure and white before me, and let not your souls be spotted with wrongdoing against me, and I, Rafiel, will guide you.

Verse of Days

I will teach my shamans the goodness and badness of each day. Keep the good days *fasti*, and the bad days *ne fasti*, and I, Rafiel, will guide you.

Verse of the Army

I will send fire against you, to strengthen you in my own forge. Let every man and woman among you see battle and I, Rafiel, will guide you.

Verse of the King

I will guide my shamans to choose from among you a king, who will serve as long as I wish him to serve. Let all my people obey this king and I, Rafiel, will guide you.

Verse of the Other Peoples

If any other peoples desire to live among you, let a clan adopt them, and keep them separate from you lest they offend me, and I, Rafiel, will guide you.

Last Verse, The Verse of Promised Bounty

I am Rafiel. If all my children follow my way and the Way of the Shamans, then all good things will come to them, for I, Rafiel, will guide you.



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The Calendar

The calendar of the shadow elves, like so much of their life, is closely bound up with their religion. The year is divided into 14 months each of 24 days. Naturally, each month corresponds to one of the verses of the Refuge of Stone. The names of the months, then, are Gathering, Name, Refuge, Shaman, Crystals, Birth, Wanderers, Temple, Food, Days, Army, King, Others, and Bounty. A shadow elf might say that he was born on the third of the Month of Gathering, for example, or on the last day of the Month of the King.

Years and Days

The shadow elves count years from the time of their discovery of the Refuge of Stone itself (1104 BC). As the beginning of their new life this is taken as year 1. Their 14 months of 24 days gives a year equal to the Common Year (12 months of 28 days), so CY 1000 is the year 2105 in the shadow elf calendar.

There are no weeks within a month, and likewise days are not given names, only numbers. Converting from a surface date to a shadow elf date is not difficult given that the first day of Gathering falls, by fortunate coincidence, on the same day as the first of Nuwmont (first day of the surface calendar). As an example, take the 17th of Sviftmont (the fourth surface month). Three preceding surface months each have 28 days, so this is the 101st day of the year $((3 \times 28) + 17)$. Four complete shadow elf months will have passed by this time $(4 \times 24 = 96, \text{ less than } 101)$ and it will be the fifth day of the fifth month in the shadow elf calendar—the Month of Crystals. Converting shadow elf dates to surface calendar dates is likewise straightforward if dates (month and day) are converted into a simple number for the purposes of translation.

Fasti and Ne Fasti

Throughout the turbulent history of the shadow elves, certain events have been very favourable and others have been disastrous. Any happening that seems extraordinary is carefully recorded by the shamans of Rafiel. The anniversaries of these occasions become special days: *fasti* and *ne fasti*.

A *fasti* day is considered good; it commemorates some special success or good

fortune of the shadow elves. A *ne fasti* day recalls some inauspicious moment in history. Both types of days have special rules concerning the types of activities that may be conducted on them.

For example, a *fasti* day is a good day for conducting official business, getting married, or being born (many adults do their best to conceive children to be born in the month of Birth, *fasti* for births; see below). A *ne fasti* day is a bad day for any of these things, and a shadow elf will go out of his way to avoid this coming to pass. The shamans and the very devout will not conduct such business on *ne fasti* days except in direst emergency. A *fasti* day is considered especially lucky for something that relates to what it commemorates. For example, the date of the first groundbreaking for the Temple of Rafiel in the City of the Stars is a *fasti* day. Further, that date is thought to be the very best for beginning new buildings.

Besides the *fasti* and *ne fasti* days, certain days are important in the worship of Rafiel. On many of these dates, grand feasts are held; others are marked by fasting. On yet others, worshipers fast most of the day, and then hold a large celebration, with plenty of food and drink, at the end of the day.

Specific Dates

Here is a list for each month of the major *fasti* and *ne fasti* dates, together with any special feasts, celebrations or events held on those dates.

Gathering 1: The first day of the shadow elf year is actually both *fasti* and *ne fasti*, commemorating the date of the Blackmoor holocaust which destroyed the surface. Shadow elves fast all day; no official business is transacted, but births on this day are considered well aspected and a sign of good fortune.

Name 2: This day is *ne fasti*, marking a disastrous attack of orcs against the City of the Stars. The onslaught was so great that hobgoblin troops reached the very steps of the Temple of Rafiel before being repulsed. Tens of thousands of shadow elves were slain. At eight in the “evening,” virtually the whole population of the City (save those on guard duty and the like) walks out to stand around the Temple of Rafiel. This huge gathering stands in eerie, total silence for a few minutes before the Radiant Shaman emerges from the Temple to wave a blessing

upon them. The shadow elves break into quiet weeping before slowly dispersing to their homes. Many bring a single flower from the memory gourd plant (see “Flora and Fauna,” later) to cast upon the steps of the temple, so that by the time the crowd has gone the steps can be shin-deep in these exotic white flowers. This simple ceremony has a powerful emotional effect on any outsiders watching it!

Refuge 9: This day is *fasti*, celebrating the discovery of the Refuge of Stone in the vast cavern that holds the City of the Stars. The day is one of joyous celebration, feasting and singing, tempered with dignified devotions to Rafiel.

Shaman 2: This day is *ne fasti*, marking the date of the destruction of Aengmor, which sank into a sea of lava.

Crystals: This entire month is *fasti* for beginning new excavations of soul crystals. No matter when a vein is first discovered, work will not begin on excavating them until this month.

Birth: This entire month is considered *fasti* for births. The percentage born with deformities is very low indeed during this month, although the percentage born with the mark of the shaman is normal. Since the gestation period for shadow elves is 12 months, the month is one which arouses deep and complex emotions in shadow elves. While being anxious and fretful about birthing itself, shadow elves fondly recall the determination of their efforts to conceive at this time. Many young elves will pair at this time, beginning relationships or marriages.

Wanderers: The entire Month of Wanderers is *ne fasti*. The whole race of shadow elves, in all of their cities, rests from any nonessential activity. No new buildings are started or finished, crops are not planted or harvested (although they will be tended), and travel is kept to a bare minimum. During this month, shamans hold round-the-clock vigils in the Temple of Rafiel, with hourly sacrifices to ensure the strength of the shadow elf race. Being born during this month prevents one from ever becoming an officer in the army, or building a stronghold. Shamanic births are also extremely rare during this month, although if they do take place this is regarded as great good fortune, the child destined for pre-eminence in the shamanic hierarchy.

Wanderers 8: This day is *ne fasti* and is

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marked by total abstinence from food or water all day. What event could be so dire as to warrant such commemoration by the shadow elves? The day of their rejection by the elves of Alfheim. The bad luck on this day is not due to any supposed loss on the part of the shadow elves—Rafiel will guide and protect them, after all—but rather the disgrace laid upon the entire race by the surface elves' inhospitality and bad manners toward their clan brothers.

Temple 14: This day is *fasti*, marking the laying of the cornerstone of the Temple of Rafiel. Remodelling of the Temple always begins on this day. Construction of other temples in other cities is also begun on the fourteenth day of the Month of the Temple.

Food 16: This day is *ne fasti*, marking the return of the shadow elves' second surface party, which reached the Sun's Anvil in the Broken Lands and concluded that the surface was still uninhabitable.

Days 19: This day is *ne fasti*, marking the return of the elves' first surface party. This party found only the red sun, and no livable conditions for shadow elves.

Army 1: The first day of the month is *fasti*, and is known as Mustering Day among the shadow elves. Every adult shadow elf is considered a member of the shadow elf army. On this day each year, a census is taken of all available soldiers.

King 1: This day is *fasti*, for it is the birthday of Tarasfir, the first King of the shadow elves selected by the shamans under the guidance of Rafiel.

King 12: This day is *fasti*, for it is the birthday of Telemon, the current King of the shadow elves.

Others 15: This day is *ne fasti*, marking the outbreak of a plague in Alfmyr which killed over 10,000 elves in a matter of weeks. The plague was brought by a shadow elf who had been in Glantri when it appeared there first; since dwarves were blamed for the plague in Glantri, the shadow elves in turn blame the dwarves for this terrible misfortune.

Others 22: This day is *ne fasti*, commemorating a shameful day in shadow elf history when members of the Felestyr and Celebryl clans quarrelled and fought over ownership of certain prestigious areas in the City of the Stars. Tempers were lost, blood ran hot in veins, and some thousand elves were killed before shame, shock, and the exhortations of shamans stopped the

insane slaughter. All combat is prohibited by the way of Rafiel on this day. Community leaders and shamans of the two clans exchange gifts and greetings and take a late evening meal together to break the fasting of the daytime. They wear but the simplest and humblest of robes to this repast, disrobing before shamans to show that they carry no weapons, and given the humble white garments by the shamans after a ritual blessing and washing their hands and feet in a little holy water.

Bounty 24: This day is *fasti* and is celebrated with great feasts, to look forward to the promises of Rafiel yet to be fulfilled. The feasts are so ample that they make the process of fasting on the following day much less onerous!

Keeping Track of Time —

It would seem that the shadow elves would have no special reason to keep track of time underground and, in fact, many other underground denizens do not keep track. Humanoids such as orcs sleep when they feel like sleeping, eat when they are hungry, and in general live in a disorganized fashion. Rafiel does not allow this for the shadow elves, and they are careful to obey him.

The temple shamans are in charge of keeping track of time, in order to properly observe *fasti* and *ne fasti* dates. Timekeeping is also important for conducting various ceremonies throughout the day at each temple. The principal method of timekeeping is the waterclock. A large soapstone bowl is filled with water, which drips out over the course of the day, through 14 tiny holes drilled around the bottom of the bowl.

The bowl is further decorated with various religious icons and inscriptions related to the blessings granted by Rafiel. These drawings are inscribed in such a way that the level of the water on the drawings shows the time of day.

The accuracy of these bowls is unbelievably high, and the shadow elves have no need (or desire) to travel to the surface to know the time of day. About once every two months, the chief shaman of a temple will synchronize its clock, adjusting the bowl's water level according to instructions she receives from Rafiel.

History as the Immortals See It —

The history of the shadow elves is a history of hardship, a tale of tribulations which might have destroyed any lesser race. The shadow elves revel in these hardships, believing that their trials are a test of their mettle. Weakness is a grave sin.

The Beginning —

The shadow elves once lived on the surface, just as all other elves still do today. This was 6,000 years ago ("now" is 1000 AC). Over the next several thousand years, some elves (from the southern continent, now under an icecap) travelled north and colonized what is now Glantri. They lived peacefully, developing their culture and magic, until their lives were suddenly shattered by the Great Rain of Fire (3000 BC). The planetary axis shifted, causing incredible climatic upheavals. Blackmoor was forever covered in ice. The elves in Glantri fled to what is today the Broken Lands. They were then driven underground, for the first time in their history, to escape the fiery holocaust that ravaged the surface. Glantri, only a little later, underwent its own temporary ice age.

Eight hundred years later (2200 BC), surface elves fleeing the southern continent arrived in Glantri, hoping to find the earlier elven colonists. Instead, they found humanoids and hostile humans who blamed the elves for the Rain of Fire. These elves did not find their cousins, most of them finding only death at the hands of the savages of the Broken Lands. A few were able to settle, however, and defend some land of their own.

The elves underground made the best of a bad situation in the meantime. They were sylvan folk, so they cultivated the fungus that grew so abundantly in the nether regions and created new forms to suit their needs. They had brought seeds and a few plants with them, and the elvish wizards among them worked hard to produce new plants which could survive in the radically changed environment the elves found themselves in. They feared approaching the surface and so withstood this way of living for as long as they could.

Then the small band travelled back to the surface, cautiously and with great ap-

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prehension. The holocaust seemed to be over, and they settled in Glantri again, in 1950 BC. It seems that they did not meet any of the elves from the second migration, since they were separated by many hostile humanoids and human tribes.

This situation did not last. Around 1700 BC the other, earlier elven settlers in Glantri found a strange artifact from the Blackmoor civilization, in the Broken Lands. They tinkered with it, and it exploded cataclysmically. Great, impenetrable clouds of smoke and ash rose into the sky and did not disperse for years. A dreadful rotting plague affected many creatures in the area, with the ancestors of the shadow elves particularly affected. When they first felt the explosion and saw the clouds, these elves fled for the caves below out of instinct and racial memory. This instant flight possibly saved them from extinction.

The elves resumed their subterranean life, while on the surface other developments took place. Humanoids were migrating to and fro across the land and the Broken Lands themselves were slowly being settled. But below, the elves were resigning themselves to a life of eternal darkness. Their fear of the surface was great.

Yet even in this darkness, there seemed to be hope. In a very deep cavern below the

Broken Lands they found a temple, built in a strange and unfamiliar style and the centre of a community of barbaric humans, the Azcan (somewhat akin to the Aztecs of our world). The elves drove the humans out after prolonged battling, occupied the area, and adopted the central religion of the humans. Such a fearful and unfortunate people were very ready to worship the Immortal to whom this temple was raised, taking their discovery of it as a sign that he might favour them. Atzanteotl was the Immortal's name, and around his temple they built a great city, which they named Aengmor. Construction of the city, which lasted nearly 50 years, was ended in 1352 BC.

For a short time the elves seemed favoured, but another cataclysm was on the way. The Broken Lands were not fully settled from earlier events, and periodic earthquakes and volcanic eruptions ravaged this region. In 1290 BC, a sudden eruption spewed forth a vast lava stream which surrounded Aengmor and trapped the elves. Many died from toxic fumes or the overwhelming heat, but a fair number escaped through the use of magic. The survivors moved on to even deeper places, abandoning the city of Aengmor forever. They drove down deep, deep below the surface, on a restless decades-long search for a new

homeland.

This was a fortunate decision by the elves. Atzanteotl was evil, beginning to demand hideous sacrifices in his unspeakable temple ceremonies. Indeed, the apparent destruction of Aengmor was part of his plan. Dissatisfied with the low birth rate of the elves, he drove them out of Aengmor without actually fully destroying the city. Later, more fecund humanoids would discover the ruins of Aengmor and recolonise it under the bastardized name of Oenkmar. In this way, the Immortal of Entropy gained more followers—and more vicious ones—than he would have had with the elves.

Further into the Deep —

So the exiled elves travelled further underground, while on the surface life became better.

Humanoids overpopulated the Broken Lands, and many moved underground to the Lands Below—but not as deep as the underground elves, of whom they had no knowledge. In 1190 BC the lost city of Aengmor was discovered by humanoids and resettled. Much later, in 800 BC, the elves in the Sylvan Realm migrated back via their Rainbow, carrying Trees of Life that they established in what is now Alfheim. At



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the same time, the ice finally receded completely from Glantri and humans began to settle there in greater numbers.

Meanwhile, the underground elves had discovered a vast cavern in the far depths of the world. On one of its walls they discovered written inscriptions made by the hand of the Immortal Rafiel. These crafted inscriptions were the Refuge of Stone, 14 verses that promised protection to the underground elves, and a great bounty yet to come. More, the verses gave the elves a code to live by, and a name—Shadow Elves. Some voices were raised in doubt, for it was not so long since the same elves had settled around a temple and revered an Immortal who turned out to be a very bad choice of patron. But the weary, frightened, and despairing took heart from the verses. They offered a feeling of security and stability after generations of misfortune. And others felt wonder at the strange gravity and magic of the place, and sensed the presence of an Immortal's hand in a way they had never before.

The shadow elves settled in the massive cavern, and erected a great Temple to Rafiel. Around this temple they built a city, the City of the Stars. The Refuge of Stone was first discovered in 1104 B.C., and the City of the Stars completed (in its original hexagon form) in 1040. In this year the first shaman-selected King of the Shadow Elves, Tarasfir, was enthroned.

Rise of the Shadow Elves –

With the promise of Rafiel, and his guidance, life became better for the shadow elves. It was not as pleasant as it had been on the surface, but it was tolerable. Over the coming centuries, other cities in other deep caverns were built. Additions were made to the temple complex in the City of the Stars, and the city itself grew. The shadow elves grew and prospered without being attacked by invaders from the surface, which fortune they ascribed to the protecting hand of Rafiel. The one exception was a surprise invasion by a huge force of humanoids in 448 BC, commemorated on the *ne fasti* day of Names 2.

Many among them still dreamed of the surface world, however. So, in 896 BC, a hardy group of shadow elves ventured to the surface. They were young misfits and mavericks taking an initiative. They found

only a fiery, deadly red sun, and few returned to their homes. In 792 BC, another group was sent to the surface. They emerged at the Sun's Anvil in the Broken Lands, and under the circumstances wrongly concluded that the surface was still uninhabitable and probably would be so forever.

Reasonably enough, the shadow elves turned away from any interest in the surface world and spread out in their new underworld home. During this time the shamans of Rafiel learned new spells and powers, and the most learned among them were taught the most secret power of the soul crystals, so that the magic of the shadow elves was amplified greatly. The shadow elves prospered and their numbers increased substantially.

Discovery of the Surface –

In 131 AC, shadow elves encountered a group of very daring human adventurers in a cavern. The humans were captured and interrogated. To their astonishment, the shadow elves learned that the surface had become inhabitable centuries before, and entire nations of elves existed on it.

The shadow elves wasted no time. After dispatching the human intruders, King Aiasele sent a delegation to the surface. They carefully avoided all humans who, after all, were responsible for the Great Rain of Fire. The emissaries stole their way into the shadowy trails of Alfheim and approached King Celedryl. Initially, Celedryl was happy to welcome the shadow elves to Alfheim. He felt that some accommodation could be made, space could be found. Then he learned that the shadow elf population was equal to that of Alfheim itself!

Moreover, the shadow elves demanded reparations for their long neglect in the tunnels beneath the Broken Lands. They felt outraged that they had been abandoned to a harsh fate by their surface-dwelling cousins. They demanded more than half the land of Alfheim, even though they knew they were reconciled to their underground lives and the sunny summer of Alfheim hurt their skin and eyes. The final straw was their demanding the leadership of the country! The shadow elves, abandoned for centuries, left no room for debate or compromise. Celedryl and the Alfheim clanmasters refused their demands. The shadow elves returned to their homes, threatening war.

Celedryl did not have to wait long. In 150 AC, the shadow elves infiltrated the Lands Below inhabited by orcs and other humanoids. Magically disguising their forms, they manipulated the tribal chiefs, convincing them to attack Alfheim. However, little was accomplished by these raids on the well-prepared Alfheimers.

In 390, once again stirred up by the shadow elves, the humanoids put forth a major attack. Again they lost a majority of their troops to the surface elves, and this time the shadow elves realized that using mercenaries to fight their battles was not going to lead to success. They tried to attack Alfheim with a surface raid of their own in 560 AC, which was easily put down by Alfheim with some assistance from Darokin.

If war would not succeed, then, stealth might. Telemon, the new king of the shadow elves, sent infiltrators to the surface, where they gradually gained more and more influence in Alfheim. However, this proved to be a two-edged sword. Some infiltrators came to see the basic generosity and friendliness of the surface elves and came to question the offensive policies of the shadow elf leader. Finally one spy broke the silence and revealed all to an Alfheim clanmaster. King Celedryl quickly purged the shadow elves named by the turncoat, this taking place in 675, but unknown others escaped.

In 802 plague ravaged the surface world and the shadow elves did not go unaffected. A shadow elf returning from Glantri brought the plague to Alfmyr, where some 10,000 died. Rapid quarantine precautions left the other cities mostly unscathed. Since the Glantrian rumour was that dwarves were responsible for the disease, this became the official version among the shadow elves also.

Infiltrating the Surface World

King Telemon has sent agents to infiltrate other surface lands increasingly in recent years in a new tactical approach. His agents are trying to learn all they can of Alfheim from a distance, to probe the habits and weaknesses of the surface elves. Telemon covets the lands of the surface elves and still plans and schemes to conquer them.

Because of the geographic dispersion of the shadow elf lands, these agents scurry

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to and from a range of the surface lands. It may be a crucial historical development that Telemon's spies are now working in a quite different way from before, for the information and reports they convey to the King are but one way in which the world of the shadow elves is threatened with instability of a subtler form than before. Telemon is not the only one to know that Rafiel's way must be abandoned, but he is the one most capable of doing something about it. Much of the rest of this book is dedicated to explaining the complexities behind the apparent quietude and simplicities of shadow elf life.

Historical Synopsis

5000 BC: First elf civilization on Southern Continent (now under icecap).

4500 BC: Beastmen discovered in upper Borean Valley.

3500 BC: Blackmoor flourishes. Elves trade and war with Blackmoor.

3000 BC: The Great Rain of Fire; Blackmoor culture is obliterated. The planet shifts its axis, freezing the Blackmoor continent and causing ice sheets to recede from the regions of the modern D&D game world. Elven home continent freezes over, becomes southern icecap. Survivors of the elven colony in Blackmoor flee into the newly formed Broken Lands and below the surface. Temporary ice age in area of Glantri.

2800 BC: New elven nation on the southern continent land of Vulcania divides on issue of magic vs. technology. Returnists (magic-favouring) under Ilsundal leave for northern continent on long march.

2400 BC: Beastmen move south and prosper in the vacated lands of ancient Blackmoor. Tribes gather at Urzud.

2200 BC: Southern elf migrants settle in the frozen valleys of Glantri.

2100 BC: Ilsundal's migration reaches Sylvan Realm. Meditor and Verdier clans leave Ilsundal's northward migration and settle in southern Karamaikos.

1800 BC: Ilsundal becomes an Immortal, creates the first Tree of Life. Kagyar the Artisan, an Immortal of the Sphere of Matter, and a patron of mortal arts and crafts, decides to create a race which will prove resistant to annihilation like that which destroyed Blackmoor. From the ancient dwarven race, he constructs

the "modern" dwarves, more resistant to radiation poisoning.

1725 BC: King Loark raises Great Horde at Urzud and migrates eastward, continuing his Quest for a Blue Knife.

1700 BC: Elves find artifact of Blackmoor in the Broken Lands and trigger a cataclysm which buries the Horde. Loark dies, the remains of the horde break apart. Elves driven out of Glantri by local cataclysms.

1420 BC: Underground elves discover temple to Atzanteotl, build the city of Aengmor around it.

1310 BC: Quest for steel: Wogar Tribe migrates west from Blackmoor to a great lake called the Cradle. After a prophecy from the Great Shaman, they move south following the shaman's floating gri-gri.

1290 BC: Atzanteotl surrounds Aengmor with lava, slaying many underground elves. The survivors flee into the deepest tunnels and recesses below the Broken Lands.

1190 BC: Descendants of the Great Horde surface in the Broken Lands. The Tribes meet again and discover the Rock of Oenkmar. End of the Quest for the Blue Knife, the sacrificial dagger in the Temple of Atzanteotl. Truce proclaimed.

1104 BC: Underground elves discover the Refuge of Stone and take the name of shadow elves unto themselves. Building work begins on the City of the Stars. Myfallar The Old is chosen as temporary King.

1040 BC: Tarasfir is enthroned as the first King of the Shadow Elves selected by the shamans of Rafiel.

896 BC: First shadow elf exploration to the surface world ends in disaster with few survivors.

800 BC: Alfheim colonized by followers of Mealiden. Elven wizards begin systematic alteration of climate to increase fertility of the land. Ice recedes to the far north.

792 BC: Second shadow elf expedition to the surface lands emerges in the Broken Lands. Failure of this expedition leads to abandonment of further attempts to reach surface.

700 BC: Mealiden is acclaimed King of Alfheim.

500 BC: Nithian Empire destroyed. Remaining Black Moon gnolls scatter east and west. Oenkmar Rock sinks into the

earth.

350 BC: Mealiden abdicates the throne to follow Ilsundal's path to Immortality. Alevor of the Grunalf clan becomes King of Alfheim.

250 BC: Mealiden becomes an Immortal of the Sphere of Energy.

0 AC: First Emperor of Thyatis crowned.

100 AC: Celedryl of the Erendyl clan is crowned King of Alfheim.

130 AC: First contact by humanoids with shadow elves. Shadow elves rejected by Celedryl. Campaign of shadow elf incitement of humanoids against surface elves begins.

395 AC: The Radiance is discovered in Glantri.

550 AC: The beast man invasion of the wizard Illodius scars the magical forests. Alfheim Town is founded later, in the blighted area.

560 AC: Alfheim/Darokin alliance crushes the shadow elf invasion.

582 AC: Telemon, the current shadow elf King, is crowned at the Temple of Rafiel.

600 AC: Sylvan Lands are conquered by Moorkroft. Feadiels arrive in Alfheim.

675 AC: King Celedryl purges shadow elf infiltrators from Alfheim, but he is only partly successful.

700 AC: Doriath, a former adventurer, assumes the throne of Alfheim. The Erewan faction of Erendyl clan leaves Alfheim for Glantri.

802 AC: Glantrian Gold Rush and plague (actually sent by the Immortal Yagrai) result in irreconcilable hatred of the dwarves of Glantri.

845 AC: Construction of the School of Magic in Glantri, completed 875 AC.

975 AC: King Thar unites the Broken Lands, threatening Darokin commerce. Enforces Tharian Code of Conduct. The Legion is created. Thyatis is very concerned at the military threat.

1000 AC: Today. All D&D game Gazeteers are set in this period.

1004-1009 AC: Cataclysmic events described in *Wrath of the Immortals* boxed set.

1010-1013 AC: Events described in the three *Poor Wizard's Almanacs* and *Joshuan's Almanac*.

1200 AC: Great War with the Master of the Desert Nomads. See adventure D&D module X10, *Red Arrow, Black Shield*.

The Secrets of the Soul Crystals

As DM, you will already be aware from the true history of the shadow elf race that what player character shadow elves are led to think is not entirely accurate. The *Players' Book* deliberately fosters many incorrect beliefs, and nowhere is this more true—and more important—than in the case of shamans and the soul crystals. The truth is revealed here for you, the all-knowing DM. It is important to realize that players are not being given false information so that they may later find out you have been lying to them. Rather, their characters may be able slowly to come to the realization that “this is the way things really are”—until they learn the next piece of the puzzle, of course! So, let's begin to tell the true story for you to appreciate the secrets of the soul crystals.

As you know now, not everything taught by the shamans is completely true. Indeed, some of the things believed by shamans but not taught by them are mistaken. They are crucially in error regarding their misunderstanding of the nature and purpose of the “soul crystals.” Not until a shaman reaches 16th level and becomes a Colourless Shaman will she begin to understand even the smallest part of the facts in this section. Exactly what beliefs shamans do have at different levels of experience will be detailed after the truth about the crystals is revealed here.

The Blackmoor Holocaust

The Blackmoor holocaust, the Great Rain of Fire of 3000 BC, nearly destroyed the entire world, shifting it on its axis and changing its face forever. Areas that once flourished were soon covered over with barren icy wastes, while existing ice caps melted and ran off the land into the sea. Thus, the Known World of the D&D game Gazetteers appeared, and Blackmoor vanished.

What caused this appalling holocaust? So much of the truth is shrouded by time, and even the little that is known is kept secret by those who are aware, but this much can be said: Aliens from another world visited the planet, and the “Rain of Fire” was the crash of one of their spaceships. Its nuclear power plant caused the

devastation of the world.

The Nucleus of the Spheres

This power plant, known among the Immortals as the Nucleus of the Spheres, still survives today. It is buried ten thousand feet below the Great School of Magic in Glantri, encased in solid rock with no access tunnel. Its radiation is deadly; any living being visiting the artifact would have to make a Saving Throw vs. Poison each round or die then and there. After leaving, such a visitor would have to make another Saving Throw vs. Poison, this time with a penalty of -1 per round of exposure the character just had, or be permanently affected by the radiation. Should the being fail, death occurs after 2d4 weeks of progressive debilitation. A *wish* or other high-level *healing* spell cures a victim.

The Nucleus of the Spheres is an artifact in every sense of the word: both because of its ancient age and because of its potency as a power source. Immortals of the Sphere of Energy discovered the nuclear reactor and bestowed their magic upon it, giving the artifact the ability to produce the Radiance and enable mortals to attain Immortality in the Sphere of Energy. Naturally, Immortals from the other Spheres did not see this development as a good thing, for the power of the Nucleus to assist the Sphere of Energy seriously unbalanced the equilibrium among the Spheres.

So Immortals of the Spheres of Time, Matter and Thought put a great curse upon the artifact, giving it a nasty side effect in the form of a permanent magical drain. Each use of the artifact forever drains some magic from the Prime Material Plane. The artifact cannot be destroyed currently, and its existence will eventually result in the annihilation of all magic in the D&D game world. This particular curse was selected precisely because of the affinity of the magic-user class with the Sphere of Energy, so that revenge will slowly and increasingly be exacted upon that Sphere.

[Time travel using rules from the

AD&D accessory *Chronomancer* might be used in an attempt to destroy this artifact, by going back in time and preventing the crash of the starship or otherwise messing with events, but this possibility was anticipated and will be blocked by Rafiel and other Immortals. See *Chronomancer* for details, or see the TSR Online “Download of the Month” on “Chronomancy and the Multiverse.”—Roger.]

The Radiance and Glantri

The magical power of the Nucleus of the Spheres, known as “the Radiance,” is the reason for the settlement of Glantri and the construction of the Great School of Magic there. While precious few of the nobles of Glantri know the full story of the Radiance, many spend their whole lives trying to discover it. After hearing rumours of an easy path to Immortality, who would not search for this?

Those few who do know of the Radiance are admitted into the Brotherhood of the Radiance, secretly led by Prince Etienne d'Ambreville. This handful of mages wields great power in Glantri thanks to the artifact. Special spells are used to draw upon this power, the material component being a sizeable magical receptacle that must remain within the owner's dominion. It is probably through these receptacles that Etienne d'Ambreville—actually Rad, an Empyrean of the Sphere of Energy—can detect any mortal user of the Radiance.

For more information, consult GAZ3 *The Principalities of Glantri*, the *Wrath of the Immortals* boxed set, the AD&D campaign expansion, *Glantri™: Kingdom of Magic*, or the AD&D boxed adventure, *Mark of Amber*.

The Radiance and the Shadow Elves

The Glantrians are not the only ones who know of the power of the Radiance. Nor has the Brotherhood of the Radiance an exclusive hold over the use of its magical might. As the Refuge of Stone teaches, “In the fullness of time, I, Rafiel, will show my shamans the secrets of the

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crystals that have the power of life and death and life everlasting. Guard these crystals carefully, and I, Rafiel, will guide you.”

“Soul crystals” have nothing to do with souls. Shadow elves are no more reincarnated than are surface elves or surface humans. Shadow elves do not pre-exist within a soul crystal, nor do they travel to a soul crystal after their life ends. All of these teachings of the shamans are falsehoods taught to carefully inculcate a high degree of reverence for soul crystals among the general population. This reverence guarantees that shadow elves will go to great lengths to find soul crystals and even greater ones to keep them intact and safe once they have been discovered. This is exactly what Rafiel wants, since the great work his shamans are performing needs many such crystals.

In fact, soul crystals are naturally occurring receptacles for the Radiance, scattered throughout the region by the Rain of Fire when the spaceship crashed.

Dangers of the Radiance –

On the surface, “mastering” the power of the Radiance is a dangerous affair at best. Each use of the Radiance has a 1% chance of corrupting a part of the user’s body, causing a rotting disease that mortals cannot heal.

Fortunately this effect does not bother possessors of soul crystals. Instead, due to magic used by Rafiel upon the crystals, the effect is displaced forward and the corruption affects future life. Among the shadow elves, babies born with deformities (primarily facial) are the price paid for the use of the Radiance by shadow elf shamans. This fact is not known by any except the White Shamans and the Radiant Shaman herself.

Another danger on the surface is the draining of magic by the use of the artifact. Again, this danger is avoided by use of a soul crystal. This is for the simple reason that no curse has been placed by other Immortals on the crystals. If you are keeping track of use of the Radiance as described in *GAZ3 The Principalities of Glantri*, you do not have to keep track of the uses made

by the shamans among the shadow elves.

The Durability of Soul Crystals

Soul crystals themselves are minor artifacts, being receptacles which allow safe, portable use of the Radiance power. Allowing these crystals to spread throughout your campaign could seriously unbalance your game, giving magic-users “cheap” power for which there are no tradeoffs. Your campaign could be overwhelmed by PC magic.

Fortunately the very nature of the crystals, along with the beliefs of the shadow elves, will easily prevent this from occurring. We’ll discuss the religious awe of the shadow elves first.

Soul crystals are believed to hold the past and future generations of the race of shadow elves. This being the case, no non-shadow elf would ever be allowed to keep a soul crystal. If a dwarf, say, happened upon a vein of the crystals and managed to extract a few, it would not be long before a literal army of shadow elves would be on his trail to retrieve their lost relatives. Further, the crystals themselves are thousands of years old and are quite fragile outside their natural environment, both on account of their age and the magics placed upon them. A crystal taken to the surface is soon affected by the harsh radiation of the sun; it crumbles to dust within seconds of any such exposure. Since the crystal must be physically touched for its power to be used, this makes them effectively useless above ground. Trying to keep them in the dark above ground does not work, either. The crystals still crumble after 1d4 hours, no matter how tightly enclosed. Notice also that, since shadow elf shamans need to have a soul crystal to cast their spells, they cannot use shaman spells above ground. This applies to all shaman spells, even those which do not actually use the power of the Radiance itself.

Finally, the true nature of soul crystals is unknown to anyone outside the race of shadow elves, and only a handful of shadow elf shamans know the truth even then. Even Prince Etienne d’Ambreville does not know that soul crystals draw upon the

power of the Radiance, and he is not able to detect those using this power through the agency of the soul crystals.

Finally, the soul crystals are not only used by shadow elf shamans as spell foci and for providing auxiliary magical power. Deep in the Chamber of Spheres in the Temple of Rafiel, the White Shamans labour to bring Rafiel’s will to fruition. What are they doing there? It is a mystery which invites itself into the imaginings of even the most subservient acolyte within the Temple. But it is better to begin with the life of just such a humble acolyte, and to consider deeper mysteries later.

The Way of the Shaman

The worship of Rafiel is not a simple business. It contains puzzles, paradoxes, and symbolic truths. PC shamans should be made to feel, and role-play, a sense of wonder and strangeness in the service of Rafiel. Here, just two examples are given of the complexities of this Immortal’s cult, which should serve to illustrate its subtleties.

First, the progression from acolyte to Radiant Shaman (21st level or higher) is one in which dress changes symbolically. While the teachings of the shamans are that the soul of Rafiel’s servants becomes purer and closer to Rafiel’s ideal, the garments worn by the shamans become seemingly *less* like Rafiel’s ideal. Acolytes may only wear white clothes and nothing else. The Radiant Shaman must wear predominantly white, but is also free to decorate a basic garb with ribbons, cloths and ornamentation of many colours. Shamans learn during their indoctrination that when the soul has become whitened (i.e., close to perfection in the sight of Rafiel) the need for always presenting oneself in white raiment before him is no longer so great. The inner and outer shaman exist in a complementary relationship, it seems. This is an example of a subtlety within the reverence of Rafiel. His shamans debate such complexities in learned and intricate debates. The DM can be told now that much of these debates (and certainly the one about the degree of white which



should be worn!) is just sterile nonsense, actively encouraged by Rafiel to distract over-reflective shamans from the *real* mysteries of the Temple of Rafiel too early along their shamanic road.

A second example of the complexities of Rafiel's cult concerns the practice of abandoning "imperfect" babies in the caves far from the cities. This seems a barbaric and cruel practice, and the shadow elf's placid reply that "Rafiel will guide them" seems callous and cold. Nothing could be more untrue. Rafiel does guide them after a fashion, and the large majority end up safe, snug and cared-for. Rafiel appears cruel, wicked in some ways, but the reader should put this impression aside when going through the following sections. After all, this misapprehension is one shared by exalted company—one Immortal in particular—and this, too, is part of Rafiel's plans.

SHAMANIC INITIATION AND Acolyte Life

The orders of shamans of the shadow elves are seven (half of 14) and have an important relationship with the seven

levels of the Temple of Rafiel. The seven orders are:

- Junior Acolytes* ("zero-level" shamans)
- Acolytes* (1st-4th level)
- Marking Shamans* (5th-9th level)
- Death Shamans* (10th-12th level)
- Life Shamans* (13th-15th level)
- Colourless Shamans* (16th-18th level)
- White Shamans* (19th and higher levels)

The Radiant Shaman is the head of the Temple of Rafiel and is elected by conclave from the White Shaman group. The office is held until the Radiant Shaman becomes a Wanderer.

A child born with the mark of the shaman is always shown to a senior shaman of the Temple of Rafiel (usually a White Shaman) as soon as is practically possible after birth. The child is then taken into the Temple, there to be educated and raised, when she reaches 10 years of age. The child is taken away completely from her family. She does not live outside the Temple again. The child can acknowledge her parents and relatives should they see each other (in the chamber of the Refuge of Stone, for example), but otherwise has

no contact with them. At this stage, the child is a junior acolyte with no spell-casting powers at all (neither shamanic nor magic-user spells).

Because the child is so young (in elvish terms) her education has a powerfully formative effect. The raising and education of the junior acolytes is undertaken partly by the (senior) acolytes, young adults, with the help and supervision of the Marking Shamans. This training lasts over a century (!) and has important effects on the shaman. One of the most important is that the Wisdom of the shadow elf is raised by one full point. A PC shadow elf shaman may be allowed this bonus to initially rolled Wisdom score at your discretion, but if this is done then you should insist on the PC selecting from the following skills; the junior acolytes are taught specific skills to mould them in the Way of Rafiel. The skills Read/Write Shadow Elf (Int), Cooking (Wis), and one of Teaching (Int) or Leadership (Ch) or Persuade (Ch) are mandatory. Studying written sacred works is essential, as is learning to prepare feasts and *trania*, the essential foodstuff of the shadow elves. Other skills may be selected by the player

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as normal.

The junior acolyte is also given instruction in combat skills; all adults are considered members of the army and the child will be grown one day. Note that shadow elf shamans are allowed the use of edged weapons and training in the crossbow at least is mandatory.

The junior acolyte is also taught important prohibitions of the Way of Rafiel. Many have already been mentioned in the verses of the Refuge of Stone but some others apply. Junior acolytes may never wear any coloured garment (white only), and may never bear any gem as a decoration (this latter prohibition is absolute at all shamanic levels—gems can never be so little regarded, even those which do not hold souls). They may not enter the Second (or any deeper) level of the Temple. They observe *fasti* and (especially) *ne fasti* days with absolute punctiliousness. They prepare the *trania* and meals served to the other shamans, with help from the senior, “full” acolytes. They are taught absolutely to respect shamans of higher orders. There’s a lot of respect and prohibitions to learn, and service to give, so it’s as well they have plenty of time to learn all of this. Also, the acolytes must keep up with non-shamanic studies. Some will not pass the ritual of initiation, and of those who survive a failure, turning to mage studies can be an important option for serving the community. The most promising may sometimes, as a special treat, be allowed to read a few verses from one of the holy books to shadow elves visiting the Temple, but such a generous indulgence is rare.

Junior acolytes with superior Strength or Dexterity (13 or better in either or both) will receive especial grooming for army duty. While all shamans are technically part of the army, some receive special training in combat skills and are often seconded for important patrol duties with the army. They are not truly separate from other shamans, but they are often referred to as the Hand of Rafiel by others (both other shamans and the army). A PC shaman with such an ability score *must* take at least one combat-related skill to reflect this training (frequently taught

are Tactics, Blind Shooting, or Martial Arts). Subtle skills of the evasive/detecting/signalling kind are not usually taught to shamans, but rather to members of the Second Shadow (see “Travel and Vigilance,” below).

SHAMAN’S INITIATION

A shadow elf is deemed to have reached the age of adulthood at 120 years. A junior acolyte usually gains the ability to use a 1st-level magic-user spell at an earlier age (85-110; roll d6, multiply by five, and add 80) but no shamanic spellcasting is possible until the junior acolyte has undergone initiation. The Test of Rafiel is a stern trial of the junior acolyte’s faith and resilience. Since shadow elves must be strong in the Way of Rafiel, some form of test of endurance is usually employed. Typically, in the months before the shadow elf’s 120th birthday, she is adopted by a Marking Shaman and shown some of the more extreme geographical wonders in the shadow elf lands. She may thus be shown the Boiling Lake, the Forest of Spiders, the Warrens, the Desert of Lost Souls, and other marvels (see large fold-out map and “Geography of the Shadow Elf Lands”).

An initiation rite can thus be one of the following (as examples):

- ♦ to survive the heat of the Boiling Lake, sitting naked by the shore, for 12 hours;
- ♦ to sit on a rock in the Forest of Spiders, anointed with a foul-smelling oil which is held to attract arachnids (actually it doesn’t) and survive for 12 hours;
- ♦ to be taken to the centre of the Warrens and left there, returning through the endless mazes to safety;
- ♦ to survive a “night” in the Desert of Lost Souls, in the hope that prayer to Rafiel will fend off the madness that so many find there.

You may well consider that a player who has had his shadow elf PC gain the necessary 2,000 XPs to qualify for shamanhood must have his PC undergo one of these rituals. If the player wants the +1 Wisdom bonus for his shaman PC, then an initiation ritual should be passed for this boon to be gained!

Success or failure can be determined by a suitable ability check. Con can be used as a basis for resisting the heat of the Boiling Lake, for example. If things are a matter of faith, use Wis; if luck, use Cha.

Because this shouldn’t be reduced simply to a matter of luck, allow the PC to have a vision of where she should spend her initiation ritual a few days before she must choose which ritual to undertake (after the Watcher has shown her around the options, as it were). You can tailor this to the PC’s best chance—a PC with a good Con score would do well to take a physical endurance test, for example. This allows her time to prepare. For example, if she wants to take the ritual of staying sane in the Desert of Lost Souls, if the player states specifically that his PC will practice meditation and prayer in the coming days this should add +1 or even +2 (if well role-played) to the chances for success on the d20 roll. Don’t suggest to the player that his PC should undertake some task-specific preparation. This is something the player should come up with himself!

The player does not have to undertake the form of ritual suggested in the vision, but to opt for another choice would appear to be contrary to the inspiration offered by Rafiel. This means a -2 penalty to the ability check (add 2 to the dice roll).

If the initiation is unsuccessful, the junior acolyte may possibly be able to try again. This assumes she is still alive and sane enough to try. (For an initiation ritual where failure means death or permanent disability you may add a +1 bonus for chances for success to balance this!) A PC in this position will need to earn 2,000 XPs all over again to take another stab at successful initiation. A second failure means that no further attempt can possibly be made. If a failed character is still alive, the Mark of the Shaman slowly fades away over the following years.

If the initiation ritual is successful, the Marking Shaman who has accompanied the junior acolyte brings her back in joy and celebration to the Temple of Rafiel, and there she is stripped of the dirty travelling garment she has been wearing. She is bathed in holy water and given the

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white smock (for regular use) and robe (for ceremonial use) of a full acolyte. The robe has a tiny border of trim in a colour which matches that of the first soul crystal the acolyte is given. During the bathing, the Marking Shaman closes the eyes of the acolyte and places her hand across the shamanic mark on the acolyte's forehead. She recites the Verse of the Shaman at this time and then dresses the new acolyte. Parents and siblings of the young acolyte are invited to this ceremony, and can speak

Life and Death Shamans —

Death Shamans live on the Fourth Level of the Temple. They have the power of life and death over shadow elves. Death Shamans have the onerous duty of taking imperfect babies miles from the home cities of the shadow elves and leaving them, after a short ceremony, in the tunnels of their abandonment. Rafiel teaches that such children must always be put far away from the homes of the shadow elves, and thus a powerful shaman capable of defending herself from the humanoids which might be encountered in

those far-distant tunnels and passages is required for the task.

Likewise, the Death Shamans perform some of the ceremonies in which the Wanderers are exiled from their homes. Importantly, they leave half way through the ceremony and their place is taken by a Life Shaman, symbolizing the new phase of existence under the guidance of Rafiel. This is done for important and distinguished Wanderers; for "ordinary" shadow elves, a Marking Shaman will perform this ceremony.

The Life Shamans also live on the Fourth level of the Temple, on the opposite sides of the building to the Death Shamans. This symbolically represents the balance of life and death in all things. Life Shamans often devote themselves to pursuit of the healing arts and their spell selections reflect this. They frequently help the wounded of the army and may be found sometimes working "in the field" with them. Importantly, Life Shamans gain an automatic skill in addition to those they may otherwise possess due to their long cumulative years of study: Ancient History, that is, the history of the shadow elves. If a skill check is made with

this skill, the Life shaman has learned the correct version of the shadow elf past (the version in this book). If a skill check is failed, the version in the *Players' Book* (or an absence of knowledge) is learned instead. This skill improves by one place for each successive rise in the hierarchy.

The Life Shamans also learn the beginnings of one great secret which their sisters living opposite have not yet experienced. They can use *call upon souls*, the first special shamanic spell unique to the shadow elves. This is a unique moment in the life of a shadow elf shaman, perhaps the most emotional moment of all. A Life Shaman must always find her own "fifth-level" soul crystal to be able to use this spell: this is an absolute injunction within the Way of Rafiel. The special "Spells of the Radiance" section below details this spell and how the high-level shamans of Rafiel approach their use.

Colourless Shamans —

Colourless Shamans are those deemed all things wrongful in the eyes of Rafiel, although maintaining this state requires



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constant vigilance. This meets a dual reward. First, it guarantees a fairly rapid return of the soul in reincarnated form and is held to increase the chance of the character being reincarnated with the mark of the shaman upon her once more. Second, sixth-level spells—most importantly including another powerful soul-gem spell—are available to the Colourless Shaman.

Living on the Fifth Level of the temple, Colourless Shamans tend to lead lives of meditation and study. It is now vital for them to progress to the final stage of purity, positive rather than negative, through prayer, contemplation, devotion, and study.

However, Colourless Shamans are not allowed to sink into an endless abyss of introspection by any means. As users of sixth-level spells they can use the vital spell *raise dead*, and an understanding of what is allowed with the use of this spell is crucial.

The Way of Rafiel allows the raising of any hale and hearty elf who has met a violent end. The most notable case, of course, is a shadow elf who has been killed in combat trying to defend the city. But it has to be established that the elf requiring the spell was strong and healthy. If possible, a conclave of one Life, one Death, and one Colourless Shaman will decide the fate of the elf. The Death Shaman usually acts as “devil’s advocate,” the Life Shaman speaking for the deceased party. In clear-cut cases one or the other will say “Rafiel wills me to be silent,” so the decision is automatic. The Colourless Shaman makes the ultimate decision. Sometimes such deliberations are not possible—in times of mass battle or many deaths—and the Colourless Shaman will decide alone.

White Shamans and the Radiant Shaman

White Shamans are the most exalted of all, having attained at least 19th level and the use of 7th-level spells. Following on from Colourless Shamans, their use of the *raise dead fully* spell is strongly circumscribed in a similar manner. It is also the case that White Shamans must locate their own “seventh-level” soul crystals.

White Shamans are held not just to have eliminated imperfections in the eyes of Rafiel, they have achieved near-perfection in the positive virtues of the Way of Rafiel. They are not entirely perfect, obviously (only Rafiel is), but they represent the highest state of attainment within the shamanic hierarchy. Of course, the path to Immortality in the Way of Rafiel now beckons. The guardian of the secrets of this path is the Radiant Shaman, the pre-eminent member of this group. There is only one Radiant Shaman, Porphyriel, of the Temple of Rafiel in the City of the Stars.

White Shamans hold considerable power. They are the final arbiters of the Way of Rafiel, and they have spiritual and temporal authority. They advise the King on all matters. They jealously seek out babies born with the Mark of the Shaman. They seek information and learning on all aspects of shadow elf life.

What is quite crucial about White Shamans is that they are aware that soul crystals are not exactly what they seem. This realization is progressive with the gaining of experience levels beyond the 19th. It is something which has to be divulged by Rafiel to these shamans, because while they live in the Sixth Level of the temple, they work in the Chamber of Spheres on the Seventh Level of the temple, building an artifact under Rafiel’s guidance. In the course of this work it becomes clear to them that “soul crystals” are not exactly what they appear to be. How the White Shamans handle this incongruity is a matter of no little importance, and is described after the Radiance spells have been detailed.

Spells of the Radiance –

Certain spells are available to shamans to call upon the power of the Radiance by using a soul crystal. These spells cannot be learned or studied by ordinary means, but are gained like clerical spells: by proper reverence of Rafiel, by keeping oneself “pure and white,” and then waiting for “Rafiel to guide” one, granting the spell.

These spells are described here in terms

of the understanding that almost all shamans have of them, explaining their effects in terms of souls within the soul crystals. Even White shamans still think this way about the spells, as is discussed after the spell descriptions. When the players have characters of appropriate levels they can read these spell descriptions. Only much later, if at all, will they learn the truth behind them.

Number of Soul Crystals: Shamans are almost always only permitted the use of one soul crystal at any one time. Wearing any more would be almost disrespectful to the souls of which the shaman is acting as custodian and protector. The Radiant Shaman is exempted from this restriction, and *in extremis* (massive assault on the Temple of Rafiel) the restriction can be more widely relaxed. When a shaman gains a new soul crystal of greater potency than the one she currently uses, either from her Temple or from a quest of her own, she is always expected to return the old, “weaker,” crystal to the Temple.

Call Upon Souls (Spell level 5)

Range: 30’ radius from shaman

Duration: 1 round per level of the shaman

Effect: Increases power of spell effects

Description: This spell enables the caster to increase her spell effects for one round per level. The shaman calls upon the power of from one to seven souls in her soul crystal, specifying the number to be called upon when casting the spell. If she calls upon more souls than are present in the soul crystal, the spell fails. Otherwise, the shaman casts her spells as if she were one level higher per soul called upon (so an 11th-level shaman calling upon six souls would cast her spells as if a 17th-level shaman for the duration of the spell).

If the level of spell casting does not substantially affect the operation of spells cast (e.g., as for a dispel magic spell), then the caster may instead choose to increase any one of the following factors: Range (except for range 0 spells); Duration (except for permanent or instantaneous spells); or, Area of effect (except for spells affecting only one person or target). The affected factor is increased by 10% for each soul

called upon (up to a maximum of 70%). It is possible for a shaman to affect different factors of different spells cast successively during the duration of the *call upon souls* spell.

Immediately after the casting of the spell, the souls called upon are weakened and cannot be called upon for one week of game time. During this time their strength cannot be used for Radiance spells. However, they retain sufficient strength to allow the shaman to cast non-Radiance shamanic spells. Note that if the shaman calls on more souls than the soul crystal actually possesses, the spell fails but the souls are still weakened.

Control Destiny (Spell level 6)

Range: 0 (shaman only)
Duration: Permanent until used
Effect: Affects the fate of the caster

Description: This spell alters the result of dice rolls affecting the shaman, by drawing upon the power of the souls contained within a soul crystal. To use this power, the character must have a soul crystal with a certain number of strong souls; souls weakened by previous spells are not available for use. The shaman casts the spell in advance, stating how many souls she is drawing upon. Their strength is then reduced for a week, as described in the *call upon souls* spell above. The character must then later state, before an event occurs, that its result will be altered by the spell.

If the dice roll fails, the caster draws upon the souls in the crystal to change the score, on the basis of one soul per score point.

When using this spell, the caster must draw upon the power of at least five souls. If there are not five strong souls in the soul crystal, all remaining souls are weakened, but the *control destiny* spell fails utterly. All souls called upon will be weakened, irrespective of whether this number is more than the shaman needs for “success” with the dice roll. One *control destiny* spell can affect only one dice roll. The shaman can pre-cast any number of these spells before leaving on an adventure, but of course she must have her soul crystal (or crystals) with her to gain the effect. She must state

before a dice roll, of course, which spell she is expending, as they might have different numbers of souls being drawn upon.

Dice rolls that can be affected include To Hit rolls, saving throws, weapon or spell damage, and Ability Checks. *The caster cannot draw upon souls to get a score superior to what the dice can naturally produce.*

For example, the shaman casts the spell to affect a saving throw against dragon breath, specifying that 10 souls are being called upon (and available). The shaman fails her saving throw by 5 on the dice roll. She draws upon the power of five souls to make good this shortfall, ensuring that the saving throw is made. The other five souls are still weakened, even though in one sense they are not “really” used here.

Discharge Soul Power (Spell level 7)

Range: 20 yards per level of the shaman
Duration: Instantaneous
Effect: Poisonous energy blast

Description: To use this dangerous spell, the caster must have a soul crystal with a number of unweakened souls, as usual. She can discharge some or all of the power of these souls in a destructive energy blast followed by flames. The spell requires 1 full turn (10 rounds) to cast.

The spell draws upon 2d10 souls; the shaman cannot control the strength of this spell. Each soul causes 1d6 damage in the spell effect. However, when calculating damage, all rolls of 1 on the dice are re-rolled. The blast is like a *fire ball*, causing double damage against hard material (stone or metal), normal damage against softer objects (e.g., wood), half against living creatures. It also causes a flash of light, a clap of thunder, and a billowing cloud.

The smoke rises to the sky (or to the ceiling of a cave or cavern, etc.) and spreads out over a 200-yard radius per soul drawn upon. Anything that remains a full day within that area must save vs. Poison or be affected by a rotting disease. Saving throw modifiers include: +1 for remaining inside a log cabin or equivalent, to +5 inside a fortress. The cloud is not affected by winds, but dissipates after one full day.

The souls drawn upon are weakened, and cannot be drawn upon again for one week. If there are not enough strong souls within the soul crystal to meet the number of souls drawn upon (determined by the 2d10 roll), then 2d10 must be rolled again. If this second roll is below the number of souls in the soul crystal, the souls are simply weakened for one week. If this second roll exceeds the number of souls in the crystal, the crystal shatters, destroying all the souls within it. The shaman must make a Save vs. Death Ray (with a -2 penalty) or die immediately; even if the save is made, she suffers 1d6 points of damage per soul destroyed as the crystal shatters.

Transcend Life Force (Spell Level 7)

Range: 0 (shaman only)
Duration: 2d12 hours
Effect: Attempt to reach Immortality

Description: This spell gives the caster a chance to become an Immortal. It should be clear that the discovery of this spell is the culmination of an entire campaign for a shadow elf shaman character. To acquire this spell, the shaman must go on a special quest revealed to her by Rafiel. Other details about this spell are available only from the DM in the case of a PC shaman.

DM's Notes: The nature of such a quest is suggested below, but a vital point to note here is that a character can fail her attempt at becoming an Immortal. This causes the victim's body to wither and turn to ashes while her lifeforce is drained into the soul crystals of the Chamber of the Spheres, where it becomes more energy supply. The character is forever lost and cannot be revived (even with use of a *wish* spell). Her trapped lifeforce (along with possible others) remains conscious within the artifact until the last flicker of energy (often for some months). With some soul crystals it is possible to use *ESP* or other forms of mental communication mode and converse with the victim. A lifeforce can only reveal what it knows—essentially how it got there and whatever it knew before it got there—but it will rarely do so for reasons which will become obvious in the following section.

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However, the fact of mental contact with these consciousnesses explains in small part why shadow elves believe that “souls” inhabit these crystals.

The Road to Immortality —

At levels in the shamanic hierarchy below the White Shamans, shamans believe fully that soul crystals draw on the power of souls. When a non-Radiance spell is cast, the power of souls is not drawn upon to such an extent that they are significantly weakened. The shaman does regard the spell effect as coming from a nexus involving her ritual casting, the souls in the soul crystal, and the will of Rafiel. But the souls stay unweakened.

When Radiance spells are cast, souls are weakened. This is due in part to the potency of the spells, in part to their symbolic importance (it is taught that they are known only to Rafiel’s most trusted servants), and in part to the will of Rafiel.

One major consequence of all this is that shamans of Rafiel are understandably reluctant to cast Radiance spells. They understand that drawing on the power of souls does not harm them or damage them; Rafiel would not allow such a thing. But, due to their symbolic significance, they must be used sparingly and with reverence. This suits Rafiel’s purposes admirably. Reducing the uses of soul crystals to the absolute minimum necessary ensures that many soul crystals will become available for use in the Chamber of Spheres, with considerable potency left in them. The need for many soul crystals in the work there also results in frequent quests for soul crystals. The most powerful are those of “higher level” and with more “souls,” and these are the most precious to Rafiel’s designs. Hence the injunctions on high-level shamans to go on quests to find them. But then their understanding of these crystals begins to become more sophisticated than that of their juniors.

It is gradually apparent to shamans of Rafiel, when they reach the status of White Shaman, that the soul crystals are not what they have been believed to be. White Shamans are involved in the work

of the Chamber of the Spheres, and it is clear that the technological nature of this work deals with a lot more than souls. A more complete description of the Temple of Rafiel is given elsewhere, but essentially Rafiel’s most powerful shamans are trying to build an artifact very similar to the Nucleus of the Spheres in Glantri. Rafiel wishes them to do this, because it will greatly increase the power of the Sphere of Energy if completed. Since Rafiel is an Immortal of that Sphere, this project is of central importance to him.

White Shamans are introduced gradually to the fact that soul crystals aren’t quite what they seem. Initially, they are given to understand that there is simply more to these soul crystals than what they have previously learned. The nature of this more will be learned later, as they participate in the great work of Rafiel in the Chamber of Spheres in the Seventh Level of the Temple of Rafiel. They are also told tantalizing hints of the spell *transcend life force*. They cannot cast it—only a Radiant Shaman can do this upon attaining 36th level—but they realize what their goal is now: Rafiel’s hand is guiding them to Immortality! Don’t forget that these shamans are now of 19th level at least. They are far, far along the road, the Way of Rafiel, which now leads to Immortality. They understand gradually, as they gain levels, that the work in the Chamber of Spheres is the great glory of Rafiel. “In the fullness of time, I, Rafiel, will show my shamans the secrets of the crystals that have the power of life and death and life everlasting.” *Immortality!*

The devotion of the White Shamans reaches, if anything, a new ecstatic pitch. They gradually realize that the earlier beliefs they had about soul crystals were a parable taught them by Rafiel, to enable them better to appreciate his great work. However, they do not know the whole truth. The Radiant Shaman is closest to such knowledge.



Geography of the Shadow Elf Lands

The lands of the shadow elves of the Known World stretch out far in all directions from the City of the Stars. The City itself is described in detail later in this chapter, but first a guided tour around the major “natural” sites of interest is given. Rules for travel times around the tunnels and passages connecting these wonders are given separately, in the Travel and Vigilance chapter. Details of patrols and guards occupying important locations are likewise to be found in that chapter.

Lakes and Waterways —

The major body of water in the shadow elf lands is the connected complex of the Ebon and Dragon Lakes, joined by canals built by the shadow elves (using spells such as *rock to mud* and then digging!). Much water from the higher water tables drains through into this complex directly. Lakes in the Broken Lands filter into this region, and it is likely that some of the water drained off through the Sump and Weir of Alheim makes its way into Dragon Lake rather than into the Malpheggi Swamp.

The only water mass at a significantly higher level than Dragon Lake is the Boiling Lake, which drains through the narrow Boiling River into Dragon Lake, causing the eastern half of the greater lake to be shrouded in steam almost permanently. Otherwise, the great Sojourner rivers flow slowly away from Dragon Lake in both directions. In both cases, the current is slow and lazy and sometimes seems almost entirely absent. The Sojourner rivers connect the towns of the elves and their barges and ships take advantage of the usually placid nature of these fairly shallow but broad rivers, as described in the Travel and Vigilance chapter. Hazards (i.e., monsters!) are also considered there, although special monsters are noted for individual locations below.

Dragon Lake —

This great lake is some 800 feet deep at its deepest point. To the north and west its waters are still and quiet, but to the northeast a pebbled, rocky shore lies

below an old lava flow. The swirls and whorls of igneous rock here are massive and highly impressive in shape, having been worn down to an almost perfect smoothness by water erosion. To the east, steam shrouds the bubbles and agitations caused by the outflow of the Boiling River into the Dragon Lake. The vaulted ceiling of this huge cavern rises to almost 400 feet in places. The lakeside can be crossed on foot from the north canal to the point where the Boiling River flows out into Dragon Lake, but the temperature can be very extreme here at times so the shadow elves have built a series of rope bridges with very tough, fibrous fungal “rope” around the west and south sides of the Lake. Anyone really wishing to walk right across to either Sojourner river can do so easily enough, but the ferry-men here can get you across a lot easier. Skinwings have enough room to land at any river or canal entry into this Lake, but they do not much like the heat to the east of this cavern.

Dragon Lake is so named because deep in its silent waters lies a somnolent dragon turtle of great strength (45 HD). It is not especially large as dragon turtles go, and is usually sleepy. However, there is a 1% chance for each month that it will awaken due to warm water from the Boiling Lake seeping over it and rise to the surface for 2d4 days. It is avoided by the shadow elves if it rises, for obvious reasons!

The cavern of Dragon Lake is also home to some 4,000 steam bats which roost in the eastern side of the cavern. They are wholly blind and harmless unless attacked or frightened, and the elves respect them. They consider that Rafiel may have guided even these humble creatures here, given the significance of the bat motif in the Temple of Rafiel (see below).

Ebon Lake —

This is considered later as part of the Vault of the City.

Cavern of Continual Rain

This isn't a single cavern as such; rather, it is a complex network of arterial pas-

sages terminating in a small honeycombing of fairly large caves and caverns south of a major volcano shaft. Within these tunnels and caves a very fine rain falls to the ground continuously. Periodically, at random intervals, sudden swirls of wind drive the fine drizzle in all directions. Visibility is reduced here, especially infravision (down to 20 feet), and likewise acute hearing counts for little. The soft fall of rain isn't the major problem, but the endless dripping of water from rock onto rock and the slurping and gulping sounds of bubbling mud underfoot certainly is. Naked flames are almost impossible to keep alight and no form of weather controlling magic works here. The whole area radiates magic but what sort, and which being was responsible for creating this peculiar area, is unknown. Notably, the stream which flows from these caverns is very shallow and narrow, as if only a small part of the rain falling here ever passes into it.

The Cavern of Continual Rain is also feared for the presence there of a small group of grey puddings (rock-coloured black puddings) of exceptional size (20 HD). Evading them is not easy given the heavy, muddy conditions underfoot—note that terrain altering spells such as *mud to rock* (reverse of *rock to mud*) will not work here.

The Warrens —

This network of tunnels is a source of both fear and fascination for shadow elves. The Warrens are a veritable maze of tunnels and passages, remnants of some long-ago burned-out volcano's activity. Some shadow elf myths say that a fiery worm, smooth and black and glowing hot as lava, bored through this area creating the passages many centuries ago. Hence the smoothness and symmetry of so many of the Warrens. He was the last of his kind, looking for a mate, travelling endlessly and producing the endless warrens found today. He found a reward of sorts and a curse of sorts. His reward was to produce more of his kind; his curse was to be made cold and clammy, wicked and slippery, a ghost of his former self. Thus was the Boneless born. Well, so shadow

Geography of the Shadow Elf Lands

elves tell their children sometimes.

The Warrens are certainly dangerous. All monster encounters are at twice normal frequency here (see “Travel and Vigilance” for encounter rates). Moreover, the Boneless does haunt these damp passages (see “Flora and Fauna”), and it is a terrifying monster to the shadow elves, because they believe that it actually eats souls. That is, anyone killed and eaten by a boneless has his or her soul destroyed forever. This is a terrible fate.

This would not matter so much if it were not generally believed that there are important treasures hidden deep within the Warrens. There are rumours of powerful magic, the tomb of an ancient human warrior bedecked with fabulous magical weapons and wealth, and more. There are also tales of a hidden passage which leads down to the very centre of the world, although this is usually regarded as a fable.

From time to time a group of exceptionally brave (or foolish) young shadow elf adventurers decides to investigate the Warrens. If forbidden, they may sneak off anyway. Sometimes some return, and some treasures have been found there—but not the Big One, not yet anyway, so the lure still draws the impatient and reckless.

Soul Mines of Alfmyr —

Alfmyr is the area which is by far the richest in veins of soul crystals in the surrounding tunnels and passages. The terrain isn't always easy here, the rocks being hard and difficult to work, but the tireless searches of the shamans for soul crystals ensures that all necessary efforts will be undertaken. A mining operation always begins in the month of Crystals. A patrol of varying size (depending on the apparent size of the vein of crystals) will guard the mining operation, being relieved every 14 days. Once a vein of soul crystals has been found, it will never be left unattended, so a small temporary settlement will always spring up on site—there is no question of the miners going back to town or village for sleep.

Extracting the soul crystals is a work of excruciating delicacy. The work of re-

Table 1: Soul Crystal Number & Strength

d100	No. of Crystals	“Level” of Crystals	“Souls” in Crystals
01-30	1d4	1	2d4
31-60	1d6	2	2d6
61-80	2d4	3	2d6+2
81-90	2d6	4	3d6
91-96	2d8	5	2d12
97-99	2d10	6	3d10
00	5d6	7	4d10

moving them from the rock in which they are embedded requires very delicate work with fine tools and may take hours, with junior shamans chanting and intoning the verses of the Refuge of Stone. The elf extracting the crystal can lose pounds in weight from sweating during this ordeal.

You may need to determine the quality and quantity of soul crystals found in a vein at some time during adventures in the shadow elf lands. Table 1, below, needs three dice rolls. The first determines the number of soul crystals found. You can determine how long they need to be extracted (at least 1-2 days per crystal should be a minimum). A second roll should be made for each crystal to determine what “level” it is—this is the maximum spell level which can be cast by a shaman wearing and using the crystal. A third die roll determines the number of “souls” in the soul crystal (this is important for using spells of the Radiance).

There is a degree of tension within the shadow elf community about Alfmyr's riches. There is something of a perception that the shamans of the City of the Stars turn up, take the crystals, say a brief thanks, and carry them back to their own city. This does cause some resentment in Alfmyr, which feels that it is taken for granted and the vigilance of its people in looking for veins of soul crystals is insufficiently appreciated.

The Desert of Lost Souls

This blasted, desolate plain is extensive and utterly barren. Rock, sand, shale, and stones greet the cheerless sojourner in this place. Small pools of standing water here are rank and fetid, some even poisonous. The air is stale and in places foul.

The desolation of this place is held to have originated, and to be sustained, in several ways. One shadow elf legend, which is rarely referred to because of the shame it involves, refers to a subgroup of Clan Porador which departed from the Way of Rafael and struck out on their own, abandoning their brethren and stealing all the food they could carry away from the City of the Stars. The legend says that an evil spirit possessed a shaman of this clan and led the departing elves into barrenness and starvation. Magically induced confusion prevented the shadow elves from finding their way back to their brethren. Many of their souls still have not returned to soul gems, and wander lost and aimless in this terrible place.

Creatures of exceptional wickedness or treachery today may be exiled here also. Those Wanderers who have not led a good life may be guided here to a fast, if not very pleasant, death (usually following a descent into madness). Finally, some shadow elf sages speculate that a long-lost humanoid race may have wandered into this blasted area and perished as a precursor of what was to befall the Porador elves later.

All these stories have only a little truth to them. Exiles and desperate creatures have found their ways here, but not on any significant scale. Rather, a malefic magical artifact, the *Crown of Corruption*, is buried within the Desert of Lost Souls and draws the exiled and fearful to it with a beguiling telepathic effect. The thing is evil and radiates madness and terror. An adventure to deal with it can be found in the Adventures section, at the end of this file.

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The Forest of Spiders —

This dense fungal forest west of Losetrel is comprised largely of the tall, branching fungi the shadow elves call Barisel fungi. Their intertwined lateral branches make vision and travel difficult (move rates halved, all visual ranges reduced to two-thirds normal). They provide a natural haven for spiders of all sorts, which populate this area densely. A variety of arachnids prey upon the small lizards, giant centipedes, rock rats and other smaller creatures which scurry among the rocks and fungi. The term “Forest of Spiders” is often used to refer to the whole fungal forest around Losetrel, but by far the densest populations of spiders are to be found west of the river. Watches are posted at regular intervals along the river banks opposite the Forest of Spiders. Until recently, the spider threat has not been too great. Spiders are not, after all, social creatures and do not exactly use advanced skirmish tactics. Of late, however, their threat has changed. Small groups of spiders have attacked together, showing unusual cunning and unique co-operation. The shadow elves do not know why this is. (*DM*

Note: A small group of aranea has moved into the Forest of Spiders and is controlling these attacks, trying to slay elves and steal any magic they have. The aranea are very careful to stay out of sight.)

While the western reaches of the Forest of Spiders would be well avoided, small parties of shadow elves regularly brave its hazards to trap the shroud spiders which weave the silk for which Losetrel is so famous. Shroud spiders do not breed well in captivity, and their numbers must frequently be replenished by fresh captures. Spider hunters sally forth with fresh meat lures treated with secret recipes which allure spiders and leave these for their prey, below nets and surrounded by snares. Poor hunters who cannot afford such lures may even try to use themselves as live baits, tempting the spiders into cages or net traps. The captured shroud spiders are then taken back in wooden cages on narrow carts which can travel in the dense fungal growth. Spider hunting is a highly skilled and dangerous business, and a brave and good spider hunter can become very wealthy—if he lives to enjoy it.

Note that while (giant) shroud spiders are the intended prey of spider hunters,

many other types of spider (normal and giant) are present here. Populations of crab spiders, albino cave spiders (use the black widow spider profile), and even rha-godessae are sizeable here. More unusual types of spider (e.g., tarantellas) are rare even in this spider-filled habitat.

Lava Tunnels —

Lava tunnels can be very dangerous, but shadow elves seek them out for sport! These tunnels are not common, but the greatest density of them lies around the Boiling Lake and the western limb of the North Sojourner River where it stretches out toward (but does not meet) the Cavern of Continual Rain. Some artisans, notably blacksmiths, do indeed have small settlements around these areas. They have protections against the extreme heat, of course—usually *rings of fire resistance* or a *resist fire* spell. Such shadow elves are usually regarded as eccentric, but their work is vital for military purposes (among others). The army is only too happy to provide a rare burly shadow elf with a *ring of fire resistance* to allow him to ply the blacksmith or weaponsmithing trade.

Also, shadow elves will go to great lengths to beg or borrow (but never steal) magical protections which will allow them to go lava fishing. Magically treated rods and lines can be hired in the cities and then the happy elves can go off in search of the elusive lava fish. These creatures resist heat when alive but cook normally once dead, so there is a finesse about hooking a lava fish with a maggot-and-kobold meat bait, gaffing it, and then flourishing it above the lava so that it is swiftly char-grilled.

The City of the Stars —

The Great Cavern —

The City of the Stars is built on the ceiling of a vast natural cavern (see fold-out map), which has a ceiling height of between 2000 and 2500 feet in different places. Within this cavern, gravity operates very oddly. There is a wafer-thin gravity null plane in (approximately) the



Geography of the Shadow Elf Lands

central plane of the cavern, with gravity leading bodies to fall away at opposite speeds from this null plane in both directions. And, apart from the majestic City of the Stars and this bizarre natural feature, this huge cavern has other settlements and features of some note.

Ebon Lake

This lake contains deep blue water, which is quite acidic (due to the sulphur springs) and hostile to aquatic life. It is an almost entirely “dead” lake, without fish or other fauna. A few giant frogs, toads, and small lizards are rare visitors. The lake is deep (750 feet at deepest) and the water is drinkable, though bitter. It is also slightly warm, facilitating the formation of clouds which rise gently to the gravity null plane. A variety of shadow elf boats are moored on the lake, usually close by the two towns within the cavern. Twin canals have been excavated to link Ebon Lake with Dragon Lake and the northern river to New Grunland. The outflow of rivers here is very sluggish.

The Towns

Dendronel and Pilinyl are busy and thriving towns with a slightly raffish reputation. Much trade and marketing goes on here, and the towns also contain an overspill of population from the city above them, including less reverential and principled shadow elves. However, both are boisterous and lively rather than cut-throat. Dendronel is also a “dormitory village” for 100 or so shadow elf miners who work the largely exhausted mines to the north-east. Only five soul crystals have been found there in the last decade but a small silver vein is still keenly worked.

Both towns have fairly large troop garrisons, with 400-500 soldiers and 30-40 officers. The populations of each town varies depending on trade and migrants but is usually some 3,000-4,000 souls.

The Gates

There are four gates at the points where major tunnels lead into the Great Cavern. These gates stand 40-50 feet high and

are magically “welded” into stone curtain walls with battlements; powerful stone gatehouses contain many guards and they bristle with crossbowmen. Each gate has some 200 soldiers and 10 officers who are eternally vigilant. For War Machine purposes (cf. *D&D Master Player's Book* or *Rules Cyclopedia*), these have AC -8 overall and 900 hp.

The Gate of Ancients is built on the path where the first shadow elves found their way into this cavern, by the wide tunnel they now call the Ancients' Footsteps. They will not alter this large passage by magic since it stands as an eternal monument to that first band of stragglers. It is decorated with bronze plaques showing the visages of all the Kings and Radiant Shamans of the City of the Stars. There is always a general here, and he has a magical wand which can turn each of these visages (one per round) into a magical *symbol* (of any type as he wishes). There are 15 of these plaques.

The East and North gates guard the routes to Alfmyr and New Grunland, respectively. Before the canals were constructed, the West gate guarded the main route to Losetrel, but this is now eschewed in favour of the water route via Dragon Lake and the South Sojourner River. The western passages are reduced in size and the guard somewhat smaller than at other gates.

Taking the Waters

Beyond the Gate of Ancients lies a fairly large (but very shallow) pool into which hot springs bubble. This area is very beautiful, with multicoloured stalagmites and very rounded rock formations. It is also a place where shadow elves come to relax and take a holiday. Chalet-like buildings made of toughened fungal trunks are very popular with the wealthier shadow elves who can afford to rent (or timeshare) them. There is a small, but tough, guard detachment of 100 soldiers and 10 officers here, and many magical alarms are placed along the Ancient's Footsteps to give ample warning of any attack (there are also very frequent patrols along that passage).

For the more impecunious elf, the sulphur springs in the Great Cavern are said to have medicinal properties. Bathing in them, and quaffing the stuff (which tastes really quite horrible), are both commended for all manner of minor ailments. The waters only have placebo effects, but often that can be enough.

Dangerous Places

To the south-west, Nymiel's Geyser radiates magic and is known as a dangerous area. A watch is always kept here. Periodically, the geyser spouts not only the filthy water it usually does but begins to spew smoke and green-yellow steam. Creatures from the Elemental Plane of Fire are sometimes *gated*, notably fire elementals and flame salamanders. This *gate* resists dispelling and is a permanent nuisance.

The origins of the fouling of this geyser's waters are unknown, but they resist *purify water* spells until at least five miles away from the geyser itself. The elves have built a complex series of barrages and locks along the thin river which links the geyser to the Ebon Lake, and filters the water through varnished fungal filters (which obviously need frequent replacing) and magical purification to prevent the Ebon Lake from being polluted. Even so, there is an overspill into the ruined area of barren rock known as the Waste.

This work is hampered by assaults from monsters from the Hills of Peril. Large caecilia and even purple worms are frequent visitors to these hills, and fyrsnaca come to brood in and around the dirty waters around the geyser. Without a massive clean-up of the whole area—which means some 200 square miles including the inhospitable terrain of the Hills of Peril—the shadow elves simply have to put up with these dual irritations.

Life in the City of the Stars

Before looking at important sites in the city, it's vital to keep in mind how shadow elves live. What you find—and what you don't find—in their great capital reflects the nature of the lives and their shared social values.

Social Life, Government, and Community

The shadow elves have a very powerful sense of community. They have suffered too hard, too long for their adversity not to bond them together, and the Way of Rafiel urges their obedience to this ethos, to their shamans, and their King. They are also powerfully committed to their families, and (much less) to their clans.

As an example of how this works, consider private property. This does exist—property can be owned, bought and sold, by shadow elves, and many do own the stone dwelling the huge majority of shadow elves live in. But it can be commandeered by shamans or the King if they so wish. Within the laws as the shamans have them written, no compensation is mandatory for this. It would not be done if it were not needed for some purpose (of Rafiel's, probably). But if this should happen, the consequences would be these: the shadow elf's clansmen would give money and time to build the elf and his family a new home. Those most closely related by marriage or friendship would give most. These principles apply within each settlement of shadow elves; between settlements, this kind of help is coordinated at the level of rulers.

The shadow elf owns a home, has a job, and uses money. But all this is given by Rafiel. And Rafiel's wish is that shadow elves should share. Help is freely given when needed, but is not asked for unless it is genuinely needed. There aren't any con elves here.

Paying taxes works on a similar principle. By long decree, one fourteenth part of a shadow elf's earnings go to Rafiel (in the form of the Temple and the King).

Shadow elves are entirely ready to pay this. They know that it is to pay for the work of the Temple, which they regard as sacred, and for the defence of the City as embodied in the King, the generals, and the army. They certainly wouldn't want to see any skimping on military spending. When shadow elves earn much of their living by bartering goods or services, they are expected to pay these taxes in the form of tithes or corvee (labour-service to the King, which may involve work within the Royal Sector, weapon making or repair, shovelling up after the skinwings, or anything else they can do). Trying to evade such duties is a thought which simply wouldn't occur to more than a few shadow elves and, even then, the shame of exposure if they were found cheating would be a powerful deterrent.

This sounds impossibly goody-goody, doesn't it? To some extent it is. There are some less than entirely honest shadow elves, but they are marginalized socially and even geographically within shadow elf communities (such as the folk of Wendolen Village—see below). And the price paid is a lack of innovation and initiative, as King Telemon feels keenly. But Telemon's views are not part of the story until the next chapter.

Telemon's authority and that of the shamans is co-existent. Because the shamans select the King (with Rafiel's guidance), there can be no conflict—in theory. The King decrees the Law, but he only does so because his authority is given by shamanic election.

No detailed legal system is given here. Obviously, if PC shadow elves go around stealing and assaulting people or killing them, they will be apprehended by a force of soldiers and brought to justice (i.e., executed). If they do this sort of thing, you have some serious problems with your players. Their PCs shouldn't be doing this sort of thing. Either get some new players or suggest to those you have that they think carefully about why they're playing this game in the first place.

Business and Money

Shadow elves have careers and jobs, and gaining enough money to be able to support their families and homes is important to them. Their businesses are what one would expect, and many are noted below, but there are variants. Some "ordinary" businesses are missing (an obvious example being undertakers). Others are very different from the norm—leatherworking is a very fine art because so little leather is available (from skinwings). Leatherworkers are rare and at the top of the tree of the artisans. Bookshops don't exist; the shadow elves have oral traditions and the small libraries they do have are kept by shamans and the military. "Carpenters" use not wood but fibrous fungi, and so on.

Shadow elves do have money. Minted copper, silver, and gold pieces are used, but the main currency is specially crafted and varnished thin strips of very hard, bark-like fungus. These are of precise size, have unique markings and edgings, and are made by craftsmen in the Royal Sector. They are carefully kept in silk pouches by shadow elves, but they are tough and have a long life. Currency units for these plaques (called collectively *kalafi*) are 10 gp, 50 gp, and 100 gp.

Much trade is done by barter in any event. This is the usual form of "wholesale" trade in markets between merchants. It is also very common between individuals; one shadow elf may agree to milk another's slugs one day in return for being ferried half-way to Alfmyr next week, or for some *trania*, for example.

Clan Adoptions and the New Enclave

From time to time, shadow elves capture intruders into their domains and are faced with the problem of what to do with them. It is considered that the Way of Rafiel does not readily allow for their summary execution. Since some of them are undoubtedly motivated by simple curiosity, this would be grossly unfair. So, unless there is evidence that the intruders have actually slain shadow elves, they are

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adopted (nominally by Clan Celebryl) and allowed to live out the rest of their natural lives in the New Enclave.

The inhabitants of the New Enclave are allowed a seven-month (by shadow elf reckoning) period of grace to get used to their new life. During this time they do not have to earn a living but are supplied with basic needs and a place to live. If they have no useful skills, they are trained (in slug management skills, etc.) and then they must earn a living. Otherwise, gently forced labour is extracted from them.

While inhabitants of the New Enclave are separated from the shadow elves in terms of where they live and sleep, they sometimes have to enter the main body of the City to work and earn their living. It is also permitted for shadow elves to visit outsiders within the New Enclave on a social basis from time to time—but not too often. The guards at the gates don't keep exact records, but they do take notice of who comes and goes. However, members of the Second Shadow (see the "Travel and Vigilance" chapter) certainly keep an eye on new arrivals for some time, and the authorities keep themselves well informed about the peoples living here.

A Night on the Town

Well, not really. Shadow elves do drink a fungal beer (in many different flavours) and they do go out to have some fun now and again. But bawdy houses, rowdy taverns, gambling dens and the like are simply not a part of their lives. Shadow elves are naive in the best sense of that word: innocent, ingenuous, and wide-eyed about life. They are not gullible, or fools, but they are naive. PC shadow elves shouldn't even get to learn of The Orc's Whiskers until their players have role-played the right kind of character for a few sessions at least!

Equipment Items and Costs

You can use standard D&D rules costs for items unless it is clear that these should be radically altered. Of course, many items cannot be had at all—you can't buy a warhorse here! Some goods

are much more expensive than usual—leatherware, for example, costs ten times the rulebook prices because of its scarcity. This includes leather armour. Make other changes as you see fit, although individual area details below give some further information.

Quarters and Gates

The small hexagon on the map within the current enlarged city is the originally designed city, enlarged subsequently. Within this smaller hexagon, there are four Quarters which correspond to the four clans of shadow elves. Originally, before any other cities had been built, the four clans occupied these four Quarters, even though there was never an injunction to do this and the geographic separation wasn't complete. Now these names have only historical importance; Clan Celebryl occupies most of this city. But there is one remnant of this old division. The crafts and workmanship typical of different clans is still mostly represented in the relevant Quarters. If you want an excellent piece of silk cloth or a good tailor, your best bet is Gelbalf Quarter.

The Royal Sector is still the exclusive province of the King and his family (plus the senior generals, their families, some 1,500 standing troops, important advisers, mages, records and archives, and all the other paraphernalia). The Shaman Sector, however, is no longer confined to shamans—it never was, since it housed those especially devout in the Way of Rafiel even in the first years. Shamans now live in and around the temple. Shaman Sector is now known as the quietest, most studious, and most refined residential area in the City of the Stars.

Studying the original hexagon shows that the gates there partly correspond to the old clan divisions within the City. The Old Gelbalf and Old Celebryl gates are now closed, sealed and walled up for defence purposes. Gates on the present city walls still have clan names. The Holy Gate is the way by which pilgrims to the Temple of Rafiel have always been admitted. The Royal Gate is that by which the Radiant Shaman brings the new King

ceremonially into the central city when a new King is chosen, although it is open for general travel within the city too.

Other areas within the wider hexagon don't have district names for the most part. The New Market is so called because it is exactly that; where merchants trade.

The Enclave is important. This was designed as the part of the City where residents other than shadow elves would be corralled. "Keep them separate from you lest they offend me, and I, Rafiel, will guide you." However, the generosity of the shadow elves in allowing so much space for their guests was rather excessive. The outsiders didn't need anywhere near this much space. Over the centuries, a small area within the Enclave has been walled off (with small gates leading out to the rest of the Enclave) for these folk. This reduced area is known as the New Enclave. The rest of the Enclave is occupied by more of the burgeoning population of the City of the Stars.

Beyond the Gates

To the east and north of the walled city (still on the ceiling) is Wendolen Village, where some 40,000 shadow elves (included in the population of the City of the Stars) live. This is an overspill area; the walled city is already packed. The shadow elves here are a mix. Some of them are the poorer or less fortunate of their kind. Others are relative newcomers to the area, attracted by the dim lights of the capital, wide-eyed about the Temple of Rafiel and the wonders inside the walls—"Have you seen the trees?" Wendolen village has a small number of ne'er-do-wells but their number shouldn't be overestimated.

The Sistyl Forest beyond is well worked-out and has few vigorous fungal growths outside a small number of intensively cultivated plantations. It is no longer a forest as such, and only provides work for some 1,000 shadow elves. More extensive fungal forests in the main cavern provide much better pickings.

Individual Locations within the City

1. Temple of Rafiel: This centrally important area is described at the end of this chapter.

2. Temple Square: This huge plaza is quite bare save for a small number of huge stalactites which extend up to 100 feet into the air (stalactites grow up here; it's the ceiling of the cavern). These are tipped with gentle magical faerie lights which are of permanent duration. There are, of course, 14 steps leading up and into the Temple.

3. King's Palace: This splendid building has powerful magical defences, notably a spherical mind barrier which protects all shadow elves inside it. Massive stalagmites form the pillars of the central entrance, smoothed and carved into intricate patterns. The towers of the Palace have three gravity catapults (see next chapter) and, at 140 feet in height, are the tallest buildings in the city.

4. Way of Fountains: Along this roadway stand 14 fountains, drawing upon the same water table drained from Troll Lake, the bottom of which is some 1,300 feet above the ceiling of the cavern. Each fountain has one verse from the Refuge of Stone inscribed upon it and shadow elves walking all the way along this route usually take care to recite them in order as they stroll along.

5. Way of Statues: Statues of the seven Kings of the Shadow Elves stand in order along this way, each in heroic pose on a massive skinwing. The statues are made of a copper-coloured alloy not unlike bronze.

6. Way of Trees: This is perhaps the most astonishing sight in the City in some ways. By extraordinary diligence and care, the shadow elves have managed to grow and keep alive one specimen of each of many surface tree species—oak, alder, maple, cherry, apple, jacaranda (this one gives serious problems) and others; a total of 14, grow here. The cherries and apples are exquisite delights for feasts. The scent of the jacaranda is intoxicating to the shadow

elves and beneath this tree when it is in flower is a traditional place to plight one's troth (even in an arranged marriage). The shadow elves love the trees—and are constantly reminded by them of the shame and perfidy of the surface elves who deny them the chance to live among such natural wonders.

7. Skinwing Stables: The large majority of the 315 skinwings in the Celebryl Air Force are stabled here. This powerful air defence is still named after the clan that first tamed the reptilian birds they ride with such pride and expertise. Regular training flights and manoeuvres always attract young shadow elves and sightseers from other cities. Periodically, the stables are opened to the public, who are allowed to watch the skinwings croaking and growling with pleasure as their skins are brushed and oiled by their grooms. The Changing of the Guard, with General Garafaele and the King inspecting, is a popular sight for visitors, combining royal pomp with smart uniforms and well-drilled troops and animals. A reassurance to all shadow elves!

8. Military Headquarters: The nerve-centre of all City defences. General Garafaele and the 14 generals of the city are almost invariably here. A total of some 1,500 troops is permanently stationed here and there are more gravity catapults placed here. In the basements of the HQ are the headquarters of the Second Shadow; the following chapter gives details of this organization.

9. Gravity Artillery: Atop each city gate is a pair of gravity catapults with working crews. Details of gravity artillery are given in the "Travel and Vigilance" chapter.

Let's Go Shopping

10. Diloriel's Armours and Weapons: This is the best place in the city for this stuff. Prices and availability are altered as follows: leather armour, 10 times normal price; chain mail, 20% below normal price; plate mail, six times normal price and is only made-to-measure (needs 4-6 weeks); longbows and lances not avail-

able; crossbows 20% below normal price. These changes reflect shadow elf habits and prejudices (plate mail is disliked by such slender and light folk), availability of materials (leather is very expensive!), and similar considerations. You may improve other rules as you wish. For example, consider spears. Their shafts cannot be made of wood since the shadow elves do not have any. Rather, they are made either of sculpted stone (using *rock to mud*, sculpting the mud, and then *mud to rock* spells) or strider fungus stalk-rods, hardened and varnished. Such a spear can have its shaft snap fairly easily (if a natural 1 is rolled). Make up other rules as you see fit without being unfair to PCs!

11. Lefarel's Apparel: A fashionable clothes shop. Specializes in fine silk bridal gowns.

12. Off-the-Stalk: A rough-and-ready basic clothing shop where garments of coarse silks are hung on varnished fungal stands—hence the shop's name. This shop does a good sideline in children's toys.

13. Siristel's Supplies: A leatherware shop (including made-to-measure leather armour). Exceptional workmanship.

14. Shoes Aplenty: The cobbler here, a young female named Rafasta, works with Siristel on offcuts and side-pieces of leather to make shoes which are much in demand. Both shadow elves will pay well for any leather or usable animal hide for their work. Boots and shoes cost 10 times normal prices.

15. Maflarel's Emporium: This is where the PCs go for pretty much anything else they need. Maflarel is always the best bet for miscellaneous equipment. You should review the normal equipment list in the D&D rules, then decide on item availability and cost. For example, garlic will be unavailable—or does this resourceful elf have some in stock for some fabulous price (100 gp at least)? Up to you! Maflarel is detailed in the "Among the Shadows" chapter.

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Artisans and Services —

16. Felestyr Warehouse: This warehouse is usually employed by merchants of the Felestyr clan when they import their goods into the city. They store their products (especially weapons and armour) communally, unlike other clans.

17. Bonded Warehouse: This is a warehouse for rent. Shadow elves hoping for work as guards for merchant convoys and wagons often hang around here. Shadow elves who know what they're doing will try Halfalen's Haulage Co. (#31) instead.

18. Map Shop: Old Jaflarien has maps of all the major passages, waterways and tunnels in the lands of the shadow elves etched onto blanched fungus bark. Some of them are even accurate.

19. Candle World: Jennafer, the proprietress, has discovered a small colony of unique wax-secreting worms in the cavern walls close by The Waste, and has single-handedly revolutionized the science of discreet lighting in the City of the Stars. Her work is all the rage—everyone wants a candle, how does she do it? Each candle (6 hours burning time) costs 4 gp, but this is a bargain to the shadow elves.

20. Drewmund's Locksmiths: Within the New Enclave this surly dwarf plies his trade. His mutterings about security, thrift, caution, and protecting one's assets on behalf of one's family have struck a chord with only a few shadow elves, but enough to allow him to scrape a living.

21. Parafal's Glassware: This shop supplies flasks, bottles, mirrors, and fancy glassware. These are at least twice the normal price; sand is not easily come by in the shadow elf lands. The proprietress is a distant cousin of Porphyriel, the Radiant Shaman, and she doesn't let anyone forget it. In the window of the shop—and a glass window is a rarity!—is a huge glass flask with Porphyriel's likeness etched on it (and the 14 Verses of the Refuge of Stone for good measure).

22. Tobacconist: The "tobacco" on sale with the clay *tretiltans* (a sort of pipe) here is prepared from the very best fun-

gal sources. If you like being sick, light-headed, coughing up multicoloured lung fragments, and smelling like a singed rat, this is the place for you.

23. Pots and Pots: Imaginatively named, this shop sells all manner of clay and ceramic pots and pottery.

24. Kiln and Urn: Another potter's shop, with superior craftsmanship and an unusual line in vegetable dyes (their Celebryl Blue could become a classic design).

25. The House of Hopes and Wishes: This portentously named shop sells all manner of exotic "consumer" items—lava fish, smoked skitterling fillets, even utter rarities such as spices and once even an apple! It is secretly owned by Maflarel, and managed by a charmed lackey of his.

Relaxation and Enjoyment

26. The Hall of Fourteen Voices: This is the major concert hall in the City of the Stars. Shadow elves are by no means as musical as their Alheim cousins, but they enjoy vocal recitations of sacred music and bardic historical sagas.

27. Whispering Waters: This is a good 'street cafe' where shadow elves meet to eat fungus "bread," *trania*, and perhaps the odd luxury such as curdled slug milk, washed down with a mug of sulphur water. Being in the New Market district, this is habitually frequented by merchants discussing business.

There are few such places in the City of the Stars. "Eating out" is a concept alien to the shadow elves, who eat very frugally. Merchants eat and drink here because they are not at home, or elves will take liquid refreshment because they are hot and tired from work. If friends who haven't seen each other for a while meet by chance, they may come here to eat and talk. But cafe life is not an important form of social discourse here!

28. Stone Caps: Another street "cafe" where shadow elves sit at tables made of stone in the shapes of flat-top fungi. Staple fare is the order of the day: *trania*, mineral water, hot sour slug's milk or curdled whey for a luxury.

29. Public Baths: Shadow elves, like their surface relatives, tend to be fussy about cleanliness and often visit these baths. Both cool and warm baths exist here. The baths are lovingly sculpted and use natural decor, with dramatic stalactite formations being incorporated into the design.

30. Boat Hire: The agent here hires out boats on behalf of many boat owners in the city. The boats aren't here, of course; they are on the Ebon Lake, or around it on the shores in small boatyards. Travel and Vigilance details boat hiring.

31. Halfalen's Haulage Co.: Halfalen hires (and hires out) guards for merchants carrying their wares over long distances. This is a good place for penniless PCs to come and find employment, although Halfalen has a definite preference for brawn over brains when hiring people.

Also, Halfalen owns the best giant slugs in the City. He will hire them as draught beasts to merchants, but only those he knows well. He also has a subsidiary business, mostly run by his two sons, rearing and training giant slugs. This is the place to go if you want to buy a really good slug.

Halfalen's only daughter was Marked as an acolyte last year, and he is intensely proud of this fact. He and his family have been conspicuously devout in attendance at the Temple of Rafiel ever since.

32. Pilots & Guides: This hiring-out agency provides guides with definite skills such as Orientation in Caves, Know Terrain (often at +1 or better), Helmsman, Mapping, and the like—"professionals" as opposed to the "labourers" handled by Halfalen. The proprietor of this agency, Raffainfar, is not on good terms with Halfalen and treats him with disdain.

33. Sarantyr's Skinwing Rides: Sarantyr owns two skinwings and hires them out to give rides around the city, usually to children or visitors to the city. The two skinwings are rather old beasts, very well trained and very docile, and the harnesses into which their riders are fitted are very secure indeed. Sarantyr has an understanding with the military, so that they keep an eye on these skinwings from their own beasts and Sarantyr pays extra taxes

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for this friendly watchfulness.

34-37. Taverns/hostelries: There are a fair number of these scattered about the city, since merchants need to stay with their helpers, and there are some shadow elf adventurers, after all! These four are a fairly typical cross-section of the hostelries to be found here, selling their *trania*, mineral water, and weak fungal beers.

34. Hands of Rafiel: Very plush and refined, a talking shop for intellectuals and scholars, with prayer mats and pewter mugs on which the 14 verses of the Refuge of Stone are etched.

35. The Cap and Stalk: A hang-out for the most important and wealthy merchants. Extremely respectable.

36. The Traveller's Comfort: A hostelry for less well-to-do merchants and even the leaders of their haulage teams. Lively, friendly, and a good place to hear gossip, especially from other cities and about business matters.

37. The Stoneturner: The name derives from the shadow elves' ability to move tunnels around—to turn them, as it is sometimes put. Miners from the Felestyr clan congregate here, and rumours of new soul crystal finds (and precious metals, but that's a lot less important) often start from this tavern. Miners from the main Great Cavern mines also tend to visit here when in the City. The Stoneturner is rough and ready, but friendly enough.

Off the Beaten Track —

38. Risardiel's House of Mystic: Risardiel is a young female shadow elf fortune teller. She dresses rather oddly (she is colour-blind and wears clashing colours together with her white garments), and does tend to simper and giggle a lot. But she has an unquestionable talent for the dramatic, and many of the shadow elves are superstitious folk. Risardiel has her own skinwing and flies about, discerning the future and the will of Rafiel from the pattern of lights as they fluctuate within the city. The logic is that, while individuals turn lights on and off, the overall pattern betrays collective awareness of the

fate decreed by Rafiel. This is augmented by individual palm-reading. Risardiel offers you the chance to feed a PC some complete drivel in return for his cash, or maybe now and then one of her predictions could come amazingly true.

39. The Orc's Whiskers: The existence of this rough-house is a carefully guarded secret. It is below a shop which sells glassware, basic metal goods and tools, and which appears quite innocuous. But it is owned (again!) by Maflarel, and its basements become by night The Orc's Whiskers. Here, hard liquor is served; real dwarven meads, brandies from Karameikos, mind-numbing substances from Glantri. Smoked and cured foods, sugared fruits, pickled gherkins and fish, and all manner of delicacies are on the menu (subject to seasonal availability). Halfling pipeweed and worse is smoked. It is possible to sit next to an elf of the opposite gender and hold hands without being married, even without having been previously introduced.

This is the place to meet the tiny rag-tag of unconventional, weird, misfit, miscreants who have enough money to be able to afford to indulge themselves here. It is a place where, notably, tales are told of other lands, lands with trees and dappled sunlight, or barren rock and fierce humanoids, or even the Land of the Red Sun. The listeners are not sure what is true and what is myth in these explorers' tales. They're usually second-hand, but an eyewitness account is always delivered to a packed house. Shadow elves who come here have their eyes opened to an entirely different way of life...

40. College of Wizardry: This is a fairly grand name for a small and unprepossessing place. It is operated by Yalfanare, a 12th level elf-wizard, whose function is simply to put shadow elves in touch with more experienced shadow elf wizards who can teach them new spells for their spell books, or to help with magical research, and the like. There is no grand organization anything like the Great School of Magic in Glantri. This is due to the shamans, who used a subtle argument to

make sure that no group of mages could ever subvert their authority. It would be a mistake, they argued, to have such a college because this would imply that magic was something for a minority to study, rather than something which should be studied very widely to maintain the defences of the shadow elves. Variants on this argument have been used by the shamans to considerable effect over the centuries.

The leading mages of the City are not too unhappy with this. They have influence on the King through Kanafasti (so they think) and they know that confronting the shamans would be a very bad move, so they just get on with their researches without making a big issue out of it.

This is where PC shadow elves (or even outsiders) should come to purchase new spells for their spellbooks or to buy and sell minor magical items (potions, scrolls, and the like). Permanent magical items are never sold to outsiders, although they will be bought from them. Do not sell permanent magical items to shadow elf PCs (unless at outrageous prices); Yalfanare prefers barter (on terms much to his advantage).

41. Quanafel's Thaumaturgy: This is the alternative place to buy, sell, and trade magical items. Quanafel (profile in the "Among the Shadows" chapter) is an irascible old (757 years) elf-wizard of 18th level, always eager to buy or trade for unusual magical items or magical wands. His home is a bewildering collection of curiosities inside: an embalmed kobold in a glass case, stuffed birds, a preserved bear's paws, cases of geological samples, and all manner of bric-a-brac.

General City Notes —

In a city of nearly a quarter of a million shadow elves, there is ample room for you (the DM) to add further locations and details. You might wish to make a photocopy of the city plan on the inside cover of GAZ13 (permission is granted to do this for personal use) and mark such additional locations in. Keeping index cards with short details of each location

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is a useful way of retaining information about them at your fingertips.

Also, when describing the City, draw the attention of the players to the sights and sounds. The markets are busy with merchants talking, haulers unloading giant slugs, elves scurrying to pour water and food into troughs for the panting, hungry beasts. Shadow elves wave greetings to each other as they stroll along the spacious streets, and parties of young elves skip and jest on their way to the Temple, accompanied by a slightly harassed acolyte-teacher. Paint the city with sensory impressions: sight, sound, smell, touch, and taste.

Temple of Rafiel

The vast Temple of Rafiel dominates Temple Square, rising to over 100 feet with mighty stalactites hanging down, like the pipes of some vast organ, almost to the public shrines and steps of this spectacular building. Sculpted from rock, with inlays of coloured limestone, quartz and marble, the mosaic-decorated Temple is a wonder to take the breath away.

There are seven levels of the Temple (half of 14), with the highest level (i.e., that rising highest into the air) being the First Level (as described in the Shamans and the Secrets of the Soul Crystals). Rising to this First Level are what are referred to by the shadow elves as “the 14 steps.” There are actually two sets of these. Further, each of the steps actually comprises 14 smaller steps; each set of 14 is crafted of progressively lighter rock and has one verse of the Refuge of Stone etched into its steps. There are thus actually 196 steps rising to the entrances to the First Level shrine.

The Upper Temple Levels -

The steps lead up to a great hall in which devotees may whisper a quick prayer, ask one of the many scurrying junior acolytes for help, bring offerings to the Temple, or just pause for reflection. At the far end of the hall, a passageway leads to steps which descend into the Galleries of the Second Level of the Temple, and onward

into the Chamber of the Refuge of Stone.

Here is the object of the shadow elves’ reverence: the 14 verses themselves. They are regularly visited by the devout, school parties, shadow elves wishing some special boon in their personal lives (for a safe birth, a happy marriage, a relative’s safety, etc.). Special public ceremonies (marriages within the royal family or court, graduation of an acolyte into the ranks of the Marking Shamans, the public and formal appointment of a new Radiant Shaman or Radiant General, etc.) also take place here.

Acolytes will hover in and around this inner sanctum, with mugs of water for weary travellers, to attend to those overcome by the sight of the holy of holies, and to keep everything clean and pristine. The junior acolytes live in a warren of rooms to the sides of the First Level, and they also have some rooms in the “unrestricted” part of the Second Level of the Temple.

There are also a couple of small court chambers on the First level where Marking Shamans will adjudicate relatively small disputes between shadow elves.

Part of the Second Level is the Galleries. Here, religious art, especially that depicting the military struggles of the shadow elves, is displayed. Some works, notably mosaics, are permanent whereas others are temporary (statues in exhibitions, for example). Of course, these struggles (and victories) are the will of Rafiel. Hence memorials to them are very much appropriate within the Temple. Although these Galleries, and some other rooms occupied by the junior acolytes, are on this level, these are considered unrestricted. Junior acolytes are not permitted to pass through the bronze-shod doors which allow ingress to the central core of the Second Level. Only (full) acolytes are allowed here.

The acolytes have their living rooms on this Second Level. There are also a small library, teaching rooms, a meditation room, and food preparation areas. There are always a small number of Marking Shamans supervising the acolytes in this level, and at least one White Shaman. The White Shaman is here in case a child is born with the Mark of the Shaman in the City. She

does not stay, or sleep, in the First Level of the Temple for security reasons, but she must be accessible and so she stays here. An acolyte given the primary responsibility of attending to the White Shaman is considered very favoured, and the acolytes do their best to appear devout and worthy to the Marking Shaman responsible for drawing up the relevant attendance roster.

Middle Levels of the Temple

The Third Level, home to the Marking Shamans, has many record rooms. Since Marking Shamans have to act as judges in many disputes, they have many legal records. There is also a court chamber here, where disputes of importance or complexity will be adjudicated by Marking Shamans (or even by a White Shaman if the dispute is a major one). Shadow elves other than Marking (or higher-level) shamans are only admitted here after being blindfolded and having undergone purification rituals in the First Level of the temple. Marking Shamans also keep a small number of low-level (1st, 2nd) soul crystals here, and reserves of coins and nuggets of precious metals. What commercial book-keeping the temple requires is done here.

The Fourth Level is home to the Life and Death Shamans, who occupy opposite sides of the temple. The central core is, however, shared by them for meditation and prayer (there are separate, and joint, shrines) and for eating.

The Fifth level is home to the Colourless Shamans. A major feature here is the great Conclave, where the White Shamans come to elect a new Radiant Shaman when necessary (or to choose a new King). Symbolically, the White Shamans take one step away from their own inner sanctum at this time, to bring themselves closer to the communal lives of shadow elves when making these crucial decisions. Colourless Shamans also maintain the small library of works on the special magics of Rafiel (i.e., the spells of the Radiance), rare devotional works, and original supplementary religious works (such as *The Concordance of the Way of Rafiel*,

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The Songs of Nasnaefel, and Jacquafarel's *Verses of the Soul*).

There are extensive living complexes on the Sixth level, although there are but 13 White Shamans at the present time (the number has varied from 9-20 over the years). The most important magics, "spare" soul crystals of 3rd and higher levels, and copies of all religious texts and scrolls, are all to be found here. Extensive alchemical and magic-user experimentation facilities are to be found in this very large temple level as well.

The Chamber of the Spheres

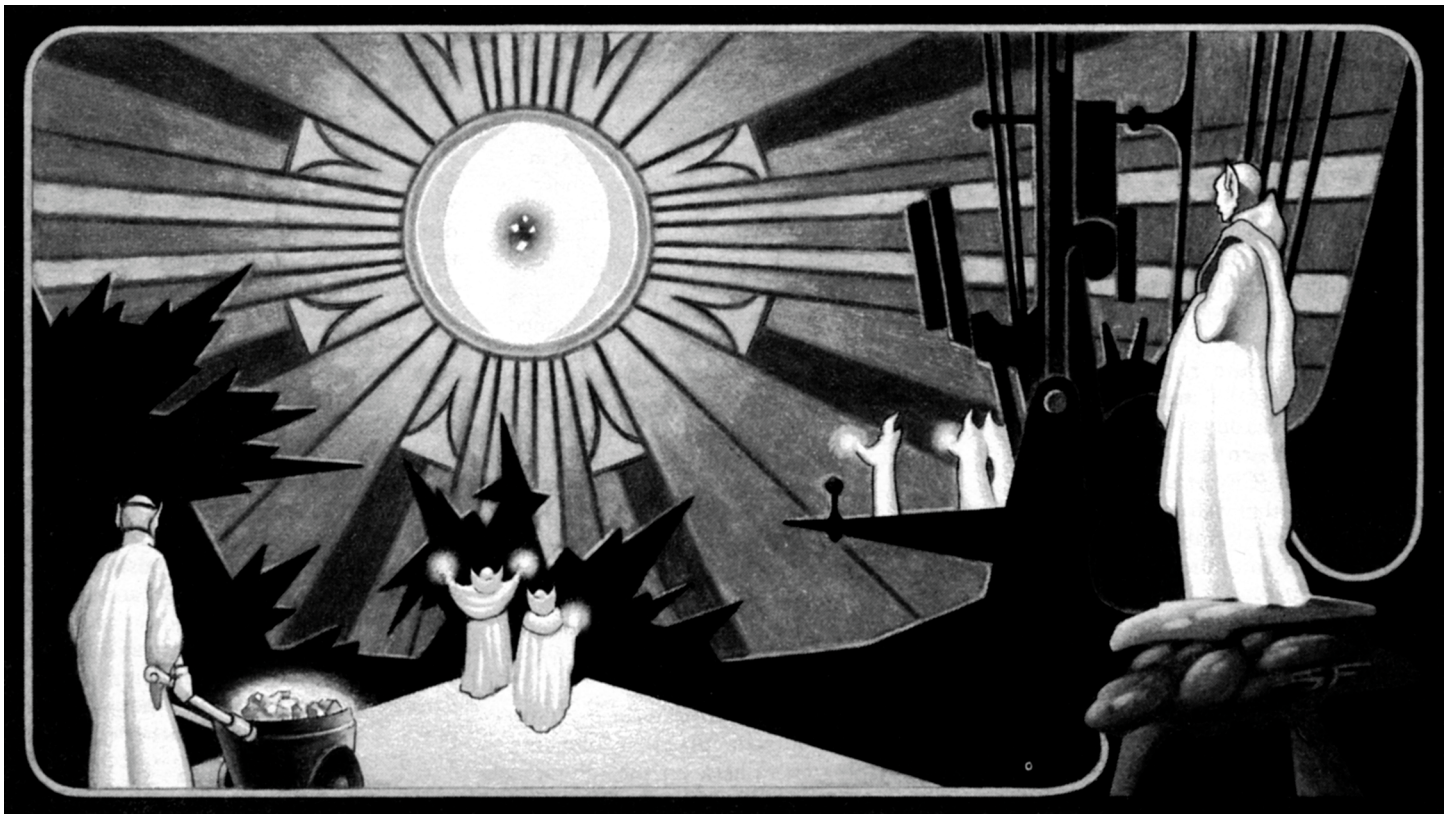
PCs shouldn't get to see this unless they are of Companion level (either as outsiders or as White Shamans). At this level you will want to tailor the nature of this ultimate sanctum to the needs of your campaign. It lies 60 feet below the Sixth Level, well sunk into the rock, and all manner of magical traps will protect it from those who should not be here (i.e., who aren't White Shamans). Porphyriel alone has the magical keys to enter, although Randafien (a 19th-level male sha-

man) has complexly coded notes allowing him to work out how to enter, should any awful misfortune affect the Radiant Shaman.

Exactly what does this place look like and what is being done here? It is full of humming, complex machinery which will be unlike anything the PCs have ever seen. The Spheres themselves are bright globes with whirling crystals suspended inside them, and soul crystals can be found incorporated into the machinery in many ways. Metal cylinders, pipes, boilers, globes, supports and frames will fill this huge area (the size of the Sixth Level itself). The Chamber of the Spheres is actually a *magical nuclear reactor*, so it combines technological and magical principles, making it very strange. In addition, it is built and shaped by elves, adding their aesthetics to it, so it looks strangely graceful and almost eerie. Even a simple metal pipe here is anything but: it is fluted, decorated, etched, and sweeps in a gentle arc along its path.

If you are going to have some kind of intrusion into this area, or a battle (if the PCs are high level and not shadow elves,

for example), you will need to keep in mind the specific effects of the Radiance on creatures (see "The Secrets of the Soul Crystals"). You should also keep in mind that every shadow elf in the City will try to prevent entrance here and will try to slay anyone who has intruded here. In the last resort, Rafiel himself will appear in his mortal form to prevent irreparable damage being done to this vital project. He will prefer persuasion to more direct methods of dealing with intruders, but he will use spells in combat if he must, obviously avoiding area-damaging spells and using personally disabling attacks (*maze, feblemind, polymorph, disintegrate, power words*, etc.). Similar principles will guide shamans who must fight in defence of their temple.



TRAVEL AND VIGILANCE

This chapter details travel in the lands of the shadow elves, movement rates, hazards, skill uses, and other factors. It also details the organization of the ever-vigilant army of the shadow elves, including their intriguing Special Services...

INTO AND OUT OF THE CITY —

To start with, there is the pressing problem of getting into and out of the City of the Stars itself. Skinwing flying is one obvious possibility, but skinwings can carry virtually no cargo, so this has limited usefulness (the army has most of them anyway). Magic is a possibility (*fly, levitate, teleport* being the obvious spells). But there are still problems—what about 1st-level characters? What about merchants with cargo to shift?

The problem is fortunately solved by the existence of what the shadow elves call “gravity flutes,” narrow cylinders of altered gravity which exist at the sides of the Great Cavern near the City of the Stars. Gravity flutes are not found more than 10 miles from the City of the Stars. Shadow elves call them *flutes* because they are cylindrical in shape and because there seems to be a gentle, almost inaudible sighing of an unfelt breeze within them. (Other races do not hear this.)

A gravity flute is 5-30 feet wide. A shadow elf entering one can at once recognize it by a rising of the hairs at the nape of his neck (other races must make a Wisdom check to recognize gravity change here unless they experiment).

When a gravity flute is entered, the wall becomes “down.” One simply steps off the floor (Great Cavern) on to the wall (which is now the floor). When one reaches the ceiling of the Cavern (City of the Stars), this is of course just another wall (while you are inside the gravity flute), until you step out on to it, when it becomes the floor.

It takes 1d20 rounds to find a gravity flute, or 2d20 rounds if the seeker is more than 5 miles from the City, since they move around slightly and are rarer the further one goes from the City. Movement rate within the gravity flute is at normal speeds.

TRAVEL ROUTES —

An important distinction is made here between *primary, secondary, and tertiary* travel routes. This affects movement

rates, hazards, encounters, and skill use. Rules for obstacles and encounters are given following the detailing of each type of route. Rules for movement rates for daily travelling can be found in the *Expert Rulebook*, page 41.

Primary routes are those shown as roads on the fold-out map, and certain major waterways: the routes from the City of the Stars to Alfmyr and Losetrel via the canal, Dragon Lake, and the South Sojourner River. These are broad, frequently travelled, well-patrolled routes, the safest and fastest to use.

Movement rates here are full normal rates. At your discretion, it may be possible to have skinwings fly at least part of the way along such routes.

Encounters: Check for a trivial encounter once per 8 hours, and for an important encounter once per 24 hours.

Obstacles: There is only a 5% chance per day of travel that an obstacle significantly affecting progress will be encountered, due to the frequent checking and maintenance of primary travel routes. Check on the Obstacles Table later in this chapter to determine the nature of the problem.

Secondary routes are those shown as tunnels (in dashed lines) on the fold-out maps, and all major waterways save those listed above as primary routes (and the river leading north through the Forest of Spiders towards the Cavern of Continual Rain and to the north beyond; this is a tertiary route). These are less frequently travelled, less often maintained (or harder to upkeep), less frequently patrolled (or more attractive as habitats for monsters, etc.), and for many reasons less trustworthy than primary travel routes.

Movement rates here are reduced by 20% due to rocky and uneven terrain, rougher water, and the like. If a travelling group has at least one member with the Know Terrain skill, this may be reduced to a -10% penalty to move rates.

Encounters: Check for a trivial encounter here once per 4 hours, for an important encounter once per 8 hours.

Obstacles: There is a 10% chance per day of some important obstacle blocking smooth progress. Check on the Obstacles Table later in this chapter to determine the nature of the problem.

Tertiary routes are those well off the beaten

track, abandoned areas, complex honey-combed passages, and the like. Worked-out Alfmyr mines, the Warrens, minor tunnels and waterways not on the fold-out map (but added to it by the DM), are all examples of tertiary routes. Obviously, these are the most hazardous places to travel.

Movement rates are reduced by 30%, or by 20% if at least one of the travellers has the Know Terrain skill.

Encounters: Check for both trivial and important encounters once per 2 hours.

Obstacles: There is a 20% chance per day of some important obstacle blocking smooth progress. Check on the Obstacles Table later in this chapter to determine the nature of the problem.

UNDERGROUND SHIPS —

Large ships can only travel safely along primary waterways. By “large ship” here is meant anything larger than a riverboat (see *Expert Rulebook*, pages 42-43). Along tertiary waterways, nothing bigger than a two-elf canoe (with a 1000 cn capacity in addition to two elves) can travel safely. PC shadow elves who make any attempt to find out the facts of life as regards underground waterways will be told these facts.

Vessels which are too large to cover waterways safely will suffer some mishap at some distance along the route they do take. The type of mishap is up to the DM; if the PCs didn't know about their mistake, the vessel can be forced to stop fairly quickly so the PCs don't lose too much time. If they just set off without checking their facts, or, even worse, ignored advice, then they deserve trouble. Strand them in the middle of nowhere if you can.

The usual obstacle is reduced ceiling height, but there are others. Stalactite forests are a nice variant, jagged rocks just below the waterline another possibility, too little draught for a large vessel another, and then a small section of rapids or even a waterfall (along a tertiary waterway) are possibilities too. You should determine the nature of the obstacle to suit the general terrain and how mean a treatment you feel the PCs deserve.

There are no sailing ships, obviously, but there are a few magical vessels which travel the primary waterways in particular (they are too valuable to risk elsewhere). These vessels have zero friction between hull and

water, so that a reduced crew of rowers can propel the boat along. Some others even have magical propulsion, only needing a helmsman conversant with the right magical command words to drive them along. The magical manufacture of such vessels requires material ingredients from very rare aquatic monsters, so these boats are both very rare and very expensive.

Giant Slugs

Giant slugs are not terribly fast, but they aren't as slow as one might think, and they are fairly reliable. They do not actually carry loads—these slip off too easily—but they are trained to pull sleds or coaches when harnessed. Travel rates for giant slugs are given below.

Giant slugs can easily be slowed when overloaded, so it is especially important not to have them carrying too much. Their travel rate in miles per day is one-fifth of their normal speed in feet per turn. A giant slug with normal encumbrance travels 12 miles per day.

Giant slugs need 10 elf-days worth of food per day to keep going, and while they will eat *trania* for a couple of days they want something better afterwards or they won't continue! Grazing in a fungal forest for one hour will give them enough food for one day, and small villages along primary travel routes will usually have enough fresh giant slug food for sale. Giant slugs also need at least one gallon of water per hit die per day. They secrete a lot of slime, after all.

SLUGRUNNER Coaches

An innovation currently causing much debate among the shadow elves is the charter hire service from the City of the Stars to Losetrel (and Alfmyr) provided by teams of giant slugs from Halfalen's Haulage Co., which offers the coach-travelling

wealthy elf the chance of a luxury service, pandered to by a tough warrior-guard coachman. The cost is 50 gp per trip; the coach conveys only 2500 cn weight. Among merchants this is becoming seen as a mark of style and prestige, but others think it is merely pretension and wasteful. Halfalen, however, finds bookings are on the rise!

ENCOUNTERS

Encounters were earlier divided into trivial and important. This distinction needs explaining.

Trivial encounters are ones with small creatures or monsters which offer little (if anything) in the way of offense, and no serious threat, to travellers. These encounters are just placed for a little colour, and to allow you to roll some dice, consult an imaginary wandering monster table, and tut-tut to yourself and look disappointed (adding a depressed-sounding "you lucky devils" spoken out loud to the players, if you like). Such encounters will be with albino lizards, skitterlings, a few steam bats, harmless cave snakes, and the like. Social encounters with other travellers may also be included here.

Important encounters are ones which offer at least the prospect of a meaningful combat threat to travellers. The creatures which may be encountered will include those from the lists below.

In aquatic encounters, travellers may meet cold-water piranha, giant (poisonous) frogs, giant catfish, giant amoebas, giant eels, freshwater termites, *fyrasnaca*, water weirds, and other creatures.

In areas which are wet or damp, but not actually aquatic, some of the same creatures (the amphibians) may be encountered (and likewise some of those from the next paragraph). To these may be added black puddings, carrion crawlers, gelatinous cubes, (wild) giant slugs, giant leeches, grey oozes, ochre jellies and similar horrors. Many

"black" puddings here are actually gray and rock-coloured and will surprise if attacking from camouflage 5 in 6 (infravision users won't be subject to such surprise, of course).

In other terrains, common monsters include basilisks, caeciliae, geonids (in a few locations, notably in the Warrens and south of Alfmyr), giant (and ordinary) scorpions, hyposnakes, purple and red worms, rock pythons, ropers, slime worms, spiders (many sorts), and tuatara lizards.

For all these monsters, use the *Creature Catalogue* indices to check the D&D game rulebook entries.

Unique terrains should have unique or specially designed monster encounters. The many spiders of the Forest of Spiders have been listed, with the Boneless of the Warrens, in the descriptions of those locations in the previous chapter. If you design a special terrain and area (and there is ample uncharted territory around!), you can select suitable creature populations and encounters to suit the locations. Also, the lists above are not exclusive, and other suitable encounters may be added as you see fit.

HUMANOID ENCOUNTERS

These need to be placed carefully by the DM as designed encounters rather than "wandering monster" encounters. Shadow elf patrols, watches, tunnel rerouting, are all designed to keep nosy humanoids away from their heartlands. Large groups of humanoids simply never make it through; they are stymied by fast-reacting shadow elves sealing off all methods of ingress. So, traveller encounters should be with small groups of humanoids who may have slipped the net (the PCs will be expected to report this to the army as soon as possible!).

Table 2: Encumbered Movement Rates—Giant Slugs

Encumbrance	Normal Speed (feet per turn)	Encounter Speed (feet per round)	Running Speed* (feet per round)
Up to 2000 cn	60	20	40
2001-2400 cn	40	13	27
2401-2750 cn	20	7	13
2751-3000 cn	10	3	7
3001 cn or more	0	0	0

* Giant slugs don't run! This is about as fast as they can go when they're really scared.

Travel and Vigilance

Obstacles

If an obstacle is encountered, roll 1d10 and check Table 3 to determine its effect on travel. If the travellers are on a primary route, subtract -1 from the dice roll. If they are on a tertiary route, add +1 to the dice roll.

Table 3. Travel Obstacles

d10 Roll	Obstacle Effect on Travel
1-5	Slows travel time
6-9	Delays travel time
0	Prevents travel

An obstacle which slows travel time reduces movement rate by 50% for one hour along a primary route, 1d2 hours along a secondary route, and 1d6+1 hours along a tertiary route. The obstacle is one which doesn't actually stop the traveller moving but forces him to slow down. Examples would be: a rockfall which has scattered debris widely along a tunnel but not blocked it, a boat in trouble, half-sunk in the water, around which other boats must make their way extremely carefully, weak seismic effects (causing everyone to slow travel from caution!), and the like. Clearly, the exact nature will depend on the terrain and the type of route.

An obstacle which delays travel time holds up travel for 1d2 hours along a primary route, 1d3 hours along a secondary route, and 1d6+1 hours along a tertiary route. The traveller is forced to stop while a boat is hauled out of the water, while a fallen row of stalactites is cleared away, while the carcass of a dead purple worm is shovelled up, and so on. The delay is tiresome but not outrageous.

A delay which prevents travel is significantly more serious. Here, a tunnel wall has collapsed, the ceiling of a waterway has caved in, bands of marauding humanoids have demolished a passage, tunnels are currently being re-routed to thwart intruders, and so on. The DM should determine how long it will take to remove such an obstacle. Of course, the travellers may not even be certain just how big an obstacle is (is the tunnel blocked for 50 feet or just 10?). Skills such as Know Terrain, Mapping, and the like can allow the PCs to find a way around the obstacle in reasonable time (converting the block into a lengthy delay) if the relevant ability check is made.

Terrain Types

The modifiers to move rates and encounters given above are for travelling along tunnels, passages and waterways. These rules don't apply to skipping along the tops of fungi, ledge-hopping in confined spaces, unusually muddy or unsafe terrains, volcanic shafts and the like, although you can use the rules above as guidelines for adapting for use in such places. In particular, when you're plugged into dungeon-adventure mode, use standard encounter checks.

Skill Checks

Skill checks shouldn't be used for normal travel (except perhaps for Mapping if PCs get lost). Skills such as Climbing, Ledge Hopping and the like should only be checked if PCs are trying to deal with an important obstacle you have designed, or very tricky terrain; and both modifiers to the skill test and the possible consequences of failure should be designed for the individual area.

Shadow Elf Army

Technically, all adult shadow elves (save for specialist mages, shamans, and the like) are members of the army, but the standing army is another matter. It is compulsory for each shadow elf to spend 10 years in military service, but quite a few make a career of it.

Ranks and Strengths

General Garafaele is one of 14 generals in the City of the Stars; this number is fixed by convention. A general must be of 10th level, and have Attack Rank D (two strikes per round), at least. There are also generals in Losetrel (currently five), New Grunland (currently five), and Alfmyr (currently three). All are technically subject to the Radiant General (Garafaele) who in turn is subservient to the King and the Shamans.

Serving the generals are a number of senior officers. The elves have a long, poetic name for them and it is easier to call them Captains for our purposes. Each Captain is at least 7th level, and the most distinguished captain is 10th level (Attack Rank E), awaiting promotion to general. There are some 280 captains in the army, of whom

half are in the City of the Stars and environs, a quarter in other cities, and a quarter out in Watches: a few will be adventuring at any given time.

Junior officers, Sergeants, must be of 3rd level at least. The highest-level Sergeant is currently 9th level (and awaiting promotion). There are close to 1,000 sergeants in the standing army, with some 300 in the cities and the others in Watches and Patrols.

The remaining 7,000 or so members of the standing army are referred to as 'soldiers' (which is also the generic for the entire body of the army, of course). These are elves of 1st to 4th level of experience for the most part, with a small number of 5th and 6th level types who are not very intelligent and thus make better soldiers than officers.

Members of Special Services (tunnel shapers, gravity artillery, air force, the Second Shadow) are dealt with later on.

Watches and Patrols

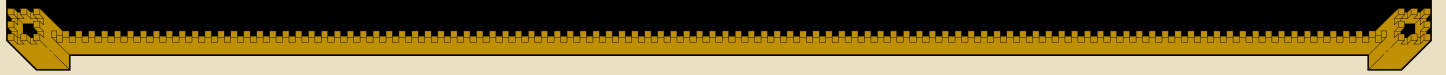
A Watch is a powerful guard of shadow elves placed by a tunnel network which is known to lead to dangerous places. Tunnels leading to surface lands, to the Land of the Red Sun (this is a well-kept secret!), to lairs of dangerous monsters, to the Warrens, and the like will all have a Watch placed upon them. A Watch consists of a Captain and a Sergeant (or two Sergeants of levels 5-8), 10 soldiers of levels 3-4, 20 soldiers of levels 1-2, and a Snake or Serpent (see "The Second Shadow," below) and a tunnel shaper.

The possessions and skills of such a Watch will be carefully selected by the military authorities. The group will be well equipped with magic (see "Equipping Watches" below), and skills such as Signalling, the combination of Blind Shooting and Rapid Fire, Hide in Shadows (for ambushes), and general stealth and combat skills will be highly represented. Tough soldiers are selected for Watch duties. There will always be at least two officers with *teleport* spells or scrolls able to notify central military authorities if a major peril or attack is taking place.

Patrols are rather light duties. These are routine affairs along well-travelled routes, although they can be a little riskier when precautionary patrols (e.g., by a tunnel where a monster was sighted a while ago) are posted. Along secondary routes, and at

What EVERYONE KNOWS





What Everyone KNOWS





What Everyone Knows



any point more than 12 miles from a village along any route, minor patrols are in operation. A Sergeant will command 2-4 soldiers of levels 3-4, and 4-6 soldiers of levels 1-2. Major patrols are undertaken along the main arterial waterways (and lakesides), and the primary routes close by villages. In a major patrol, a Sergeant of level 5 or higher commands 2-5 soldiers of levels 3-4, and 11-16 of levels 1-2. (This is the main stamping-ground for training new recruits.) Rarely, either type of Patrol will have a second Sergeant, of 3rd level, being trained on the job, and possibly a Captain doing a tour of inspection. Finally, any Patrol has a 5% chance of having a Snake or Watcher of the Second Shadow accompanying it.

Equipping Watches

For nonmagical equipment, watches and patrols have fairly standard resources. Captains will have magical plate mail or magical chain mail of very good (+2 to +4) enchantment, a magical shield, and a magical weapon (+2 or better with a 10% chance for special properties). They will have magical crossbow bolts and are 50% likely to have a magical crossbow. They will always have 1-4 useful scrolls and potions, and a magical ring. In Watch parties, a Captain will have 1-3 other magical items in addition to a wand (*magic missiles* is favoured) and a major magical healing source (such as a *staff of healing*).

Sergeants will have magical chain mail, a magical sword, and are 10%-per-level likely to have a magical shield. They will always have magical crossbow bolts, and are 20% likely to have a magical crossbow. They have 1-2 useful potions and scrolls in addition to some magical items needed for healing (e.g., a *potion of antidote* and a *potion of healing* or *super-healing*). Sergeants of superior level (7th or above) may have miscellaneous magical items, as the DM sees fit, but nothing excessive (minor wands, a *ring of protection*, a *displacer cloak*, a *ring of invisibility*, etc.).

Ordinary soldiers will not have magical items unless they are at least 2nd level. At and above this level, allow each a 10% chance per level for having a magical sword, the same chance for magic armour and shield, and a 20% chance for 1-2 various useful magical items. Standard issue is

chain mail, sword, and light crossbow.

In all cases, adjust the level of the items to the strength of the soldier. A humble 2nd-level elf isn't going to have a ring of *spell turning*, *wishes*, or *X-ray vision*, nor a weird magical item like an undersea boat. Likewise, an exceptional Sergeant with a magical sword could possess a fairly powerful one with significant Talents (see the *D&D Dungeon Master's Companion*, page 57). As a rule of thumb, equip these NPCs in a manner slightly below that of PCs in your campaign. Don't forget that certain forms of magic are unknown to shadow elves (no *wands of lightning bolts*). Finally, any General around the place should be individually designed by you!

Shamans

Shamans are not actually part of the Army, but the Army will often make requests to temples to attach a Shaman to a Watch or patrol, because of their healing abilities. Virtually all Watches will have a Shaman in attendance, and many larger patrols will have also.

Special Services

Gravity Artillery

The map of the City of the Stars shows the positions of the Gravity Catapults placed to defend the city. Their operation is quite a complex one.

Gravity catapults use rocks as missile weapons. A successful hit from such a weapon inflicts 3-30 points of damage. These catapults use *telekinesis*, permanently enchanted on the catapult, to project the missile upwards at a rate of 200 feet per round until it reaches the gravity null plane (at 1200 feet above the city). At this point, the missile passes through the null plane and simply drops on anything directly below on the cavern floor. It will drop from the gravity null plane to the floor in one round; there is a slight slowing of the trajectory as it passes through the null plane and, for an instant, the rock appears to hang in the air motionless.

Missiles cannot be specifically targeted at targets on the floor of the Great Cavern, unless the elves manning the gravity catapult can see light sources on the floor of the Cavern to aid their guidance (this is way

out of infravision, don't forget). The gravity catapult hits as a 16 HD monster. Of course, with 7 rounds between firing and landing on the Cavern floor, the target may well have moved before the missile reaches it (and something else may now be in place to get squashed!).

Skinwing riders of Sergeant or better rank have special magical rings which enable them to deflect the rocks up to 30 degrees from their path of motion in one round. The deviation is assumed to take place at the start of the round in which the magical effect is activated. The skinwing rider must be able to see the rock (so a *faerie lights* spell is sometimes placed upon it). The maximum range of his control is 400 feet, and he must spend a full round concentrating on this action (any aerial combat/skill check is at a +4 penalty during this time). This movement change cannot result in the trajectory of the missile becoming parallel to, or altering direction from, the gravity null plane. That is, if the missile was heading up it must stay heading up (although maybe at a shallower angle); if it was falling from the null plane, it must still fall. One tactically devastating case of this manoeuvre is for the skinwing rider to glide just under the gravity plane and redirect the missile as it passes through the gravity plane, altering its point of impact very significantly and catching targets on the floor wholly off-guard.

Lastly, a gravity catapult crew is comprised of six elves, and reloading a catapult with a rock missile takes 4 rounds, 2 rounds if a mage with a *telekinesis* spell is available to load the rock into the catapult. Half of the gravity catapults actually have "gunners," each with a *ring of telekinesis*, and then have 2-round reload times.

Skinwing Riders

Skinwing riders are an elite group. They must have a Dexterity score of 16 or better, must have the Skinwing flying skill, and cannot wear any armour superior to leather in the saddle. Swords and light crossbows (sometimes saddle-mounted) are standard weapons.

You will find full expanded rules for aerial combat in the boxed set *Gazetteer, Dawn of the Emperors*. They are too lengthy to be reproduced here. Stats for skinwings which enable them to take part in aerial combats

Travel and Vigilance



are given in the “Flora and Fauna” chapter. There are some important points to add to those details.

First, the Great Cavern isn’t a large place. A skinwing out of control and falling crashes into the ground in a single round, with a fair chance of grievously injuring its rider. When the skinwing crashes, it should always be treated as being at terminal velocity. Well, no one said life was easy in the Air Force. If the rider makes a successful Dexterity check, you can allow him a chance to cast a life-saving spell (*fly*, *levitate*, *teleport*, *dimension door* onto another skinwing), or performing some crucial action, in time.

Second, skinwings have a gliding ability which does not take a manoeuvre action to perform; they will glide their normal movement allowance and descend just 10 feet per round. However, the skinwing must travel its full movement allowance to glide in this way.

Skinwings can hover, although they’re really not very good at this. They can remain in the same place for one round if they were neither ascending nor descending in more than a one-manoevre dive or climb in the previous round. In the following round after hovering, the skinwing must dive or climb at one-manoevre rate (no more is possible, no less is allowed).

Finally, there is the unique problem of the gravity plane. Think of this as being like the flat surface of wobbly jelly being occasionally struck with a spoon. That is, it stays in more or less the same place, give or take a margin of error. Above the City of the Stars, the distance to the Great Cavern floor is some 2,400 feet, and the gravity plane is at 1,200 feet, although it varies slightly from place to place and from time to time.

The point is that it isn’t possible to predict or know exactly where the gravity plane is at any given instant. Thus anyone flying through it can brace themselves for it, but they can’t absolutely ready themselves. When a skinwing and rider pass through the gravity plane, the rider needs a Dexterity check. If this is failed the rider cannot perform any actions (spell casting, flying manoeuvres, etc.) on the coming round. The skinwings are much less hassled, simply flapping a bit but adjusting to the new downwards direction (they travel 100 feet down but stabilize during this round).

Tunnel Shapers

Tunnel shapers are elves who have specialized in spells which affect the structure of rock and stone; they may be treated as an NPC character class in some ways. Specifi-

cally, the areas affected by a tunnel shaper with rock-affecting spells may be increased by 50% in all dimensions (size of a cube, range, duration, etc., as relevant). Tunnel shapers will always have spells such as *transmute rock to mud* (and its reverse), *wall of stone*, *move earth*, *flesh to stone*, *transmute rock to lava* and other spells of this type. In addition, tunnel shapers have the unique spell *stone door* as detailed below.

Stone Door (Spell Level 4)

Range: 10’

Duration: permanent (or until dispelled)

Effect: to seal and disguise a passage

Description: This spell enables the spellcaster to seal off a tunnel or passage, while completely disguising this blockade from nonmagical detection by other creatures. The spellcaster can seal off a tunnel area of up to 40 square feet per level. Thus, a 7th-level spellcaster could seal off a passageway of up to 280 square feet—say, 20 feet wide by up to 14 feet high.

The difference of this spell from others which might appear to give a similar result (e.g., *wall of stone*) lies in the disguise effected. Both surfaces of the stone created by the spellcaster appear absolutely identical to the surrounding stone. While the stone

created is but 1 inch thick, it responds to all normal tests (rapping with a hammer, etc.) as if it were solid rock. Only attempts to smash it down or work it with tools, or the use of a spell such as *detect magic* will reveal the stone door for what it is.

The stone door is created at the rate of 40 square feet per level of the spell caster.

Finally, the spellcaster only can pass through the stone door for a period of time after the spell casting as if it were a normal door (taking one round to “open”); this duration is one day per level of the spellcaster. After this time, the stone door resists such bypassing.

The Second Shadow

This subtle organization is a complex and fine intrigue. The essence of matters is this: all shadow elves know that there is a Second Shadow organization. They believe it to be a group of shadow elves skilled in the arts of concealment and spying who root out intruders into the shadow elflands. That is, the functions of the Second Shadow are purely defensive.

Matters are more complex than this. There is one branch of the Second Shadow which has precisely these functions, and this branch is described in this chapter. However, there is an almost entirely separate parallel organization within the Second Shadow—the Serpent’s Eyes. These shadow elves are the network of spies and informants who keep the King posted on developments in areas of the surface world and they also keep an eye on “subversive” elements in the shadow elflands.

The “legitimate” Second Shadow is accepted as a desirable, necessary part of shadow elf life, even though the members of this organization cultivate a secretive, furtive image. But almost no one suspects the existence of a deeper intrigue below this group’s activities. The “legitimate” Second Shadow is an excellent screen for the deeper intrigues of the “hidden” Second Shadow!

The overall head of the Second Shadow (both branches) is the Feathered Serpent, who always has a taken name, forsaking his family name (and family) to take up his position. Currently this is Xatapechtli, who is detailed in the “Shadow Elves in Other Lands” chapter.

Below the Feathered Serpent are the Serpents, elves of 9th and higher level;

below the Snakes, elves of 7th and higher level; and finally Watchers, elves of 5th and higher level. Elves below 5th level are not recruited into the Second Shadow. Elves of noted devoutness (to Rafael!) are never recruited into the Second Shadow at all.

There are certain minimum requirements for recruitment into the Second Shadow. For recruitment into either branch, a shadow elf must have an Intelligence score of 13 or better. For recruitment into the “legitimate” Second Shadow, a shadow elf must have a Dexterity score of 13 or better. For recruitment into the “covert” Second Shadow, the Eyes of the Serpent, a shadow elf must have a Charisma score of 13 or better.

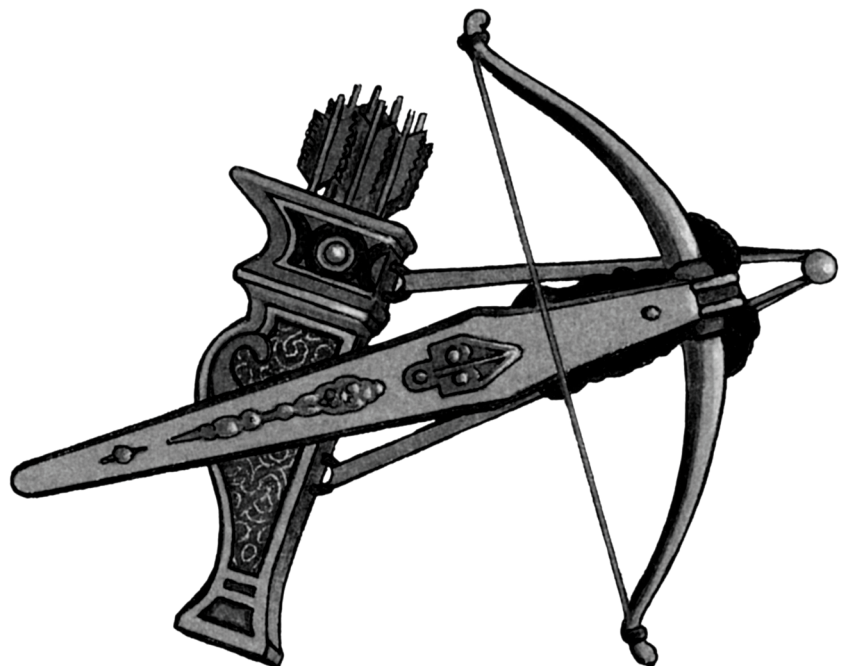
Members of the “legitimate” second Shadow will have skills from the following list: Know terrain, Mapping, Orientation in Caves, Signalling, Tracking (I), Bravery (W), Alertness, Climbing, Hear Noise, Hide in Shadows, Ledge Hopping, Move Silently, Rope Use (D). A variant of the Snares (I) skill is often possessed, allowing the elf to set tripwires, deadfalls, and similar alerting traps.

Also, these elves will have spells or magical items from the following general areas: *invisibility*, *ESP*, *detect magic*, *flying* (fast return to base!), and *polymorphing*. Second Shadow spy/scouts on watch/duty patrol will also have magical items which allow them to overcome enemies rapidly: they will often be supplied with crossbow bolts

coated with a fungal poison which will paralyze enemies. A saving throw versus Poison will negate this effect, but even if the save is made the enemy will be affected as by a *slow* spell (reverse of *haste*) for 2-5 rounds after the affected missile strikes.

Second Shadow scout/spies do not wear any kind of armour to keep them as fast-moving and silent as possible. To compensate for this, efforts are made to equip them with protections such as *displacer cloaks*, *rings of protection*, *rods of parrying*, *defender swords*, and the like.

Members of the scouting/spying Second Shadow are also trained in luring spiders. Using special potions sometimes with a meat bait (a slain humanoid), spiders are attracted into the area. The spiders are used to scare off intruders and to weaken any group which is determined to force entrance to the deeper tunnels and passages where the shadow elves lie in wait for them...



Flora and Fauna

The realms of the shadow elves hold unusual flora and fauna in addition to the better-known varieties. Here, “monsters” are detailed after more passive species.

Fungi

The shadow elves have documented over 200 species of fungi in the fungal forests, but only a minority of these are of importance. These are the following:

Blackspore: These “traditional” mushroom-shaped fungi produce heavy black spores which are valued as flavouring and in preparing *trania*, the preserved food of the shadow elves.

Darksnap: These are dangerous and considered under Monsters below, but are still prized by the shadow elves because giant slugs have a taste for them.

Lermon: This medium-size fungus, when young is the standard food supply for giant slugs; older, bigger plants are too tough and of poor nutritional value.

Pearldew: This fungus has a hollow, pitcher-like stem and a rimmed, gilled cap at the top. It exudes a sweet sap into the pitcher and, if this can be found fresh, the stem can be “tapped” (like rubber tapping) and the sap slowly drawn off. A single plant (only small ones, up to 6-8 feet, give good sap) can yield up to 1d6 pints of this sap. The sap is useful as slug food, as a sealant or glue if reduced by gentle simmering, and is part of the secret recipe used by spider hunters in their business. It is also used in the preparation of skinwing oil, the substance used for rubbing down skinwings at the stables.

Shaman: One small capped fungus has a pattern of pendulous gills which appear vaguely like the mark of the shaman. This edible fungus is greatly prized and is always given to the temple for the shamans to eat. Discovery of a significant cluster of these rare fungi is taken as a good omen.

Strider Fungus: This huge fungus is known to the orcs by the name of “Big-giz” (see GAZ10 *The Orcs of Thar*). The shadow elves call it strider fungus because of the amazing growth rate of this huge flat-top fungus compared with most other species. One fanciful tale told to children

was that the fungi could walk, and moved around when no one was looking. It was the only way to explain how it suddenly appeared, as it seemed to the elves. The Strider Fungus is important because of its thick and fibrous hollow trunk. This is used in cheap, temporary constructions around the cities (not inside them) and in the poorer shadow elf communities.

Trania: This name is given to the staple food fungi of the shadow elves as a generic, as well as to the prepared food they make from it. There is a difference in the way the two nouns are intoned, however, with the name of the fungus pronounced with the emphasis on the “tra,” whereas the food is referred to with the emphasis on the “nee” syllable.

Lava Fish

These creatures have thick scales and very dense fins, and highly unusual fanned tails which, in some specimens, can be as long as its body. The fish vary in size from a few inches to nearly a foot and a half long. Lava fish, as the name implies, live in lava and magma streams and pools. They are obviously magical in nature, but their origin is entirely unknown. They are immune to natural and magical heat, although they take double damage from all cold-based attacks. They can be treated as having 1 HD, with 1-8 hp depending on size, but they have no effective attacks.

Memory Gourd

Of the many plants the elven wizards brought from the surface, this is the most enigmatic. The memory gourd is actually a thick-rind, spineless cactus which was altered magically so it could survive on a “diet” of mineralized water and a little organic matter—a few drops of blood. The wizard who altered it had many of his family murdered in humanoid raids and his emotions seem to have affected the plant, which became widely kept for the beauty of its single white flower, produced annually. The plant seems to respond to the emotions of the elves, and changes colour from pale yellow (*fasti* days) to pale green (*nefasti* days), being otherwise of an

intermediate shade. Since the slaughter of 448 BC, the memory gourds kept in the City of the Stars have always flowered on the anniversary day—Names 2—and the flowers are usually plucked and taken to the temple steps on the commemoration of that dreadful massacre.

Skitterlings

Many small, inoffensive reptiles live in the tunnels and caves of the shadow elf lands. Long evolution underground has made many of them very unusual by the standards of surface dwellers. Perhaps none is as odd as the skitterling.

Skitterlings are small lizards, up to 18 inches in length, and about half of their body length is taken up by a long, slender tail. At the end of this tail is a fan of very thin, almost translucent, webbed skin. At the base of its tail is a pair of oil-secreting glands. It is the tail which makes the skitterling so prized by the shadow elves. The tail skin is used to make cloth of exquisite fineness, used for decorative purposes. The oil of the glands is an important element in several alchemical preparations. Firnafel “Sixhand” of Losetrel is known to use it in his special preparations (see “Among The Shadows”).

However, catching skitterlings isn’t easy. They move quickly (90’ (30’)) and can readily hide in the narrowest rock crevices. Their precious tails are ruined by over-aggressive actions on the part of hunters, of course. And they can walk on water. Their bones are lightly calcified and hollow, and they are very light anyway despite their apparent size. Their webbed feet are very large, and they move faster on the surface of water than they do on land (Move 150’ (50’) on water). They exploit the surface tension of water to “skitter along,” as the elves put it. Watching a skitterling skitter along the water of a placid river is a delight to a shadow elf. Their sinuous movements and rapid speed combine grace and efficiency with a very unusual ability.

Slug, Giant

The giant slugs tamed and bred by the shadow elves are distantly related to the wild monsters documented in the *Master DM's Book* (page 38). They are notably smaller, being usually 10-15 feet in length. They have 1-8 HD, depending on age, move at 20 feet per round, and they do not have any acid attack. If attacked, they have a bite attack, which is weak and ineffectual (Dmg 1d4). They do resist weapon damage as detailed for the Giant Slug in the *Master DM's Book*.

Giant slugs are used both as beasts of burden and for food. Their "milking" is an extraordinary symbiosis between the elves and these gentle beasts. The shadow elves feed the slugs with fungal and other vegetable food. The slugs exude a rich yellow-brown fluid when they are softly caressed with an instrument which resembles a modern-day paint roller. This fluid is highly nutritious and even tasty when processed in the making of trania. It is obviously not true milk, but the shadow elves always refer to it as such. This "milk" is quite different from the slime exuded by the slugs if they travel significant distances, although general fluid balance does link the two. A much-travelled slug will not have sufficient body fluid left to provide milk immediately after its journey.

Steam Bats

Steam bats are cave-dwelling, blind creatures which have adapted to hot, moist conditions. They are almost entirely hairless, and have shrunken, vestigial eyes. Their ears are bigger even than those of normal bats. They can be treated as normal bats (with 1 hp each) which do not have direct combat abilities but which can cause confusion (see *Basic DM's Rulebook*, page 25).

Other Fauna

It is easy for the DM to vary other fauna which are found in the world of shadow elves to reflect their existence far underground. These creatures will be different from their surface-dwelling relatives in certain ways. Blindness and an increasing

reliance on other senses will be a common change. Thus, rock rats and cave snakes will use sense of smell (rats) and thermal sensing (snakes) to the almost complete exclusion of vision. An important point in this context is that a spell such as *light* (or *continual light*) will usually be ineffective, if used to blind such creatures. Shadow elves do not use these spells, although they do use the reversed form of the light spell, but surface dwellers venturing into their realm might make this mistake.

Albinism is also a common trait in such subterranean dwellers. Don't overdo this in case it makes the creatures too easy for PCs to detect!

Keep in mind that the ecology of the Mystaran underdark is not the same as that for either the FORGOTTEN REALMS setting or the GREYHAWK setting. Strive to make your version of the underdark unique.

Skinwings

Skinwings play a vital role in the defence of the shadow elf cities, and the sight of their large forms gliding smoothly and silently above the City of the Stars is dramatic and impressive. Skinwings are reptilian, distantly related to pterodactyls, but more bird-like in appearance (though they do not have feathers). Their skins are hard and leathery, varying from light brown to a dark teak.

Shadow elves take great care to rub down their skinwings with an oily substance prepared from fungal secretions to keep their skins from cracking and to maintain full suppleness. Feeding them is slightly trickier. Skinwings will eat fungi if these are correctly prepared, but they also like and need meat in their diet. Rock rats and snakes are greedily gobbled up, but skinwings will not usually eat fish or the giant frogs and toads sometimes to be found in the underground rivers. Their favourite meals are small, juicy little kobolds, halflings, and similar humanoids. Joints of orc, hobgoblin and their brethren are also eagerly fallen upon by these sharp-beaked creatures.

Skinwings may still be found in the surface world, in Red Orcland, but those

found in the great caverns of the shadow elves have developed considerably different abilities, notably extreme and accurate infravision. Their abilities and statistics are given below:

Armour Class: 4
 Hit Dice: 1-10
 Move: see below
 Attacks: 1 bite
 Damage: see below
 No. Appearing: n/a
 Save as: see below
 Morale: see below
 Treasure Type: n/a
 Alignment: Neutral
 Intelligence: 3-6
 XP Value: as HD

Young skinwings are treated as having 1 HD. At age 3 or 4, they have 4 HD and have grown to a size where they can be flown. They gain additional hit dice as they grow to maximum size over some 20 further years, to 9 HD. A tiny few develop unusual size and strength and have 10 HD. As they grow, their abilities change as follows:

Movement Rate:

HD	Move	Flying
MF		
1-3	60' (20')	150' (50') 3
4-6	90' (30')	180' (60') 3
7-9	90' (30')	150' (60') 1
10	120' (40')	120' (40') 1

Other Statistics:

HD	Damage	Infravision	Encumbrance
1-3	1d4		60'
n/a			
4-6	1d8		90'
	1,200		
7-9	1d10		120'
	1,400		
10		2d8	120'
	1,750		

Skinwings save as a fighter with half their hit dice, rounding up. Their "natural" (pre-training) morale is 8; after training, this becomes 10. If being flown by a rider,

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their morale is 11. A 10 HD skinwing being flown by its personal rider has morale of 12 and need never check it as long as its rider survives. Note that the Encumbrance value given above is one above which the skinwing simply will not fly. Skinwings will not accept greater loads than those shown (in cn units) as a basic safety reflex.

SKINWINGS IN THE ARMY —

Skinwings are usually flown with harnesses keeping the shadow elf rider firmly on the beast's back. Sometimes a small saddle with a mounted swivelling crossbow is used.

Skinwings do become partial to individual riders if the same shadow elf (or anyone else) rides them regularly and to the exclusion of other riders. The older the skinwing gets, the more ingrained this habit becomes; the massive skinwings ridden by King Telemon and General Garafaele, for example, refuse to accept any other. Should either of these riders be slain, his skinwing would pine to death for its master within a few weeks. A young skinwing trained to accept a rider, though, could be cajoled along with some tasty titbits and a little conversational magic, although there's not a great deal one can say to a creature with intelligence this low. No rules are needed for skinwing readiness to accept a new rider. If a PC is trying to get a skinwing to accept him, the DM should arrange matters so that he will have to work hard to persuade the ornery critter to let him fly on its back!

THE BONELESS —

Armour Class: 0
Hit Dice: 10**
Move: 60' (20')
Attacks: 1 bite + special
Damage: 1d10/4d6 or 6d6
No. Appearing: 1
Save as: Fighter: 10
Morale: 10
Treasure Type: Nil
Alignment: Chaotic
Intelligence: 7
XP Value: 2,500

The Boneless is a horrific monster, far more dangerous than its appearance might suggest (from a distance). The Boneless looks like nothing more than a sickly yellow-cream maggot of vast size, up to 15 feet long. Its movement is a peristaltic writhing in the acidic slime it so freely secretes. At the front end is a small mouth ringed with wickedly sharp teeth and, while the creature has no visual sense, it has two dark patches where eyes should be, which it uses for thermal sensing.

It attacks by biting, and can also spew out a thick glob of very corrosive acid slime once per turn. This glob has a 10-foot radius and a range of 60 feet, with all in the area of effect taking 4d6 damage (a saving throw vs. Dragon Breath halves this damage). Also, any creature or character in melee with the Boneless may be affected by acid. Any successful melee hit by a character means that the character must make a saving throw vs. Wands or be splattered by acid on the skin of the Boneless, suffering 1d8 points of damage.

The Boneless likewise has several defences. It is immune to all magical cold-based attacks (*wall of ice*, *ice storm*, etc.). Hits from edged weapons will only inflict half damage on the Boneless due to its thick and slippery skin. Worst of all, the Boneless radiates magical *fear*. Anyone approaching within 20 feet of the monster must make a saving throw vs. Spells or be forced to run and flee from the monster at maximum rate for 1d6 rounds. Such an affected character can return to try again, but must make a new saving throw. However, once a successful saving throw has been made, the character will not need to make another for the duration of the combat.

Finally, the Boneless has a final attack upon its death. When slain (unless by a special attack such as a *Disintegrate* spell), the horror's head arches back, the monster writhes frantically and utters a screaming gurgle, then its body literally explodes. Its disgusting internal organs and acidic slime explode in a 20-foot radius, inflicting 6d6 points of acid damage on all in the area of effect. A saving throw vs. Dragon Breath will halve this damage.

At the DM's option, magical items carried by PCs should be vulnerable to this acid. Saving throws vs. Dragon Breath can be made for such items with a +1 bonus per +1 of enchantment.

DARKSNAP —

Armour Class: 6
Hit Dice: 1-4
Move: 10' (3')
Attacks: 1 snap
Damage: 1d6
No. Appearing: 1d8
Save as: Fighter: 1
Morale: 7
Treasure Type: Nil
Alignment: Neutral
Intelligence: 3
XP Value: as HD

The Darksnap is a fungus which takes its form and colour from its background. It can eke out an existence on rock (most often by a water source) or by parasitizing other fungi. It is capable of killing small reptiles and rats with its snap and will slowly absorb the nutrients from their decomposing bodies.

Darksnaps will snap at anything within range, and have learned to stay still and snap suddenly, so they surprise on a roll of 1-4 on 1d6 unless the victim has some special defence against such surprise. The astonishingly hard, calcified ribbings of the Darksnap can inflict an unpleasant bite, and on a natural 20 a hand has been so badly damaged that the character suffers a -1 penalty to all hit and damage rolls, and an additional -2 penalty to hit rolls with any two-handed weapon (which includes all forms of bows!).

There are rumours of huge darksnaps deep within the Forest of Spiders, which are so enormous that they can sever limbs and even swallow smaller humanoids such as kobolds, halflings, and dwarves whole. No one has ever been able to provide direct evidence that such monster fungi exist.

AMONG the SHADOWS

Many of the following nonplayer characters (NPCs) have been mentioned in the preceding text; others appear in later sections of this booklet. They are arranged here in three groups. First is King Telemon and major personalities within the circles of power among the shadow elves. Senior shamans are included here. Second, two Immortals of central importance to the story of the shadow elves. Finally, some allegedly lesser lights are considered—including the daredevil Sixhand of Losetrel, the famous spider hunter, and other colourful characters.

Only the most important magical items are given. Others may be added, but don't give characters of relatively low level bags full of magical items.

The Royal Court

Garafaele Galeifel

Radiant General of the City of the Stars, "The Hammer of Rafiel," 19th level elf-lord.

"He shall be the Hammer of Rafiel, with sleeves of flesh, and he shall not be distracted from his purpose."

—*Concordance of the Way of Rafiel.*

History: Garafaele of the house of Galeifel was an exceptionally promising warrior from his earliest days. Blessed with stature and exceptional strength, his keen mind showed a ready aptitude for military tactics, and he was readily able to inspire devotion and self-sacrifice above the norm in the shadow elves he commanded. In 752 AC, his stand with but three junior compatriots against the Blue Ogres—all 35 of them—marked him out as a shadow elf with a special destiny. Rapid promotions culminated in his elevation to Supreme Commander of the army, Radiant General (first-placed, as with the Radiant Princess and Radiant Shaman) in 924 AC. King Telemon has never regretted his action in promoting this supremely talented elf.

Personality: Garafaele is utterly dedicated to military life and knows little else. He is honourable, unbending, loyal, and brave. He is also incredibly boring if one is not fascinated by military matters.

Appearance: Garafaele is nearly as tall

as his king at 5 feet 7 inches, and he is muscular and lithe for his 554 years of age. He is fairly ostentatious in wearing only white clothing. He keeps his hair short-cropped. His outstanding physical feature is his "sleeves of flesh." His arms were both severed at the elbow by an enemy bearing a sword with the *slicing* power, but were regenerated with the loan of a *ring of regeneration*—leaving livid scars around the elbow joint which run right around his arms. Although these areas of scar tissue are painless and do not interfere with Garafaele's suppleness or movement, they have not been removed by magic and many whisper that they are indeed the "sleeves of flesh" referred to in the sacred inspirational text of Rafiel.

DMing Notes: Garafaele is distantly related to Gilfronden of Alfheim. This fact, and his unswerving loyalty to the throne of Telemon, have made him eager to work with the King to conspire in the royal intrigues. The next chapter gives additional details.

Combat Notes: E10; AC -8; hp 90; MV 90' (30'); #AT 3; D 8-15; Save E10 (automatic half damage from breath weapon); ML 12; AL L; S 18, I 13, W 10, D 15, Co 18, Ch 13 (treat as Ch 16 with respect to active members of the shadow elf army).

Abilities & Skills: Alertness (D), Bravery (W), Danger Sense (W), Leadership +1 (Ch +1), Rapid Fire (D), Signalling (I), Skinwing Flying (D), Tactics +2 (I +2).

Languages: Shadow Elf, Alignment (Lawful).

Spells Usually Carried: Garafaele will always carry aggressive spells, and will eschew informational and detecting spells. Spells such as *magic missile* will always be favoured. Importantly, Kanafasti has just taught Garafaele the *cloudkill* spell, which has awed the mighty fighter. This has been done by Kanafasti to bring Garafaele still closer into the "conspiratorial circle" of the King (see next chapter), and it has had the desired effect.

Notes: Garafaele always wears his *chain mail* +5, likewise always carries his *shield* +4 and *sword* +4, and wears his *ring* +2. Both the sword and shield have

secondary powers of no little importance.

The sword, *Strongmind*, confers upon its wielder complete immunity to all magical illusions and also to *charm*, *hold*, *sleep*, *feblemind*, and *magic jar* spells. It is a family heirloom, passed from eldest son to eldest son, but its special spell-resisting powers are only gradually revealed. It confers resistances if the shadow elf wielder is of sufficient level to cast the spell which the sword protects against. For example, *feblemind* and *magic jar* are 5th-level spells: the sword's ability to confer immunity to these spells only operates if its wielder is at least 9th level, the minimum experience needed to cast these spells.

The shield was taken by Garafaele from a huge troll he slew (and the troll surely took it from some more illustrious opponent). The shield can cast *fly* upon its owner at will. Moreover, any melee hit which misses Garafaele has a 10% chance of striking this shield; any enemy striking the shield will be drained of a life energy level or 1 hit die, as appropriate (no saving throw!).

Lastly, Garafaele has a *rod of victory*, rightly regarded as his most precious possession.

Kanafasti

Royal Wizard, 18th-level elf-wizard.

History: Kanafasti was born into Clan Felestyr, but married while young—and well. The cunning young student of magic found himself an excellent match with a plain, but rich, single daughter of a well-to-do Celebryl family. He used the family wealth to advance his magical studies, but his in-laws have been repaid many times over by the benefits of his having the ear of the King himself.

Kanafasti's name has a detailed meaning: "Kana" has a variety of meanings depending on the nature of words with which it is conjoined, since it means potentiality, openness, possibility, etc. *Kana-fasti* means "all potentials are for good (*fasti*)," which is taken to mean someone with the ability to succeed at whatever he truly aspires to do. Kanafasti was a well-named child.

Personality: Kanafasti is very careful,

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wise and sly. He says very little and listens carefully. If forced to express an opinion, he always strives to look at both sides of any question and avoid committing himself. With the very few people he trusts, though, he is relaxed, cultured, with a quick turn of wit and a wickedly black sense of humour on occasion. Kanafasti loves children, and used to tell bedtime stories to Telemon's children. He and Tanadaleyo have always been close.

Appearance: Kanafasti is now 786 years old, his white hair receding at the temples and his grey eyes slightly watery with age. He is small at 4 feet 8 inches, but he still stands upright and spry, and the speed of his movements can be surprising. He wears simple white robes, but he is rarely seen for the simple reason that he habitually stays *invisible*.

DMing Notes: Kanafasti is a key player in the political dramas of the court of the King. He knows pretty much everything there is to know about everyone who matters. He is the closest confidant of the King and is actively encouraging his designs on Alfheim. He is also good friends with Xatapechtlí, the spymaster. See the next chapter for more details.

Combat Notes: E10; AC 0; hp 39; MV 90' (30'); #AT 1; D 3-8; Save E10 (automatic 1/2 damage from any breath weapon); ML 10; AL N; S 9, I 18, W 16, D 13, Co 9 Ch 9.

Abilities and Skills: Alchemy (I), Alternate Magics +1 (I +1), Detect Deception (W), Knowledge—Glantri Society and Politics +1 (I +1), Knowledge—Alfheim Society and Politics +1 (I +1) Read/Write Shadow Elf (I), Storytelling (Ch), Teaching (W).

Languages: Glantrian, Elf, Shadow Elf, Alignment (Neutral).

Spells Usually Carried: This is an important area. Kanafasti has access to spells which few other shadow elves have, because of his access to agents in Glantri. He makes sure that other wizards among the shadow elves do not know of his possession of such spells, although he might be able to explain them away as being accrued from his own research. He is an 18th-level elf-wizard, after all. He has the

spells *cloudkill*, *disintegrate*, *delayed blast fireball*, and *meteor swarm* in his books now. The similarity of some of these to certain shamanic spell effects has not escaped the old wizard, who realizes that Rafiel's way to spell mastery can perhaps be had in other ways.

Notes: For 18 hours a day (all his waking hours), Kanafasti is protected by a *mind barrier* spell. As Royal Wizard, he can lay his hands on all manner of magical items (save artifacts) quickly. Usually he wears a *cloak of protection* +3 and a *ring of protection* +5, carries a *staff of fire*, and has a *wand of fear* up his sleeve (literally). He carries scrolls of spells such as *fly* and *dimension door* to allow him to escape if he needs to, and likewise scrolls of spells such as *ESP*, *clairvoyance* and *wizard eye* to allow him to do some magical snooping should the need for this arise. He carries at least two *scrolls of spell catching* (one for spells up to 6th level, one for spells up to 8th level) at all times. Kanafasti has not gotten to be Royal Wizard without being prepared for almost all contingencies!

Porphyriel

Radiant Shaman of the Temple of Rafiel, 21st-level elf-wizard, 21st-level elf-shaman.

History: Porphyriel has, of course, spent all her life in the Temple of Rafiel in the City of the Stars. Born into the Alafanel artisan family, she has remembered her family roots—unusually—and her family is intensely proud of her achievement. Porphyriel has always demonstrated exceptional wisdom in the service of Rafiel, if not always the most obviously deferential forms of reverence. Her election to the position of Radiant Shaman was something of a surprise even to the White Shamans who elected her—a couple of them swear that they were guided by Rafiel without conscious intent in their voting.

Personality: Porphyriel is a paradoxical personality. She is old, but has the eagerness and vigour of youth. She is calm and patient, but hungry for knowledge and impatient for a gate to Immortality. She can seem naive and innocent, even other-worldly, but she can drop a phrase

which shows that she is highly observant and appraises other people very accurately and quickly. Porphyriel is a very wise and smart shadow elf, and also graceful and charming. Her junior shamans love her greatly.

Appearance: Porphyriel is now 727 years old, but has an ageless face, looking both old and young. She has a very large facial Mark of the Shaman. Her long white hair is brushed back, and her beautiful blue eyes are slightly slanted. She wears a white robe and head-dress as Radiant Shaman, but she also wears a very large soul crystal and some finery upon her simple robes. She is beautiful as well as having dignity and authority, and at 5 feet 3 inches she is considerably above the average height for a female shadow elf.

DMing Notes: Further detail on Porphyriel's work within her temple was presented earlier. Her relation to Telemon's intrigues is reiterated in the following chapter.

PC shamans should be allowed a fleeting glimpse of Porphyriel at an early stage of their careers. She is kindly to the lowest acolytes, and is held in true awe by them. A personal word from her is prized by an acolyte for years. It would certainly be enough to make any acolyte totally dedicated to any quest or adventure Porphyriel wished her to undertake.

Combat Notes: E10; AC 5 (1); hp 57; MV 120' (40'); #AT 1; D 4-9 + special; Save E 10; ML 11; AL L; S 9, I 13, W 18, D 13, Co 13, Ch 17.

Abilities and Skills: Ancient History +2 (I +2), Codes of Law and Justice +1 (W +1), Cooking (W), Gain Trust (Ch), Knowledge—Edible Fungi (I), Leadership (Ch), Natural Healing (W), Persuade (Ch), Read/Write Shadow Elf (I), Teaching (W).

Languages: Shadow Elf, Alignment (Lawful).

Notes: Porphyriel has all the magical resources of the temple of Rafiel to call upon, so the DM may readily add to the list of magical items given for her here. For combat, she carries a *mace* +3 which will slay any orc, troll, goblin, hobgoblin or gnoll on any hit (saving throw vs. Death

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Magic at -4 negates this effect).

For defence she has a *ring of protection* +3 and a magical bracelet which takes 1 round to activate: It generates a field of force for 1 turn which acts as a *shield* +3 with the power of curing wounds (cures 50% of all physical damage inflicted on Porphyriel). The “shield” can be activated at will. This unique magical item was especially crafted for Porphyriel by Kanafasti, who wanted to make sure he was on the right side of the Radiant Shaman. Porphyriel has guessed this much, but she is still grateful, since the bracelet is a very potent defence and she knows the wizard must have put much work into its creation. Porphyriel also wears a *ring of regeneration* and carries staves of *dispelling* and *healing*. Porphyriel has a soul crystal of “seventh level” with 38 souls. She also has a personal “sixth level” soul crystal with 25 souls.

Tanadaleyo

Radiant Princess of the Shadow Elves, 11th-level elf-lord

History: Tanadaleyo is the eldest child and only daughter of Telemon and his wife Caerefel. Strong-willed and fiery of

temper, Tanadaleyo has distinguished herself in military service and especially as a skinwing rider.

Personality: Tanadaleyo is rough, tough, and dangerous to know. Most unlike the shadow elf norm, she is quite boisterous and talkative, in addition to being strong and somewhat temperamental. She can, with some effort, make herself graceful and decorative for important ceremonies and public engagements, though.

Appearance: Tanadaleyo is 5 feet 2 inches tall, wiry and strong at 110 lbs., and has long white hair tied back with a headband, and piercing grey eyes. She dresses as informally and casually as she can get away with at any given time.

DMing Notes: At 321 years of age, Tanadaleyo is a young shadow elf of vigorous health. Like her father, she is ambitious, and is fully aware of his plots and intrigues. This is detailed in the following chapter. Her title of “Radiant” reflects the fact that the first-born of the King is always given this title, just as the “first” (highest-level) shaman is the Radiant Shaman.

The DM should note that there are whisperings about Tanadaleyo not hav-

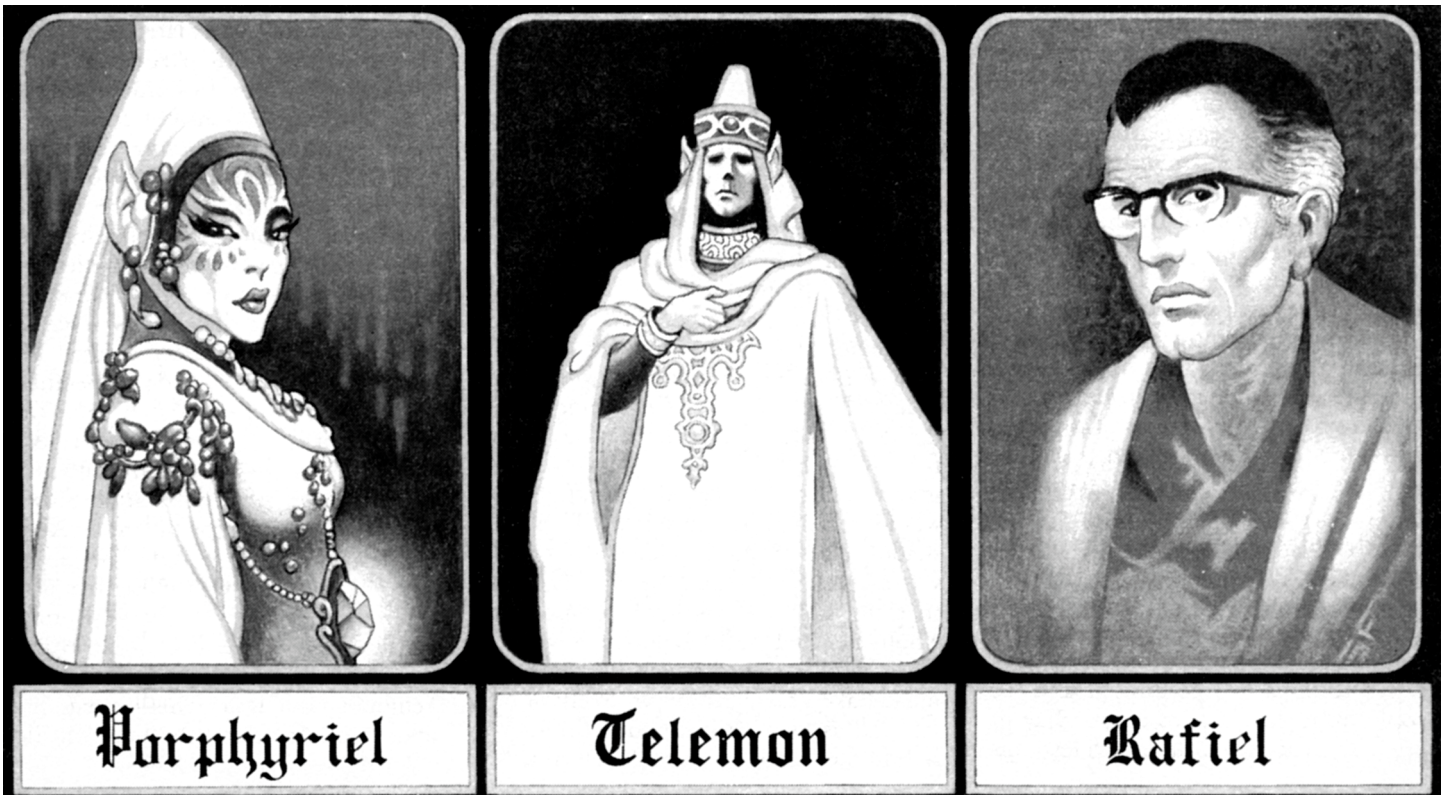
ing married yet. At her age, her parents should certainly have arranged a marriage by now. In fact, they wouldn’t dare—and Telemon doesn’t want to lose his best tactical adviser to an undeserving husband! When Tanadaleyo wishes to marry, she will probably just drag her intended off by his hair, as it were.

Combat Notes: E10; AC -4; hp 52; MV 90’ (30’); #AT 2 (Attack Rank D); D 6-15 + special (see below); Save E10; ML 11; AL N; S 15 (see below), I 17, W 12, D 18, Co 15, Ch 14.

Abilities and Skills: Blind Shooting (D), Danger Sense (W), Hide in Shadows (D), Know Terrain (I), Rapid Fire (D), Signalling (I), Skinwing Riding +2 (D +2), Tactics (I).

Languages: Shadow Elf, Alignment (Neutral).

Notes: Like her father, Tanadaleyo will carry many magical items in emergencies. Typically, she uses *chain mail* +3, a *ring* +1, and a *displacer cloak* for protection (her AC of -4 includes the melee penalty opponents have for hitting her). She wears a pair of gloves which blend to her skin so that they cannot be seen unless magical detection is used: these are a pair



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of *gauntlets of ogre power* custom-made for her by Kanafasti. She has two magical weapons of importance: a *two-handed sword* +2 which has the magical power of *slicing*, and a *crossbow* +3. Tanadaleyo is a stern, brave, dangerous opponent.

King Telemon

King of the Shadow Elf Lands, 15th-level elf-lord.

History: Telemon is the eldest son of a proud warrior family of the Celebryl clan. He has been King for over four centuries now, and, before that he was a General of distinction (and exceptional youth).

Personality: Telemon is graceful and dignified. He radiates authority, partially on account of his unusual height. He is slow to speak, appearing to weigh his words carefully, and, when he wishes to reflect on a speaker's words, he has a characteristic gentle wave of the hand which tells the speaker to be quiet. Ignoring this subtle signal leads to a glare from the monarch which will silence anyone.

Appearance: Telemon stands 5 feet 8 inches and weighs 135 pounds, which makes him a veritable giant among shadow elves. He has white hair and blue eyes of a deeper hue than most. He wears white clothes with blue and grey trims, and is fastidious about his appearance. At 711 years of age, Telemon still looks like a shadow elf in his prime.

DMing Notes: Telemon is dissatisfied with the state of affairs in his lands. He covets the lands of the surface elves, and he is ambitious to free himself and his people from the shackles of the Way of Rafael. With his daughter Tanadaleyo, his mage Kanafasti, and the sinister Xatapechtlí (see next chapter), his plotting is developing well. The full story of this intrigue is presented in the next chapter.

Combat Notes: E10; AC -5; hp 67; MV 90' (30'); #AT 2 (Attack Rank H); D 6-13; Save E10; ML 11; AL N; S 17, I 18, W 12, D 13, Co 16, Ch 16.

Telemon has a personal skinwing, Gripper, stabled in the Royal Sector of the City of the Stars. This beast is named after its habit of grabbing prey and never letting go (in combat, a successful hit roll of 19+

means a target is grabbed and suffers 2d8 automatic damage each round thereafter). Gripper is a huge (25-foot wingspan) ebony beast with 71 hp.

The unique spell-casting ability of Telemon's magical sword, *Blackbolt*, detailed below, is also central to Telemon's combat prowess.

Abilities & Skills: Ancient History (I), Codes of Law and Justice (W), Knowledge—Alfheim Society and Politics (I), Leadership +1 (Ch +1), Read/Write Shadow Elf (I), Skinwing Flying (D), Tactics +1 (I +1).

Languages: Elf, Shadow Elf, Alignment (Neutral).

Notes: Telemon can lay hands on just about any non-artifact magical item he needs, with some obvious exceptions. These include items with wishes, anything which uses magical light effects (which would only blind him), and the like. For his typical AC of -5, he wears *chain mail* +3, and wears a *ring* +1 to add to the protection of his *shield* +3. He always wears a *ring of spell turning*.

Telemon does possess one very special item—*Blackbolt*, his magical *sword* +3. *Blackbolt* casts a form of *lightning bolt*, doing 12d6 damage, twice per day; this form of spell is usually unknown to the shadow elves. A standard lightning bolt would be unusable, since it would blind shadow elves seeing it. Hence the sword was magically modified by Kanafasti so that the bolt had its light component wholly negated—the bolt now is wholly black, and a victim struck by the bolt must make a saving throw vs. Spells or be affected as by a *darkness* spell (in addition to the damage suffered!). Of course, sparing use of this power by Telemon has only increased his reputation as a great king among his people.

The Immortals

Atzanteotl, Lord of Entropy

Lord of Entropy, Screaming Demon: HD 22, St 21, In 51, Wi 31, Dx 47, Co 34, Ch 76, AL C.

Mortal form: E9, S 15, I 18, W 15, D

17, Co 13, Ch 18.

If you have read GAZ10 *The Orcs of Thar*, you will think that you know about Atzanteotl. Alas, you have been taught the orcish version of the truth.

Atzanteotl was a hero among a splintered, tiny fragment of the ancestors of the shadow elves isolated from the bulk of their folk after the Rain of Fire. This splinter group first built Aengmor in the long-lost past. Then, this small group of elves was ousted by the Azcans, who took over the city. By this time, Atzanteotl had achieved Immortality in the Sphere of Entropy.

The main body of the shadow elves fell upon the Azcans rather later, in 1420 BC. They slew most of the Azcans and drove them from the area, building up the city of Aengmor around the central temple of Atzanteotl and completing the city in 1352 BC. Here their numbers slowly grew and they were drawn into the barbaric worship of Atzanteotl, sacrificing both humanoids and even some of their own number to the evil entropic Immortal.

Fortunately for the shadow elves, Atzanteotl was not entirely pleased with them. They were a little reluctant to douse the altar of his temple with fresh blood as often as he would have liked. This may have been in part dependent on their relatively slow population growth. Not enough worshipers came Atzanteotl's way quickly enough. For this reason, Atzanteotl was determined to acquire rather more fecund and numerous followers. In 1290 BC, the evil one caused a volcano to erupt, surrounding Aengmor with lava. This caused many elves to be slain, and the others to flee, without destroying the whole city (and in particular without destroying his temple).

Within a century, humanoids had rediscovered Aengmor and renamed it Oenkmar. Their Quest for the Blue Knife being resolved in this place, they stayed and settled and treated the temple as a sacred site. Atzanteotl had finally gained worshipers as evil, depraved, and blood-lusting as he is himself.

Today, Atzanteotl's followers are all humanoids. He has no shadow elf followers

left outside the Lands of the Red Sun. The story that he reincarnates orcish followers into shadow elves is simply a false rumour.

Atzanteotl is a wicked, blood-thirsty entity, lacking any sense of honour, dignity, or decency. He will destroy whoever gets in his way.

Atzanteotl is engaged in a power struggle with Karaash, the Immortal revered by so many humanoids, for the hearts and minds of those debased brutes. Shamans of Karaash spread the story that Atzanteotl is dedicated to furtherance of the shadow elves and wishes to use them as agents to destroy all surface life. Atzanteotl's own shamans, led by Xilochtli of Oenkmarr (see GAZ10 *The Orcs of Thar*) wholly refute this and seek out the heretics who spread this story.

Atzanteotl still has a passing interest in the main body of shadow elves, now residing in the City of the Stars and surrounding cities. His attitude is ambivalent and (as usual) half-mad. Weirdly, Atzanteotl is satisfied if he thinks that they still follow evil practices even though he no longer seeks their devotions for himself. He knows that they are devoted to Rafael and, because he believes Rafael to be evil and entropic like himself, he is satisfied with this state of affairs.

In the rare event that Atzanteotl takes mortal form, he appears as an elven hero or as a dark orcish figure. In demonic shape, he appears as a black-feathered serpent with an elven face.

Rafiel

Empyrean of the Sphere of Energy: HD 25, S 32, I 75, W 44, D 46, Co 54, Ch 70, AL L.

Mortal form: MU35, S 11, I 18, W 10, D 13, Co 13, Ch 15.

Rafiel was once, millennia ago, a nuclear physicist in Blackmoor. Obsessed with supersymmetry theories, he was half-immersed in a different world than that of his deprecating colleagues in that long-lost civilization. It seemed to the esteemed scientist at times that his thought-experiments had entered into an almost magical realm, which may have had something to do with his surviving the Great

Rain of Fire.

Who can say now how Rafael survived? Certainly not Rafael himself. Suddenly cast adrift in a world where his thought experiments were no longer schematic daydreams but the only surviving reality, the human scientist floundered for a purpose to his existence. It may be that the lost and suffering shadow elves needed Rafael as greatly as the surviving human consciousness needed them. As Rafael gave the shadow elves spiritual purpose and a reason for living in the Prime Material, so their love and devotion gave Rafael a focus for his flickering consciousness.

Rafiel slowly grew to understand what he had become: an Immortal, a spiritual and noncorporeal entity, part of the Sphere of Energy. As he struggled to this awareness, the love and devotion of the shadow elves supported him. As Rafael's confused consciousness had striven for help, and cast out desperate signals in the form of the Refuge of Stone and other (still lost) messages, the shadow elves alone had responded to him. They alone had brought him succour and love. This is one of the reasons why Rafael does not tell them the full truth of what he is doing now. His stream-of-consciousness verses in the Refuge of Stone told them a parable they could understand, when they attained shamanic ability. Telling them the truth must be confined to the very wisest, and even then they must be disillusioned slowly. Rafael is a scientist—and an elitist. But we are getting a little ahead of the story.

As Rafael strove to understand the Immortal world in which he found himself and the Sphere of which he had become part, he struggled to protect his weak and oppressed followers. Instinctively, his nascent consciousness was drawn to the crystals in which nuclear energy survived in usable form. By chance, the shadow elves had been driven in that direction. By the growing power of his coalescing mind, Rafael magically altered the crystals into a form which the shadow elves could use. Even the ways of Immortals depend upon chance, and the purposes of the deepest magics and fates are inscrutable. The Ref-

uge of Stone contained a symbolic truth, laid down in a form of automatic writing, which would serve both Rafael and his faithful elves well for centuries to come.

Rafiel's injunctions to the shadow elves revolve around one purpose: to work in the Chamber of Spheres to build a nuclear reactor. This is almost identical to the Nucleus of the Spheres in Glantri, and it offers immense potential for the growth of the Sphere of Energy. Since the work of the shamans is unknown to others—and in particular, no other Immortals know of this work—Rafiel's project could be the most important in the whole of the Known World. Rafael is not just channelling his shamans to do this work for the benefit of the Sphere of Energy. Even after aeons, Rafael is deeply fearful of the intense shock done to his consciousness by the Rain of Fire. Successful building of the artifact in the City of the Stars is a form of reassurance that his consciousness is stable, secure, and reliable. Rafael has obsessive-compulsive tendencies; he was a nuclear physicist in Blackmoor, after all.

Rafiel's injunctions to the shadow elves, as coded in the Refuge of Stone, are also not as punitive as they appear. Two examples show this clearly.

First, the terrible practice of abandoning babies who are “not whole” in tunnels and passages far from the cities of the shadow elves. Is this not a wicked and cruel practice? Well, the mothers do suffer, albeit for a short time: they do accept the way of Rafael. “I, Rafael, will guide their path.” And so Rafael does. These babies are usually thought to be eaten by ravening beasts or monsters, or gnawed by lizards or rats, or to suffer some similar fate. But this is not so.

There are two factors which help to explain their most likely fate. First, children are primarily facially deformed. That is, they do not look like shadow elves: they do not have pale faces, very large ears, or white hair. They are not recognizable as shadow elf babies, and often seem repulsive even to their mothers (minimizing the pain of abandoning them). It also means that they are more easily mistaken for orcs, kobolds, or other such creatures,

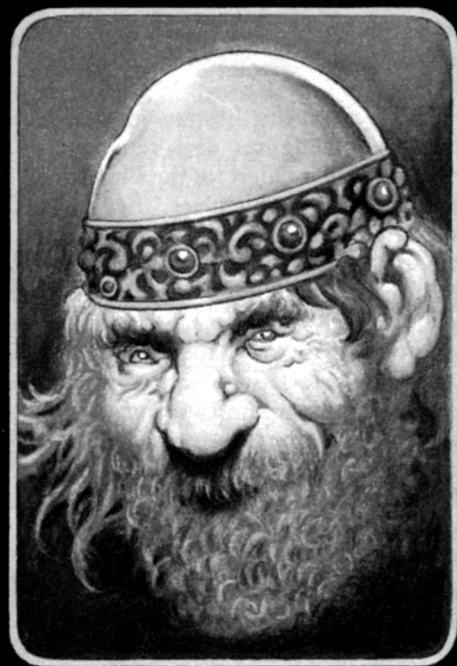
Among the Shadows



Atzanteotl



Falanen



Zindar

because of their deformities, which helps a lot with their future adoptions. Their typically truncated lifespans also help with their acceptance into humanoid societies.

Second, the supplementary holy texts of Rafiel (such as the *Concordance of the Way of Rafiel*) tells the shamans to abandon the babies in tunnels far away from their homes (i.e., the cities of the shadow elves). This results in the babies being left in tunnels mostly above the levels of the shadow elves—where they are usually found by orcs, goblins and their ilk.

Rafiel knows that a genetic burden must be borne by the shadow elves, and that the magical alterations on the “soul crystals” affect future generations (i.e., babies). He also knows that such genetic burdens must be extirpated or the shadow elf race will be greatly weakened, placing his precious project (and the shadow elves themselves) in real peril. Yet Rafiel would not see these babies lost or slain. In some way, he guides them into the arms of— orcs and goblins? Indeed. This is part of a dual-strand strategy of Rafiel.

For one thing, Rafiel wishes to keep Atzanteotl at bay. He is aware of the vile

Immortal’s interest in the shadow elves. Rafiel plots to keep Atzanteotl away by appearing to be malefic himself, as his injunction to abandon babies appears to be. Rafiel hopes that Atzanteotl will leave the shadow elves alone if he considers they are following evil paths anyway. Also, Rafiel hopes to smuggle his children—the shadow elf babies—into Atzanteotl’s realm, that of the orcs and their kin, by guiding orcs to them. When Atzanteotl’s gaze is directed towards the shadow elves, so is it directed away from his own bestial followers. Rafiel is smuggling his weakest children under Atzanteotl’s nose. And it works.

Second, Rafiel uses an analogue of this strategy with his Wanderers. These old elves rarely die the tragic and lonely deaths the reader may have imagined they do. Again, their path subverts Atzanteotl’s evil designs. The shadow elves know better: “Turn these to me, and I, Rafiel, will guide them.” Details on the Wanderers are given in the “Shadow Elves In Other Lands” chapter.

Rafiel appears, in many ways, to be a sinister Immortal, even cruel and malefic. This is exactly what he hopes most beings,

apart from his shadow elves, will think, especially Atzanteotl. Rafiel has his own purposes, which include the very genuine protection of his people.

Other NPCs

Falanen

Seer and Sage, 14th-level elf-wizard

History: Falanen showed an aptitude for book-learning early in life. His father, a military elf through and through, despaired of this until Falanen’s mother came up with an excellent compromise: get the young shadow elf interested in military writings and history. Falanen has been head of the small military history archive in the military headquarters ever since. However, Falanen has also wandered very widely in his long years, and gained much knowledge in the process. Falanen has slept beneath the skies of Alfheim, he has talked with orcs around a camp fire in the Broken Lands, and Falanen’s young eyes even saw the wonders of the Land of the Red Sun. His rheumy and fading eyes hope to see them again, for the old elf is now 793 years old and soon to take the path of the Wanderer.

Personality: Falanen is quiet and dignified. He speaks little, and softly, but he has a marvellously melodic voice and age has given him a greater charisma and grace. Falanen is ready to become a Wanderer—he is almost eager for the day—and he is an old elf completely at peace with himself.

Appearance: Falanen is somewhat careless about his appearance because he is partly blind (this affects his “normal” vision and infravision). Thus, his simple white robes are often a little grubby or dishevelled. Falanen himself is obviously old, with a wrinkled and aged skin. What is left of his hair seems almost translucent. Because his visual deficit affects central, but not peripheral, vision Falanen always seems to be looking out of the corner of his eye at things—which, actually, he usually is.

DMing Notes: Falanen is often called to recite famous stories from the history of the shadow elf struggles to Telemon (and to his children when they were younger). Telemon learned much from Falanen’s advice when younger, and the King has no doubt that his own skills owe much to Falanen’s guidance. Telemon would dearly love to include Falanen in his schemes, for he is aware that Falanen knows much about other cultures. But he respects Falanen’s obvious readiness to go the Wanderer’s way and does not wish to disturb Falanen’s placidity.

Falanen, however, is aware that the King is plotting and scheming and he has guessed what the ultimate goal is. He helps indirectly by dropping a few comments about surface life now and again, usually selected to be helpful to the King. Kanafasti has guessed that Falanen suspects something, although he doesn’t know how much the old sage knows.

Falanen is the major repository of knowledge and guidance about other lands, especially the fabled Land of the Red Sun. Thus involving him is one good way of leading shadow elf PCs to these other lands and cultures.

Combat Notes: E10; AC 8; hp 35; MV 90’ (30’) due to age; #AT 1; D 1-6; Save E10; ML 9; AL L; S 8, I 17, W 18, D 7,

Co 9, Ch 14.

Abilities and Skills: Ancient History (I), Detect Deception (W), Knowledge—Alfheim Society and Customs (I), Knowledge—Broken Lands Societies and Customs (I), Knowledge—Hollow World History and Societies (I), Knowledge—Military History +1 (of the shadow elves) (I +1), Nature Lore (I), Read/Write Shadow Elf (I).

Languages: Falanen’s knowledge skills also give him linguistic abilities above the norm. He can speak Elf, Shadow Elf, and Alignment (Lawful) perfectly, and Orc, Ogre, Kobold, Goblin, Hobgoblin, and Gnoll in patois form (being able to express basic concepts only).

Notes: Falanen wears a *ring* +2 for protection, and will defend himself with a *staff* +1 if he must. However, since this staff is a *Staff of Commanding* (very few people know this!), Falanen usually avoids combat (which he hates) by using the mental influence and control powers of the staff. Falanen also carries a *medal-lion of ESP* under his robes, and a *ring of remedies*.

Falanen’s restricted vision affects his abilities. His spells are somewhat mistargeted, so the centre of effect of any area spell he uses is 0-25% misplaced (1d6 x5%, treat a roll of 6 as zero) in a random direction. For this reason, he is careful not to cast spells at the limit of their effective range in case he blows the spellcasting altogether. Individually targeted spells (e.g., *darkness* cast at an opponent’s eyes to blind it) are saved against at +2. Falanen has a -2 penalty to hit rolls in melee combat, and he has long abandoned missile weapons altogether. If he has to use one for some reason, he has a -4 penalty to hit rolls with such a weapon.

FIRNAFEL OF LOSETREL,

“Sixhand”

Spider-hunter extraordinaire, 7th-level elf

History: Firnafel’s family is noted for the excellence of its spider silks, but working with and selling such wares did not excite Firnafel’s imagination much. Hunting them was a much better idea, and Firnafel

has become very adept at it. His nickname comes from a strange birthmark in the palm of his hand which is shaped just like an extra digit pointing down to the wrist.

Personality: Firnafel is still a devil-may-care character, but this is more for show than it used to be. Firnafel’s much younger brother Malshandir now works with Firnafel, since he has useful complementary skills and Firnafel’s protectiveness about the younger elf makes him more thoughtful and careful. Also, Firnafel’s family has begun to talk of a certain rather pretty young woman of Clan Celebryl and Firnafel is not averse to this match. It would be a shame to spoil it by getting killed by spider venom now.

Appearance: Firnafel is a sliver below 5 feet in height, and he is very slim and dextrous, with feline speed and grace in his motions. His sleek, glossy hair is cut to a fairly short length and his small eyes are always darting about. Firnafel seems always to be smiling. At 254 years of age, he is still young.

DMing Notes: Firnafel is an excellent NPC to lead PCs into scrapes on almost any pretext. Although he is a spider hunter by trade, he’s a good scout and knows his way around the tunnels and warrens around Losetrel well. He is an excellent guide.

Combat Notes: E7; AC 1; hp 27; MV 120’ (40’); # AT 1; D 2-7; Save E7; ML 9 (11 with Malshandir), AL N; S 11, I 16, W 13, D 18, Co 12, Ch 13.

Abilities and Skills: Alchemy (I), Climbing (D), Danger Sense (W), Hide in Shadows (D), Knowledge—Spider Habitats and Behaviours (I), Know Terrain—Forest of Spiders (I), Ledge Hopping (D).

Languages: Shadow Elf, Alignment (Neutral). Firnafel has also picked up a smattering of Dwarf from dealings with dwarves in the City of the Stars.

Notes: Firnafel carries a *short sword* +1, and wears *leather armour* +3 and a *ring* +1. He has a *light crossbow* +1 and a bandolier with six *crossbow bolts* +3 which are kept for really sticky situations. He uses his alchemical talents to brew potions which attract shroud spiders. He keeps

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the recipe completely secret, of course.

Maflarel

Albino Alfheim refugee, 7th-level elf

History: Maflarel was born into Clan Chossum in Alfheim. He fled that land in 929 AC, having swindled or cuckolded one too many of the elves of Clan Erendyl (the “royal” clan). Hunted down by their mercenaries, he fled into a complex series of tunnels he was unable to find his way out of. In his panic, he ran farther down until he met a patrol of shadow elves. His white hair and pale skin (and his white cloak) stood him in good stead. He cried out that evil elves were attacking him, the shadow elves slew the Alfheimers, and Maflarel has bluffed his way along as a shadow elf ever since. Shadow elves are naive and trusting, and Maflarel looks not unlike one. Now he lives in the City of the Stars with his fingers in many pies.

Personality: Maflarel is an unprincipled, sneaky little rat. He can be charming, even fawning, when he wants to be, but he is rotten through and through.

Appearance: Maflarel is fairly tall (5 feet 9 inches) and so walks with a stoop. He has pale skin, white hair, slightly pink pale eyes, and always dresses very humbly and in a very ordinary style.

DMing Notes: Maflarel knows most of the few shady shadow elves in the City of the Stars. He knows just about everyone in the Enclave. He makes it his business to know almost any worthwhile adventurer types (which will include PCs when they have gained a level or two). He wants information of all kinds and he can pay for it with food, gold, or rare commodities (spice, brandy, dwarf chain mail, a little magic.). He has contacts in the Second Shadow (see the chapter on “Shadow Elves and Other Lands”), who bring such goods from surface lands to be bartered. He even goes above ground himself, very rarely, using *teleport* spells when he can get a scroll of them (for which he will pay well). He does this only if he can get goods which can be teleported back (i.e., nothing bulky) and sold for a *very* good price as exotics in the City of the Stars. Maflarel only accepts payment in gold

and silver, and he has nuggets and coins of these metals worth a total of 80,000 gp very carefully hidden in his different residences and shops.

Maflarel is a fixer, a contact, who can get involved with the PCs in all manner of ways. He owns more than one shop in the city, and is the (usually absentee) proprietor of the infamous Orc’s Whiskers hostelry.

Combat Notes: E7; AC 3; hp 20; MV 90’ (60’) or 240’ (80’) due to *boots of speed*; #AT 1; D 2-7; Save E7; ML 8; AL C; S 9, I 16, W 10, D 11, Co 10, Ch 17.

Abilities and Skills: Bargaining (Ch +1), Escape Artist (D), Evade (D), Gambling (Ch), Gain Trust (Ch), Riding (D).

Languages: Elf, Shadow Elf, Alignment (Chaotic), Gnoll, Hobgoblin, Orc.

Spells Usually Carried: Level I—*fellowskip*. Level II—*ESP*, *know alignment*. Level III—*fly*, *haste*. Level IV—*dimension door*. Note that Maflarel’s other spells (and spells in his spell books) will not be restricted by shadow elf spell lists as in the Player’s Book. They may be restricted to the spell lists for elves as shown in *GAZ5 The Elves of Alfheim*, however.

Notes: Maflarel wears *chain mail +1* under a white smock and also has a white *displacer cloak*. He has *boots of speed* which have saved him from furious pursuers on more than one occasion—you can treat this as giving him a +2 bonus (subtract -2 from the d20 roll) to his *Evade* skill. Maflarel has a much-prized *ring of invisibility*, and a *wand of paralysis* with just four charges remaining. Lastly, in a thick stoppered fungus-stalk tube strapped to the belt around his waist, Maflarel has a *scroll* with three *teleport* spells written upon it.

Malshandir

Assistant to Sixhand, 3rd-level elf

History: Malshandir is Firnafel’s younger brother, star-struck by his famous sibling and intensely proud to be allowed to accompany him. For all his adult life (Malshandir is but 147), he has worked with Firnafel, and the thrill hasn’t faded yet.

Personality: Malshandir is somewhat shy, but is very trusting if befriended. He

is brave and loyal, and trustworthy.

Appearance: Malshandir looks quite like Firnafel, save for the birthmark and for his notably longer hair, which is tied back in a pony tail.

DMing Notes: Malshandir now has responsibility for the nuts and bolts of expeditions—fixing the snares and traps, purchasing tools and ropes and the like. These are proud duties for him, and he attends lovingly to them. He may readily be encountered going about this business.

Combat Notes: E3; AC 5; hp 13; MV 120’ (40’); # AT 1; D 2-5; Save E3; ML 9 (11 with Firnafel); AL L; S 9, I 14, W 10, D 16, Co 13, Ch 10.

Abilities and Skills: Alertness (D), Danger Sense (W), Evade (D), Hear Noise (D), Natural Healing (W), Snares (I).

Languages: Shadow Elf, Alignment (Lawful).

Spells Usually Carried: Level II—*invisibility*.

Notes: Malshandir carries a *dagger +1* and wears leather armour. He has a *ring of animal control* given him by Firnafel, which is used in situations of desperate threat as a last resort—it is an admission that his skills were not enough to deal with perils if this magic has to be used.

Quanafel

16th-level elf-wizard

History: Quanafel the thaumaturgist seems always to have been old (he is 740). He was originally from the Gelbalf clan, married into Celebryl, and saw his wife become a Wanderer three years in the past.

Personality: Quanafel is eccentric and slightly dotty, but pretends to be more absent-minded than he is. He’s actually sharp-witted and swift to size up those he meets. He can be quite sarcastic and mocking at times.

Appearance: Quanafel’s grey and white robes are usually stained with the results of alchemical experiments, or last night’s dinner. His hair is wildly straggly, and his skin very wrinkled. He looks, in a word, dishevelled.

DMing Notes: Quanafel is an excellent all-purpose Patron (hiring the PCs to run

errands, seek out monsters and magical items, etc.), trainer, dispenser of rumours, and contact.

Combat Notes: E10; AC 6; hp 40; MV 90' (30') due to age; #AT 1; Dmg 4-9; Save E10; ML 9; AL N; S 9, I 18, W 16, D 9, Co 9, Ch 12.

Abilities & Skills: Alternate Magics (I), Ancient History (I), Detect Deception (W), Drinking (Co), Nature Lore (I), Read/Write Shadow Elf (I), Storyteller (Ch), Teaching (W).

Languages: Shadow Elf, Alignment (Neutral).

Notes: Quanafel will have many magical items, but the following are the most important. He wears a *ring of protection* +4, and fights with a *staff* +3 when forced to. He wears a *ring of spell turning* which returns spells of levels 1-3 back at their caster. He will always have several magical potions and scrolls upon his person.

ZINDAR, SON OF THORALDEN

Dwarven exile and soul miner

History: Zindar was born a member of the Syrklist clan in Ferryway. An insatiably curious explorer, Zindar delved too deep for too long and saw too much. When he stumbled upon a major soul crystal mining operation, the standard shadow elf device of re-routing tunnels was deemed insufficient. Zindar would have to be taken to the City of the Stars, and there “adopted,” if anyone would have him. Fortunately taken in by members of Clan Celebryl, Zindar took up residence in the Enclave. At first, Zindar was bitter at his imprisonment and tried to escape. But he was receptive to the teachings of the shamans about soul crystals, after some initial scepticism. When he saw a shaman cast the *discharge soul power* spell from a soul crystal, he was awed by the display.

Gradually Zindar came to accept the teachings of the Way of Rafiel. He is now aghast that his people take gems—which is equivalent to stealing souls away so they can never be reborn. He feels humbled that the shadow elves didn't kill him, given the doings of gem-snaffling dwarves. Zindar sought permission to return to

his people to try to stop them mining gems, but was refused for fear he might lead them back to shadow elf lands. They might follow his return, after all. Gradually, Zindar realized that the rest of his life would be spent in the City of the Stars.

So Zindar made the best of it and helped the shadow elf shamans with his mining skills. He has become an expert adviser on the careful mining of soul crystals. His conciliatory attitudes and general good-naturedness have made him an important spokesman for the small group of dwarves in the City of the Stars. He lives in the Enclave in a small house with his goblin butler, Picksnout.

Personality: Zindar likes to feign being a gruff old dwarf, but is kindly and generous, especially to the young. He is very welcoming to any dwarf he meets and is always eager to hear news of the dwarves on the surface lands.

Appearance: Zindar has a “lived-in” face; his nose is slightly squashed and his eyes a little red-rimmed. He wears a decorated (but very battered) iron helmet which he never takes off. He even sleeps with it on. His dwarven chain mail is very old and much-repaired and his attire generally is rather grubby and has seen better days.

DMing Notes: Zindar cares for the shadow elves—but he does have occasional wistful longings to see his home again before he dies (this is a bit sentimental; he's got decades in him yet). Some shadow elves feel his long service should be rewarded with freedom, others say he knows too much. He is knowledgeable about shadow elf lands and major waterways, and tends to hear a fair bit of the gossip about town. He can be encountered by PCs in many contexts and is a fairly accessible NPC.

Combat Notes: D5; AC 2; hp 28; #AT 1; D 3-8; Save D5; ML 10; AL L; S 13, I 13, W 11, D 16, Co 14, Ch 10.

Abilities & Skills: Climbing (D), Labour—mining (I +2), Orientation in Caves (I), Survival—mountains (I), Survival—shadow elf lands (I).

Languages: Thyatian, Dwarf, Gnome, Goblin, Kobold, Shadow Elf, Alignment

(Lawful).

Notes: Zindar has a *war hammer* +1 at his belt and wears a suit of old, very battered *chain mail* +1.

Shadow Elves and Other Lands

As the lands of the shadow elves stretch far below the Known World, they have an interest in the affairs of those lands. In some cases this interest is simple; they hate or fear the inhabitants. In other cases, matters are much less simple. There is a core intrigue which dominates much of the shadow elves' dealings with the surface lands.

Dominion and the Feathered Serpent

King Telemon wants power, real power. He knows that in his own lands his word is law—technically. However, he dare not step out of line with regard to the shamans and the Way of Rafiel. Telemon knows that the Way of Rafiel is outmoded, bad for his people. He sees their lives stagnating, monotonous, uncreative. Telemon's views on this are undoubtedly shaped by his own ambition and the honey-tongued words of Xatapechtli, his spymaster. But he has other fellow conspirators.

Tanadaleyo is naturally ambitious and quick to anger. She is aggressive, and wishes to be Princess (and later Queen) of Alfheim. This is partly because of the tales she has heard from Kanafasti (and an unsuspecting Falanen) about how lovely Alfheim is, and partly due to the fact that she knows she will never be a ruler at all while the shamans run affairs.

Kanafasti, Telemon's mage, also wants to see another all-out assault on Alfheim. He is loyal to his King, and genuinely fond of the Royals (as he calls them). But, more to the point, Kanafasti doesn't want to become a Wanderer. When young he accepted the Way of Rafiel. Now that he's nearly 800, and he knows how absorbing magical research is, he isn't so keen on the creed.

General Garafaele is itching to get cracking on invasion plans. He thinks everything is going to be straightforward this time. Garafaele sees the chance of great glory for himself in the history of the shadow elves, and he also fancies a really good scrap. He has a large army, many of whom are almost eager for war.

The attitude of the shamans is difficult

to determine. Porphyriel knows that the King is up to something, and has guessed that an invasion of the surface lands is in the cards. She also knows that this is not imminent. Porphyriel is currently playing her cards close to her chest.

The key conspirator, however, is a small—almost wizened—shadow elf who spends most of his time invisible in a bizarre costume of snakeskin and feathers. Xatapechtli is head of the Second Shadow, and at his disposal are the resources of the “other branch” of that organization. His Serpents and Snakes act as spies and couriers in the surface lands, ferrying information, whispering words of persuasion and malice, carrying out thefts and assassinations and worse. Xatapechtli fawns on his King and always wishes to know his will. But it is Xatapechtli who has done more than anyone to form the King's will and give it resolve. It is Xatapechtli who has expressed his sorrow at the plight of the shadow elves so shamefully banished by the ingrates of Alfheim.

Xatapechtli

Spymaster, the Feathered Serpent, 14th-level elf-wizard.

History: Xatapechtli was originally Laraeden of Clan Celedryl, but his original name has long been in disuse. Highly intelligent, his promise as a Second Shadow recruit was swiftly spotted, and code names are always used for those in the “covert branch” of the service. The name “Xatapechtli” was revealed to him in a dream shortly after his assumption of the role of Feathered Serpent in CY 552, the ceremonial cloak implanting a name into a dream as it always has (see below). Xatapechtli had seen service as a spy and courier in Alfheim and Darokin by this time, making him a very knowledgeable (and thus dangerous) Feathered Serpent.

Personality: Xatapechtli is cunning, sly, extremely observant. He is Chaotic but not evil—he is self-willed, impulsive. He can hardly restrain his open contempt of shamans of Rafiel. But he is cool and elusive, and he didn't get to be the head of a highly secretive

organization without being able to lie through his teeth when he wants to.

Xatapechtli has a problem, though. Part of the legacy of his magical cloak is that it has mental residues of the sacrifices and murders committed by the priests who once wore it. This is part of the same magic which whispers Azcan names into the mind of the wearer, giving rise to the assumed names the Feathered Serpents take. Xatapechtli's mind being strong, this has taken decades to affect him; hence he doesn't associate his new nightmares with the cloak. Periodically he dreams of barbaric rituals and sacrifices by the Azcans and senses their hatred towards shadow elves. Loss of sleep, fear and incipient paranoia, have given Xatapechtli a haunted appearance and brought him close to breaking point.

Appearance: Xatapechtli is almost invariably invisible. If he can be seen, he is 5 feet 1 inch, very light at 91 lbs., and wears an astonishing cloak. This cloak radiates magic powerfully and is made of supple snakeskin. A mane of brilliantly coloured feathers that would put any peacock to shame ruffs the collar and cascades down the small elf's back.

DMing Notes: Xatapechtli is the spider in the middle of the web, unlikely to be encountered save by high-level PCs (although others might get to hear of the dreaded Feathered Serpent). More detail on his cloak is below in this profile; much more detail on his agents is given later in this chapter.

Also, Xatapechtli is formidably intelligent, a real genius, and knows more about surface lands and cultures than almost any other shadow elf. He is an extremely dangerous, brilliant elf.

Combat Notes: E10 (14th-level wizard); AC -6 (-11; see below); hp 40; #AT 1; D 1-8 (6-13; see below); Save E10 (automatic 1/2 damage from breath weapon); ML 10; AL C; S 9, I 18, W 17, D 10, Co 9, Ch 16.

Abilities and Skills: Ancient History (I), Danger Sense (I), Deceive (Ch +1), Disguise (I), Knowledge—Alf-

heim Society and Politics (I), Knowledge—Darokin Society and Politics (I), Non-elvish Cultures (I), Persuade (Ch), Read/Write Elf (I), Read/Write Shadow Elf (I), Signalling (I).

Languages: Shadow Elf, Alignment (Chaotic)

Notes: Xatapechtli has a *rod of parrying* (+5) and an ancient Azcan *snake staff*, which he can use despite not being a cleric, for offense. A *ring +4* gives potent protection, and he also wears a *ring of mind barrier* which radiates that spell effect constantly. A *wand of illusion* Xatapechtli keeps for deceptions is always fully charged. He has a *flying carpet* which can travel at triple the standard carpet rates, and a pair of *rings of comprehending languages* which he uses for conversations with agents if he needs to (unlikely, but he is always prepared).

Xatapechtli's magical cloak is of ancient Azcan design and was brought from Aengmor by the shadow elves fleeing it. It has traditionally been worn by the head of the King's "secret service," since the shaman who wore it among the Azcan was very powerful and skilled at disguise and concealment. The cloak gives a base AC of -2, adds +2 to all saves, grants a basic saving throw of 16 against any spells which normally allow no saving throw (e.g., *maze*, *power words*), and allows the wearer to cast each of the following spells once per day: *clairvoyance*, *wizard eye*, *conjure air elemental*, *death spell*, *dance*.

The Eyes of the Serpent —

The covert side of the Second Shadow is an independent, parallel organization to that of the scout/spies so valuable to military watches and patrols. They are known as the Eyes of the Serpent, and all have Intelligence of 13+ and Charisma 13+. Almost all are Snakes (7th level or higher) or Serpents (9th level or higher), and are recruited from the scout/spies after proving their skills there. (Note that this means that they will have a Dexterity score of 13 or better also.) Only a very few

shadow elves, regarded as having exceptional promise, will be recruited into the Eyes of the Serpent.

Xatapechtli always takes care to meet his new Eyes and talk with them on a personal basis once a year at the very least. His regional leaders, important Serpents, will meet with him much more often, perhaps even once every 6-8 weeks. Xatapechtli ensures that the primary loyalties of his agents are always to him, and fosters a strong in-group loyalty and camaraderie. He does this cleverly, by adroit dispensing of magical gifts and goodies from Kanafasti and other mages in Royal service, and from dispensing the largesse from the trade in luxuries in which his agents take part.

Shadow elves among the Eyes of the Serpent will have skills almost exclusively from the following list: Disguise (often at +1 or better) (I), Knowledge (of the land they are in) (I), Signalling (I), Tracking (I), Detect Deception (W), Escape Artist (D), Evade (D), Find Traps (D), Hide in Shadows (D), Move Silently (D), Drinking (Co), Deceive (Ch), Gain Trust (Ch).

The spells such elves memorize will be strongly of the disguise/detection variety. They are also usually given scrolls of spells such as *dimension door*, *fly*, and *teleport*, to allow them the means of a fast escape if cornered. Magical items which affect the minds of others (e.g., devices which create *charm*, *rings of human command*, *medallions of ESP*, etc.) will be used. Kanafasti works to make *rings of mind barrier* for key agents, so that they cannot be scried at all. Kanafasti and other mages also make *rings of disguise*, which are identical in effect to a *hat of disguise* (see AC4 *The Book of Marvellous Magic*, or the AD&D ENCYCLOPEDIA MAGICA™ accessory, under "Hat"), allowing the elf to appear as almost any humanoid (even changing apparent sex).

Serpent's Eyes, as the agents will often refer to themselves, will be otherwise suitably equipped for their work. They will be well financed, both with highly portable luxuries (spices and the like) and with nuggets of gold and silver, coinage taken from any captured humanoids (or stolen

by other agents), and so on. They will be given some magical potions (*truth* being a notable case) and drugs to induce sleep or even lethal poisons. They will always be well briefed for their work (and intensely quizzed about their knowledge before they are sent out to their work), given forged documents if these are of any help, and otherwise prepared.

Serpent's Eyes usually work in small cells with a regional minor leader; the minor leaders are then grouped into a cell under the regional leader himself. Care is taken to make sure that agents don't know each other or their superiors. Whenever possible, local people are paid, blackmailed, magically coerced, or otherwise persuaded to act as agents.

These considerations apply to Serpent's Eyes working outside the shadow elf lands. At any time, a small number (5% or so) are actually at work within the shadow elf cities, keeping an eye on important, possibly "subversive" shadow elves and, especially, shamanic operations. Xatapechtli is paranoid about the shamans and keeps a careful eye on them. Important merchants, traders, adventurers and other notable shadow elves are all checked from time to time, and records are fed to Xatapechtli's junior spymasters in the Royal Palace.

Serpent Eyes—and Ears —

Shadow elves do have one important problem where the DM may need new rules. The City of the Stars may be known for its twinkling lights on the ceiling of the Great Cavern. But these lights are faint and dim, and while shadow elves like *faerie lights* and soft, dim candlelight, they find torchlight moderately strong and daylight (even under a cloudy sky) very unpleasant. Obviously, shadow elves acting as agents in the surface lands must cope with this somehow.

For a minority, a magical correction is possible. Kanafasti has managed to produce a small number of magical amulets which greatly reduce the light entering the eyes and allow the shadow elf to ignore the effects of normal light levels (and allows a +4 bonus for saves versus blinding *light/continual light* attacks). How-

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ever, these amulets are only used when an agent has to be put into the field immediately. Usually, a slow and painful process of light adaptation has to be undergone.

The dark-adapted shadow elf is the normal subterranean dweller. Surface daylight half-blinds such an elf, ruining infravision and reducing vision to 60 feet through quarter-open eyes (at best). Missile fire is at a -8 penalty, the shadow elf has -2 penalties to hit rolls and AC, and a -2 penalty to Initiative rolls also. It is impossible for such a shadow elf to pretend that he is not painfully affected by such light. If a shadow elf spends more than four hours continuously in such daylight, he must make a saving throw versus Death Ray or be partly blinded, with his infravision reduced to 60 feet and “normal” vision to 300 feet.

The first step in light adaptation is for the shadow elf to spend three days in which he exposes himself to twilight, in the evening and the morning. This is taken as one hour at each of dawn and dusk. This doesn't just mean six hours—the three-day time span is crucial for adaptation. After this time, the shadow elf is partially light-adapted, and while he still suffers penalties in daylight, these are half those given for a dark-adapted elf. Eight hours of continuous exposure to daylight still partly blinds the shadow elf, however.

On the fourth day (and subsequently), the shadow elf adds two turns to this time of light exposure (one at dawn, one at dusk), so that he spends a little more time in the light. He gets an ability check vs. his Constitution score with a +10 penalty (add +10 to dice roll). If this check is made, the elf is now light-adapted. If it fails, he spends an additional two turns the next day in the light and now gets an ability check at a +9 penalty. Each day subsequently, the check is made with a decrementing penalty and the time of light exposure is increased. Eventually the shadow elf will be fully light adapted. A light adapted shadow elf has normal vision, but his infravision is now reduced to 60 feet; this returns to normal after 5-8 days back in the subterranean lands.

Finally, *light* and *continual light* spells

are very damaging to shadow elves who are not fully light adapted. They save at -2 against both spells, and suffer all the penalties noted above in addition to the normal penalties for being blinded by such a spell.

These detailed rules have been provided here because no little tension can be extracted from having your PCs sent off on a spying mission, having to hide out in a cave complex, slowly light adapting, while wandering monsters hassle them and enemies hunting them get closer to their scent. It is a different type of adventuring—instead of the PCs coming to beard the monsters down in the dungeons, it's the PCs who are holed up and the monsters which are coming to get them.

Finally, the problem of ears. Shadow elves do have ears notably larger than ordinary elves. This makes them conspicuous. This can be handled in different ways. In lands where there are few elves (e.g., Broken Lands or Rockhome), it's no problem—the people here usually think elves have huge ears anyway. Disguise (using headbands, hats, etc.), including use of the skill itself, is another possibility. Magical alterations are helpful. There is variability among shadow elves and some will have ears no larger than the largest normal elf ears. Finally, there is the act of sad resignation to a skilled wielder of a sharp knife, although this is a fate any shadow elf would wish to avoid.

Shadow Elf Intrigues —

The central plot intrigue is that the shadow elves wish to invade Alfheim and take it over for themselves. But they do have agents, and designs, in other lands. These other intrigues are detailed here. However, DMs who have read (and used) material from earlier Gazetteers, especially *GAZ5 The Elves of Alfheim*, will need help on possible “reality shifts” which will allow them to change established material subtly. Also, the tactics used by the shadow elves need description and explanation.

Details of individual agents in these lands are not given, deliberately. What we're telling you here is what the shadow

elves are up to. You will surely want to tailor the NPCs involved to the needs of your own campaign and place them as you see fit. For example, if (in your campaign) General Gilfronden of Alfheim has been unmasked as a shadow elf—as may have happened if you have run the adventures in *GAZ5 The Elves of Alfheim*—then the overall strength of shadow elf spying will be reduced and their tactics will shift somewhat.

There is one other excellent reason for not over-scripting within this gazetteer: which side will your PCs be on? If you have “normal” PCs combating the subversions of the shadow elves, you may want a powerful network of agents the PCs must battle long and hard to overcome. On the other hand, if your PCs actually are shadow elves, you may want them to work long and hard to revitalize a small, overworked network of agents with poor morale.

Alfheim

In Alfheim, the network of shadow elves is still being slowly rebuilt after the extirpation of agents in 675 AC. The general of the Alfheim army, Gilfronden, is a distant cousin of Garafaele of Celebryl, and is the most important shadow elf agent in the forested lands of Alfheim. You will need to add additional agents, of course, especially at medium experience levels and at positions of less (but still some) influence and importance.

Several of these will be in Clan Chossum. The shadow elves have found receptive ears to their sly whisperings about Clan Erendyl's arrogance here, and they bring good things for trade. Their gold and silver is traded at a good price. Some members of Clan Chossum know they are harbouring shadow elves and don't care so long as the price is right. Others (the most common case) guess that shadow elves may be involved, but they make sure they don't find out for sure, so they can keep their consciences quiet (if not absolutely clear). The shadow elves trade for durable cloths, leatherwork, and well-made utensils, always paying well (but not too well). They do use this stuff, but the primary function of the trade is to keep influential

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Chossum elves sweet. They also trade for good weaponry, claiming that this is used to defend themselves from the marauding humanoids of the Broken Lands. This is at least in part true, and any elf would protect a fellow elf from those scum, so again this helps the members of Clan Chossum to indulge in weaponmongering with a pacified conscience.

There may also be a small number of shadow elf infiltrators in Clan Erendyl, but they will definitely be very carefully disguised as elves (or humans). Within this clan, they will spread rumours about the King and try to inspire a coup against him from ambitious young elves well placed in the line of ascension.

You have *carte blanche*, really, to do what you like with shadow elf infiltrators into Alfheim. They will spread rumours, try to damage the Trees of Life, spy on the elven army, blackmail prominent elves, use selective assassination (especially members of the Royal family or important visitors from Darokin) and trade sabotage—you name it, they'll try it.

Building up an NPC spy network and having non-shadow elf PCs discover it piece by piece can lead to a tense cam-

paign, especially as the assassins and spies turn their attentions to eliminating the troublesome PCs from the lands of Alfheim.

Darokin

This is easily the most important of the “human lands,” so far as the shadow elves are concerned. Tunnels leading up and away from Losetrel emerge in the south-eastern spur of the Amsorak Mountains, and these are carefully protected by Watches. Shadow elf infiltrators are likely to be most active in the cities and towns around the eastern shores of the huge Lake Amsorak, and by passing into Crowlerd or Rennydale down to Favaro, they can make their way downriver to Darokin, the capital city, itself.

Shadow elves will have as their major goal inflicting as much damage as possible on the Darokin/Alfheim alliance. Some of them may have infiltrated the DDC (Darokin Diplomatic Corps), where elves are in demand. They will certainly target the House of Mauntea, since that house receives demihumans well and is both very rich and very powerful. They will try to sabotage trade, to appeal to the greedy

to exploit Darokin's monopoly position with respect to Alfheim (e.g., by placing “export duties” on Alfheim goods passing through Darokin), and by selective killings of elves.

Serpent's Eyes are not likely to be particularly successful here, however. Darokin cannot afford major disputes with any of its neighbours and an open conflict with Alfheim is almost impossible to envisage. More likely, the shadow elves will be able to engage in trade and politics here in such a way that they can become wealthy and pass that wealth back to the shadow elf lands in the form of goods, weapons, and similar largesse.

Ethengar

The shadow elves are a little puzzled and uncertain here. Their infiltrations are very few and have been among the western Taijits. They know of the Golden Khan and, frankly, they couldn't care less. They regard the tribes as barbarians in the most derogatory sense. Since it is unlikely that fierce horsemen would want to live underground, they do not threaten the lands of the shadow elves, and since such horsemen wouldn't like forests, they



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would not have any designs on Alfheim (which the shadow elves covet) either.

What puzzles the shadow elf spies, who are very few here, is the presence of Glantrian spies who are seemingly happily accommodated by Oktai Khan. The shadow elves are very uncertain about Glantri and this surprising presence makes them unready to forget about “those barbarians” just yet.

Glantri

Xatapechli and the very wily Serpents he uses as spies here (few in number) are intrigued by the “flamenco elves,” with whom they have only just made contact. They have realized that Glantri is an absolute hotbed of political intrigue, and that almost no one in Glantri is the least bit truthful. Thus, shadow elf operations here are simply opportunistic. The agents try to gain wealth, magic, and any information they can about other countries and peoples of interest to them.

If you have run adventures in Glantri you will know from GAZ3 *The Principalities of Glantri*, that there is almost endless scope for smuggling in shadow elf plants wherever you want them—lots of people in Glantri are anything but what they appear to be. However, you shouldn't let PCs suspect that the Radiance in Glantri has anything to do with the soul crystals of the shadow elves, or at least not until they are high-level. How you handle this will be very important to any shadow elf campaign!

Rockhome

Some few of the lengthy tunnels far east of Alfmyr emerge into the western mountains of this dwarven land. Shadow elves hate dwarves, and there are strongly equipped and manned Watches in these areas. They hate dwarves because dwarves have a notorious greed for gems, and to take gems is to steal souls. Dwarves are stealing our children, the shadow elves think.

There is also the matter of the plague, which came into Alfmyr in CY 802, which is blamed on the dwarves. Shadow elves thus feel have at least two excellent

reasons to hate dwarves!

However, an enlightened general with responsibility for this area has been using a non-confrontational strategy with some success. He has learned from interrogating captured dwarves that if the shadow elves kill them, the dwarves will come back in much larger numbers. They are curious folk, very stubborn, and don't take being pushed about by anyone. However, they are also greedy, and the general is exploiting this. Scout/spies and elite members of the Watches seek out and find dwarves tunnelling far west, and they warn them off looking for gems. If the elves have someone among them who can speak a smattering of dwarf, the dwarf is told that the gems are sacred and should not be taken (the exact truth is not revealed). The dwarf is bought off with gold and silver in return for goods—this allows the dwarf to think he is getting a good deal out of a trade and not being paid to go away as such.

So far this strategy appears to have worked and led to an avoidance of major disputes between shadow elves and dwarves. The few dwarves involved mostly keep very quiet about where their newfound wealth is coming from, so not too many dwarves get to know. Add to this determined and frequent work by tunnel shapers, and so far Rockhome presents no significant threat or nuisance to the shadow elves.

The Broken Lands

With the humanoid dwellers of the Broken Lands and the main body of the shadow elves, matters are quite straightforward: They both want to kill each other. Protection from marauding humanoid bands is the standard duty of the Second Shadow's “overt” branch and the Serpent's Eyes will be called in for support if absolutely necessary. However, there is a very deep secret within the Broken Lands which even the Serpent's Eyes do not know.

One of the factors which sustains the old Wanderers sent out into the world beyond their homes is the rumour of a City of Wanderers, far from the shadow

elf homelands, to which Rafiel may guide them. Of course, few elves believe in this story, but many of the old Wanderers have faith. There *is* such a city. It's called Oenkmar (see GAZ10 *The Orcs of Thar*). Many old Wanderers are driven from their homelands by Rafiel's injunction not to retrace their steps, and end up here. Rafiel has a purpose for them here: to take control of the humanoids and alter their actions so as to stop them attacking the main lands of the shadow elves.

However, when a Wanderer arrives in Oenkmar he begins to discard allegiance to the Way of Rafiel. Wanderers who have made it there before keep a constant watch out for new arrivals, and when one appears—skulking in the tunnels and caves around Oenkmar, wondering where this hellish place is—he is swiftly contacted and led to a “safe house.” Wanderers in Oenkmar are well disguised, and the new shadow elf won't recognize his contact for what he is; after they have talked for some time, and the older Wanderer reveals himself for what he is, the injunction seems to have less force. Many Wanderers in Oenkmar come to feel that the will of Rafiel is no longer contained in the old shamanic rules and laws now they are here. This is a new phase in their lives. Perhaps the will of Rafiel is that they should struggle to establish new rules and ways of thinking for themselves?

Oenkmar contains a small community of Wanderers—a few hundred—who hide in the Enclave and West Bend for the most part. They are not easily detected as shadow elves. They are high level, with strong magic (including illusions and the like); they are old and wrinkled (and humanoids think that everyone who is old and wrinkled looks much the same, “crumbly” being their derisive term for them); they are intelligent (stupid ones don't get this far), some have the *Disguise* skill—in short, Wanderers may be old but they are wily, talented, and compared with the humanoids in Oenkmar, they are unbelievably smart.

The primary action of Wanderers who are able to act out in the open, pretending to be humanoids, is to incite hatred

against the dwarves of Rockhome. Shadow elves hate dwarves, of course. How successful they are in this respect, how many Wanderers are out in the open, and who might be a Wanderer (could that troll princess be?), is all up to you. You can retro-fit reality shifts, changing a small and selected bunch of NPCs into disguised shadow elves, if you wish. Be careful about this, but revealing the secret of the enclave of Wanderers (in part is the best way to do this) can be a real surprise for almost any PC!

There are also the shadow elf babies adopted by the humanoids. Some of them will come to think as humanoids, but most are far too intelligent. Some will come to be contacted by the Wanderers; some will intuitively feel elven sympathies of their own; others will gain experience and then leave the humanoid lands in disgust. You may want to effect reality shifts with certain powerful “humanoids” actually being shadow elves. [This occurs in later MYS-TARA products; for instance, King Kol of the Great Crater, now a prince in Glantri, is thought to be a spellcasting kobold but is actually a mutant shadow elf.—Roger.]

The Land of the Red Sun —

Almost none of the shadow elves know of these incredible lands. Far, far below the surface of the world, countless miles from the forests and seas of the surface, is another world; the Lands of the Red Sun. Among all his people, only old Falanen the Sage has actually visited these lands. An insatiably curious elf in his youth, one expedition ended up in his being lost and confused, and instead of heading upwards he headed down and down and down until...? Other-worldly, eerie, a land without night as the world of the shadow elves has no day; populated by strange folk, from the pacifistic to the murderous, these lands are as diverse and strange as any below the true stars in the heavens.

Details of the Lands of the Red Sun are found in the D&D supplement, *The Hollow World* (which details the HOLLOW WORLD campaign, of course), and we're not going to spoil the surprises in that fine product here. If you use that prod-



uct, then information about those lands and the peoples within them can be fed sparingly to PCs via Falanen and also in other ways. Notes, diaries, old traveller's tales, half-insane survivors of a doomed mining expedition, an artifact of weirdly alien nature and a lore spell. There are many ways of nudging the PCs to these amazing locales.

There is also one potential aggressor from those lands which the shadow elves have had to deal with. These are the Azcan, fierce human warriors from the deep lands. Twice in the last two centuries, shadow elf Watches looking after the tunnels to the deeper lands have been attacked by bands of Azcan warriors. It may well be that these attacks were opportunistic, but they may herald a growing expansionist threat from the far-away Azcan Empire. The White Shamans have been told by Rafiel to make sure that Watches in the area are strengthened by powerful warriors and by at least five Life and Death Shamans; Rafiel does not wish the Azcans to survive any encounter (and give details of the shadow elves to Atzanteotl's priests). Of course, details of the Azcan race can be found in *The Hollow World* supple-

ment, but having the PCs involved in the capture of such invaders (followed by interrogations and a mission) is an excellent way of introducing the Hollow World to your shadow elf campaign.

ADVENTURES IN THE SHADOWLANDS

In this section, we'll look at campaigns and adventures in the lands of the shadow elves.

First, we'll consider what type of campaign you might wish to conduct there. Of course, play in the lands of the shadow elves may be episodic; you and your players may well prefer to visit them occasionally, rather than playing most D&D game sessions there.

Your players may want to have shadow elf player characters, or you may want to set up the shadow elves as the "baddies" and the players will have PCs interact with them as enemies. This latter possibility is clearly in the cards if you have pre-existent (and favoured) PCs who are Alfheim elves, for example.

ADVENTURER CAMPAIGN

Here, the PCs are shadow elf adventurers. Their primary desire will be to go adventuring in the shadow elf lands, travel as widely as possible, and fight monsters and gain treasures. PC shamans cannot realistically be full-time members of such a group, although they could be occasional participants.

Clearly, this is a fairly free-wheeling approach and there are plenty of places scripted for such PCs to visit. There are also plenty of unpleasant hazards scripted for them, from the Boneless to the *Crown of Corruption* (see the adventure outlines below). However, it will be more fun if the PCs can somehow get involved in the more central themes of this Gazetteer.

The easiest way to do this is to have the PCs meet more powerful NPCs as they themselves gain experience levels. They won't be trusted by anyone with real power, but they may gain commissions (as couriers, guards, etc.) from major NPCs. Some such commissions might begin as try-outs to see if the PCs are capable of meeting challenges; only then will the NPC hire them for the serious action. Kanafasti might want some minor artifact from a Warren of undead recently discovered, for example (allowing you to tag a shaman NPC to the PC party to help deal with this novel menace). Then he reports to Xatapechtli regarding their suitability

for a more important job.

You have one trick to play, of course: all shadow elves are liable for military service (not all 10 years in one go, necessarily). But don't be too arm-twisting about this. Giving the PCs some warning that they will be due for military service at a stated future time, for example, means it will be less of a shock when they finally have to knuckle down to it. Allow the players enough time to get their basic chaotic dungeon-wandering instincts out of their systems for their shadow elf PCs. Don't set up long-running themes in the early adventures which won't get played out.

One potential variant on this theme is to have a party of fairly iconoclastic, half-outcast shadow elves. Such a party could possibly include a non-elven character from the Enclave, although the PCs would have to work very hard to get him out of the City of the Stars and cover his absence while he was away. Such a party could easily become renegades, and then they might become amenable to co-operation with enemies of the shadow elves in the surface lands!

MILITARY CAMPAIGN

Here, most of the PCs are in military service from the start. Their duties are those of guards, couriers, patrollers, protectors. They may be allowed a little leave to go adventuring now and then, but this will be a secondary concern.

Compared with the campaign where adventuring PCs might become co-opted for military service, PCs in this campaign should gain more benefits. They may meet, or even become attached to more important NPCs earlier in their careers (as adjutants, bodyguards, etc.). They might gain intriguing career opportunities earlier. Two obvious possibilities are being trained as skinwing riders, or being recruited into the Second Shadow. Later in the campaign, of course, the loyalty of a PC recruited into the Second Shadow can be tested by his superiors asking him to file full reports on some possibly subversive shadow elves—the other PCs! (His bosses don't think the other PCs are subversive; they're just testing his loyalties.)

Military service also allows you to post the PCs to watches and patrols where almost anything can happen. Curious dwarves, blood-crazed Azcans, skulking spiders, a half-dead agent returning from Glantri—almost anything can turn up, and how will the PCs cope?

PCs in military service will also more readily find themselves in the company of shamans, Second Shadow scouts, and other specialists. This is both helpful (given shamanic healing) and intriguing for them, and they will learn more about other shadow elf types this way. It is also easier for a shadow elf shaman to participate in such a campaign.

Finally, shadow elves in military service can always put in for leave if they find some information which leads them to want to go adventuring, so military service shouldn't be too constricting.

SHAMANIC CAMPAIGN

Here, the PCs are (almost) all shamans, beginning their careers as acolytes. This is a challenging and difficult type of campaign to run, but maybe the most rewarding. Characters without high Wisdom scores who are unsure about being shamans could become exceptional PCs, formally affiliated to temple service and highly devout followers of Rafiel. They can become the guards and "servants" of the acolytes. They can also be allowed to do a little adventuring of their own on the side in this set-up. The players of the shaman PCs can play NPCs you loan to them for use so they don't miss out on these side-adventures. In this way, some "light relief" can be mixed in with a campaign dedicated to experiencing, furthering, and understanding the mysteries of the Way of Rafiel.

The careers of the PCs should begin with adventuring to earn the 2,000 XPs needed to qualify as acolytes, and then their initiation rituals. A Wisdom gain is a fair reward for the risk of the ritual, and you may grant a 1 point improvement in this ability score.

The PCs will be exceptional acolytes in that they will spend less time in the temple than most. They will be the ones se-

lected for courier duty, accompanying the Marking Shamans on their travels, officiating at a Temple ceremony where some disruption leads to pursuit and adventure, assignment to a routine patrol duty where something unexpected happens. Otherwise, life wouldn't be that interesting! And adventuring isn't something the Temple frowns upon.

After all, travel undertaken to gain knowledge is in the service of Rafiel. A shaman who has been fortunate enough to find a few soul crystals now and again while adventuring is clearly guided by Rafiel, and might be actively encouraged to undertake further travels and adventures. Since Rafiel guides the shaman, she should be free to follow where that guidance leads, after all. As the PCs make their way up the temple hierarchy, they should be involved in the central concerns of shamans of their level and of the Way of Rafiel as a whole.

Earlier material in this book has given detail on shamanic duties at different experience levels which you can use to determine goals for the PCs. Adventuring should not be ruled out; pursuit of reportedly stolen soul crystals would be an obvious adventure hook. Shamans are always likely to be attached to a major military investigation because of the need for magical healing.

There are two factors of importance here. The first is the gradual revealing of the secrets of the soul crystals. This doesn't come into play for quite a while, but you will need to consider carefully how to handle this delicate subject. The second is the time-scale of the campaign. If PC shamans begin as 1st-level types of 120 years, they cannot plausibly become White Shamans in a few years of game time. The campaign time scale becomes at least scores of years. This is a general problem with all elven campaigns, but it is especially acute in this case. However, this seeming disadvantage can be turned on its head—it suits episodic campaigning well for this to be the case.

Sneaky Stuff Campaign —

This is a campaign in which PCs can be adventurers, or in military service, or possibly even shamans. Their early adventures can be of almost any type in the shadow elf lands. The important thing is that the PCs have, between them, some individuals with high Intelligence, Dexterity, and Charisma scores.

The PCs will be recruited by the military authorities, Xatapechtli, Kanafasti, or whoever you else you want to present to them. Their careers will become increasingly devoted to acting as spies and agents in the surface lands. Their adventure goals will involve espionage, assassinations, guerrilla actions, sabotage, and similar acts of terrorism (or the liberation struggle, depending on which side you're on). Their skill gains will be those of subterfuge and sneakiness. Their spell use will become increasingly orientated towards spells of mental coercion and deception. This form of campaign can become a very tense, exciting affair considerably more subtle than most. It also allows for non-elf PCs (e.g., human spies in Darokin) to enter play at some stage.

ENEMIES Campaign —

Here, the shadow elves are the bad guys. The PCs track down and dispose of the evil pointy-eared pests. Maybe the PCs are Friends of Alnheim, for example. You may already have played some adventures of this type if you have used the outlines from *GAZ5 The Elves of Alnheim*.

If you haven't used those adventures, they offer a campaign against the shadow elves you may wish to use. For this reason, adventures against shadow elves are not provided in this Gazetteer, although some of the adventures (especially the *Crown of Corruption*) could be adapted for non-elven PC parties readily enough.

The actions and struggles of the shadow elves can be gradually presented to the PCs in a more favourable light and the misinformation they have been fed about them can be increasingly seen for what it is. A mission (treasure hunt, etc.) that takes the PCs close to (and thus able to observe) a shadow elf settlement too large

to attack is one way of getting PCs to see that the shadow elves are civilized people. Capturing the PCs and forcing them to escape from the Enclave will make them see that the shadow elves are not murderous villains. Inside the Enclave, NPCs like Zindar will soon make plain to them that the shadow elves are certainly not wholly bad. A dedicated shaman may try to convert them, allowing them to see something of the shadow elves' beliefs. If the shaman is successful, of course, the PCs might even eventually become agents for the shadow elves back on the surface lands where they once swore to wipe them out!

The Adventures —

The adventures and outlines given here are non-specialist: no adventure has been given for shamans only, spies only, or for any other subgroup of shadow elves. Rather, the adventures can be shaped easily enough to the particular interests and goals of your PCs.

Skill Checks: Especially in Basic level adventuring, skill checks can add fun and tension to the game and you may well want to make them part of game sessions. Don't overuse them, though. If you want to have skill checks for movement in difficult situations (Climbing and Ledge-hopping being obvious possibilities), then you should usually have only one skill check made for the crucial part of the manoeuvre (or the penultimate part—the part of the climb just before the summit, for example). Don't keep making PCs make skill checks every round, because eventually they must fail, so it's both demoralizing and pointless for them. It's also tedious rolling so many dice.

If you have a situation in which a group is attempting some action where not all have a relevant skill, improvise. For example, a whole PC group is attempting a tough climb, but some don't have the Climbing skill. Don't say they can't do it; the unskilled PCs can be allowed an Ability Check against the relevant ability score (in this case Dexterity) with a +2 penalty added to the dice roll. You can use this as a standard penalty for PCs without formal skills who can still have

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some hope of success, adding other modifiers as you see fit. Some skills, though, are all-or-none; either a character can write a language or he can't.

On the other hand, be aware that many gamers play D&D games because they like a fast, simple, fluent, easy-to-play game system which isn't overburdened with too many rules. In this case, don't use skills. Just use the occasional Ability check, only when clearly called for.

Contraband

(Basic/low Expert)

The PCs are hired to act as guards for a merchant convoy taking the tunnel route from the City of the Stars to New Grunland (you can change the route if you wish). The convoy should be of modest size—maybe three or four merchants with 4-6 slug-drawn coaches and sleds. Other NPC guards can be hired if the PC party is small or the PCs are suspicious ("see, other guys are only too happy to get the work"). The money offered won't be fantastic so it's best to use Basic PCs for this adventure. The merchants can't afford more than 50-100 gp maximum per guard. The material being transported is primarily silks from Losetrel. The North Sojourner river has been plagued by a huge Water Elemental lately, hence the need for taking the land route.

The PCs should get most of the way to New Grunland, with some obstacles and fairly minor monster encounters to slow them up and hassle them on the way. However, be sure to place one major encounter with some tough monsters, and make sure the merchant who hired the PCs is killed! The other merchants will tell the PCs to take over responsibility for the cargo until arrival at New Grunland, where they will get a good bonus for delivery to the merchant's family.

A few miles before New Grunland, the convoy is stopped by a patrol. They press-gang the PCs into temporary assistance; a bunch of humanoids is entrenched in the tunnels further along and the PCs are required to assist. You can now have fun running a short flush-out-the-bad-guys combat. The humanoids should be led by

one fairly sizeable brute—a strong ogre, for example—who can offer a PC fighter the chance of glory (or a quick death).

When the Brave Heroes return, they find the military dismembering their cargo. The watch leader can have a small sniffer slug, if you wish. They find bags of a pale brown powder, which the Sergeant says angrily is an addictive fungal extract which has been causing problems in New Grunland lately. He understands the PCs are responsible for the cargo, and this is of course true (as the other merchants will at once make plain). Let the PCs protest. Then pack them off to jail in New Grunland.

Let the PCs sweat, let them grovel and plead, and express their case with full emotional conviction. The sceptical Sergeant says he can imagine how they latched on to some poor merchant, smuggled drugs in his wagons, and killed him under cover of a monster raid to get an extra cash bonus from his family; the PCs are heartless, sick, worthless brutes. The Masking Shaman presiding seems to agree. However, the Sergeant offers a solution; the PCs must make reparations to the family and serve the military for a while. The Shaman agrees.

The Sergeant says, outside, that he didn't really believe what he was saying but he needs the PCs' help (the army will look after reparations for the family). He needs the PCs to go back to the City of the Stars, find the merchant's contacts there, and hang around looking for more work. Who was bringing the drug in? The merchant was an innocent sort. The PCs will have to watch and wait until an agent of Maflarel turns up one night, *invisible* and with a *haste* spell, to do the dirty deed. From here on, the PCs may need pursuit skills or may just report their observations to the authorities, as you see fit.

Spider Hunt!

(Basic/low Expert)

In this adventure, the PCs should begin in Losetrel. They can easily travel there on courier or bodyguard duty. They will be approached by Firnafel the Spider-hunter and asked to assist him with some

spider hunting. His brother Malshandir is ill, and Firnafel badly wants to set off at once. He knows that a brood of large, productive giant shroud spiders is there for the taking in the Forest of Spiders, and won't brook any delay. Firnafel offers the PCs either a flat fee of 100 gp apiece for a week's work or 50% of the sale price of the spiders (which is about the same amount).

He will also coax the PCs by showing off a box of *ointment of antidote* with two doses left. Each dose, if rubbed on to the skin, acts as a *neutralize poison* spell, and will neutralize any poison attack suffered in the previous five rounds (even a lethal attack, so this is a real life-saver). If the PCs include a shaman, make this into a better hook by making this a *staff of curing* with four charges (only a shaman can use this, explaining perfectly why Firnafel needs the PCs). Firnafel also bluffs a bit by claiming that most spiders aren't poisonous, or the poison is over-rated, he's still alive isn't he?, and so on.

Off go the PCs and Firnafel, through the Forest of Spiders in pursuit of a group of four very large giant shroud spiders. Firnafel has two giant slugs which pull a sled with fungus cages large enough to hold up to six such spiders. You can introduce wandering monster encounters as you wish, decide how long it takes the PCs to find the spiders, and then have them (under Firnafel's guidance) formulate a plan to capture them. Firnafel wants them alive!

There is a complicating factor, however. Firnafel's cousin Ralfamere, with some aggressive young accomplices, is shadowing the PCs and Firnafel. Ralfamere is embittered at having been passed over for training by Firnafel; he simply isn't smart enough, but refuses to admit this to himself. Now he plans to exact revenge. He has told his companions that he wants to give Firnafel and the PCs a good beating and leave them here, but when a fight breaks out Ralfamere will fight in earnest and strike to kill. After initial hesitation, his accomplices will do the same.

Ralfamere should be a fairly tough shadow elf, one level higher than the highest-level PC in the group. His ac-

complices should equal the PC party in number, and be, on average, one experience level lower than the PCs. If the PCs are all fairly low-level, make Ralfamere 4th level to give Firnafel a fair run for his money in combat. This group will do their best to attack with surprise, and will try to attack the PCs when they are weakened after a combat.

Firnafel will recognize Ralfamere, of course. On returning to Losetrel, he will ask the PCs if they want to consider raiding Ralfamere's home for him (again offering money). If the PCs do this, they will spot a spying elf (who should be able to escape), watching from the window of a house opposite. This is a member of the Second Shadow, spying on the house to try and establish links between Ralfamere and Maflarel. The PCs can find (on a successful Intelligence check at a -2 penalty) that Ralfamere's house has already been carefully searched. Very vigilant PCs (who leave an invisible watcher of their own outside!) might follow or even capture the spy. If they manage this, they will become embroiled in the operations of the Second Shadow. How this develops will affect the whole campaign, so you will need to script it according to the needs of that campaign.

Follow the Patsy

(Expert)

This is a basic adventure theme which can be used in a variety of ways. The key theme is that an earnest explorer wants to hire guards to protect him while he sets off to find some hitherto unmapped location. For a real challenge, take the subterranean origins of the waterway which runs northwards of the Cavern of Continual Rain. For a less dramatic option, take the underground origins of the North Sojourner river.

You can vary this to maximize the appeal to the PCs. The explorer can have an old book claiming that many gems (soul crystals!) are to be found where he wants to go (enticing any shaman and getting the interest of the Temple). The area might be reputed to contain specimens of a rare but highly nutritious fungus

which merchants are eager to obtain for commercial reasons. Very tough giant slugs might be allegedly living there and if the PCs can catch a few young ones (or bring back some eggs), the military might be very happy—the era of the armoured war slug might not be so far away.

The intrepid explorer will always pay very well, and will have proof of his wealth. He should also be a real drip (a “droopy-ears” is the standard shadow elf equivalent of today's nerd). He should have buck teeth, bandy legs, and generally unattractive features. You could have him fall desperately in love with some unfortunate female PC after she has saved his life a few times.

Make the PCs go on a long journey, and give them plenty of trouble. They should be subjected to repeated monster assaults, giving them a tough time—but don't send ridiculously tough monsters to kill them. Just wear them out. Never, never let them forget that they have as a primary objective keeping the patsy alive. Without doing this, they don't get the huge fee they were promised. You, as DM, must ensure that the patsy gets into endless scrapes—without actually getting killed, of course. Make the patsy a real pain, catching cold and complaining about the damp and how he needs a hot bath, writing ghastly love poems to the PC he has fallen for, etc.

When the PCs get to their goal you should add something unexpected: undead, a skeletal fire-breathing reptile, mindless berserk golems of clay or stone, or some astonishing natural feature. A vein of soul crystals is an obvious possibility (then the shamans will need the PCs to guide them back here!!). This unexpected feature can be simple or complex, standing alone or signifying some deeper mystery (something is controlling the Undead; do the PCs want to explain the catacombs they so unexpectedly find here?). This can be designed to suit the timeline. If the PCs have to put up with a very long journey with the patsy, they may just want to go home and get their money—or they may leap at the chance of a new kind of adventuring.

Try to expedite the going-home jour-

ney. The fun was the original length of the trek, going back is often an anti-climax. A military patrol may come after the group, checking on their safety or on a search-expedition of their own. Or the PCs may discover some magical aid to mobility such as a flying carpet (this is rather generous!).

One last note: there's nothing to say the patsy (and thus the PCs) can't get lost along the way!

Something Rotten in the Warrens

(Expert)

The Warrens have always been avoided for good reasons. Unfortunately, a threat is seeping from that area which has to be dealt with. Some minor streams seep from the Warrens down into Dragon Lake, and the water coming from these is impure and covered in froth which seethes on the surface of Dragon Lake. Strong, brave, experienced adventurers are needed for the job: the PCs.

When the PCs get to the entry to the Warrens on the shore of Dragon Lake (where there is a patrol), all hell is breaking loose. The dragon turtle is waking up! This is just to throw the PCs off guard and surprise them with a first assault later. The patrol screams to the PCs that they (the patrol) must go to warn the authorities, and they urge the PCs to get on with their job. The PCs enter the Warrens.

They get attacked right away. Rising from the befouled water are four storm giants!! They aren't actually giants; they are (Water) Elemental Drakes (see the *Master DM's Book*, page 29, or the MYSTARA MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM accessory). They were sucked into the Prime Material through a tiny vortex deep inside the Warrens. Angry and irritated by the polluted water they find themselves in, they will fight the PCs eagerly.

After this initial combat, the PCs should be able to follow the stream of polluted water back through the Warrens (they will need some light to see the colour of the polluted water, of course). You can select whatever encounters you feel appropriate during this journey. Some

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very unpleasant monsters might lurk inside the Warrens, since there are no shadow elf patrols to deal with them.

When the PCs arrive at the area of the vortex, the nature of the problem is revealed. Matter from the Elemental Plane of Water is being sucked in and over the massive, bloated corpse of a dead Boneless! The filthy acidic residues of the carcass pollute the water, and something must be done.

The PCs are faced with the problem of shifting 2,000 pounds of waterlogged, highly acidic (touch causes 1d6 damage per round) carcass as far away from this cavern as possible. Make the exact design of the passage as difficult as possible for moving this stuff. Magical solutions offer a fair bet. *Disintegrate* and *flesh to stone* are two of the more obvious possibilities.

Of course, the PCs aren't going to get away this easily. Attack them when they are most vulnerable here—when some of them are asleep, when they are discussing what to do, etc. The attack comes from a Boneless of huge size (73 hp) which has traced the scent of its dead relative and fights in a frenzy (no morale checks).

Of course, this now means that a second carcass has to be disposed of! The PCs have to implement their solution to the problem all over again. If in the course of doing this they dismember the Boneless they have just killed, they will find a partly digested arm in its stomach. They can track the Boneless by following its acidic slime trail. If they do this, they will find a pair of elf corpses, one partly eaten. Both elves are dressed in (acid-ruined) chain armour, but the elven *longsword* +2 one of them possessed—with a Clan Chossum clan hilt (see GAZ5 *The Elves of Alfheim*)—is still intact.

How did these surface elves find their way here? What were they doing in the desolate stretches of the Warrens? Do they have some kind of base hidden there, knowing that shadow elves avoid the place? What is to be done about the vortex? There are plenty of spin-offs from this adventure!

Death in Darokin

(*High Expert*)

The PCs are approached by a senior Serpent of the Serpent's Eyes. They will be asked to undertake an important task, vital to the security of the shadow elves. They will be very well paid. Their work will help to prevent a major invasion of the shadow elf homelands (this is a lie). It involves the use of disguise and deception in one of the surface lands. Details can only be given if the PCs agree to the job.

Assuming that they do, what they are told is this: a powerful member of one of the Great Houses of the land of Darokin is financing an assault by elves of Alfheim against the shadow elf lands. It is necessary to eliminate the Darokin human. This task cannot be trusted to the organization "on the ground" in Darokin for fear of infiltration. Outsiders are needed. The PCs get the job. Total secrecy is expected, of course.

You should add basic information to this. The PCs may well never have heard of Darokin, for example. Then they get a more detailed briefing. In about 21 days time, the diplomat—Greenleaf Vickers—is due to travel from Akesoli to Akorros, across Lake Amsorak, and then cross-country to Darokin. From Darokin he will head upriver to Favaro, and then across land to Alfheim Town. You will need to give the PCs a sketch map of these locations (see GAZ11 *The Republic of Darokin*). The PCs can attempt to eliminate him at any stage along this journey, but he must not get into Alfheim. The PCs themselves can be smuggled to the surface into a cave system in the mountains just north of Crowlerd.

The PCs will be given material help, of course. They will get clothing of types worn by surface elves, money (including Darokin coins and nuggets of gold which can be traded), and a little magical assistance if absolutely necessary. One item which they must have is a magical *ring* which radiates a *comprehend languages* effect in a 20-foot radius, so that anyone the wearer talks to in that radius will hear what he says as being expressed in the listener's home tongue. No one else

in the ring-wearer's party gets this benefit, though! If the PCs do not include a shaman, then one must accompany them as an NPC. They will get a briefing from a Serpent expert in disguise, also, who will teach them the use of cosmetics, hair dyes, and similar techniques so they can pass for normal elves in Darokin. They will also get a crash course in elocution (notably, the art of speaking slowly and not in a squeaky voice). Of course, if one or more of the PCs has already joined the Second Shadow, they can watch the others trying to cope with all this with some amusement.

What course of action the PCs take is up to them, of course. The length of time they need to become light-adapted may affect planning; if one or more takes a long time, then hiring a boat and trying to sink Greenleaf Vickers' ship is not going to be possible for time reasons. The PCs can strike in more than one way, and it's up to them to choose.

You will need, of course, to draw up a list of Greenleaf Vickers' entourage. He isn't expecting to be attacked by homicidal shadow elves, but no head of a Great House wanders about without some seriously useful bodyguards (including spellcasters) in his retinue. For example, it is likely that his retinue includes some surface elves who may be especially hard to fool with disguises (DM discretion).

There are many role-play novelties in such an adventure. The blinking shadow elves will see unbelievable sights. What the heck is that green stuff all over the floor, for a start? What *is* grass, exactly? Plant and animal life here will be surpassingly strange to them unless they have been here before. Trying to handle encounters with surface NPCs is going to be taxing too. Just think of the weird stuff these people eat, for a start. Imagine a shadow elf inadvertently knocking back a brandy to imitate those he sees drinking in a hostelry. Shadow elves talk in a squeaky voice usually, but that'll be nothing compared to what happens after a brandy. Consider planning a quick getaway using horses. What the heck is a horse? "You mean we're supposed to ride

those monsters?”

However, this basic plotline can be considerably complicated. An excellent strategy is the set-up. Here, the Serpent's Eyes within Darokin are drawing up a plan to have Greenleaf Vickers assassinated, and they learn that Darokin civil servants know of this. They thus want to have some real patsies shipped in from outside, but patsies who look as if they are plausible enough assassins. Cue the PCs. After the PCs have failed, there will be a fast attack by the real assassins when Vickers is relaxed and off-guard. Note that one consequence of this is that Vickers will be very well guarded indeed, and you might allow the PCs an Intelligence Check to realize this at some stage (especially if the PCs are intelligently following Vickers' group, looking for weaknesses, noting habits, and otherwise doing good sneaky spying stuff).

In this variant you can give the PCs the name of an Eye of the Serpent they should only contact in extreme urgency in Darokin (the city), from their original spymaster. He's also being set up here, since the Darokin authorities know he's an Eye of the Serpent, but the PCs may just be able to find him (through intermediaries). From him the PCs can learn of the wicked trick that's been played on them. They can't be totally certain, but it will seem to be fairly clear to him that they must all have been set up, and he will guess why.

Finding this contact may be a matter of absolute urgency since the nature and approximate whereabouts of the PCs will surely be slipped to the Darokin authorities in some plausible manner before long! This will result in Darokin officials and authorities seeking them out, sending both powerful fighters and spellcasters out to look for them. A clash with such a force should alert the PCs to the fact that their cover is blown.

The PCs, at this stage, can go to the Darokin authorities and change sides if they know they're being set up; they can go home with the intention of trying to cause the immediate demise of their spymaster; or they can try to assassinate

Vickers anyway and go to someone really important in the Second Shadow (like Xatapechtli's secretary's secretary), hoping for a decent reward for their merit and compensation for their having been deceived. They might even get it!

CROWN OF CORRUPTION — (Companion)

The Desert of Lost Souls has become extremely dangerous. Sightings have been reported of a hitherto unknown undead menace. They are humanoid, possibly elfen, but are so shrivelled and rotted that it is not possible to be certain. Worst of all, there has been at least one report that they wear gems! Several elves have been reported killed, and a shamanic group which went to investigate has returned. A powerful adventuring group must now be sent; this means the PCs (they are Companion level, after all). A Life Shaman should accompany them unless they have a strong shaman amongst their own number. The sightings have been concentrated at the slow curve of the South Sojourner river, on the way to Losetrel, which is one reason why this menace cannot be ignored.

What has happened here? An evil magical artifact, the *Crown of Corruption*, has long been buried in this awful place. Recently, it was found by a shadow elf wizard, Shallatariel, and the foolish wizard thought to study and investigate it. He has become its helpless puppet, his mind stripped away, but his magical skills now used by the malign intelligence of the *Crown*. If your PCs move in powerful social and political shadow elf circles, Shallatariel should be known to them as a mage of Losetrel and his sudden disappearance should be rumoured some months before this adventure takes place. Wizards this powerful don't just vanish without anyone noticing!

If the PCs head into the appropriate area, they will soon be attacked by some of the desert zombies which the *Crown of Corruption* has created from the half-mummified corpses of humanoids (including elves) which lie buried in the Desert. Note that the Desert has some dunes, petrified fungi, etc., so chances for

cover, surprise and the like are normal. The initial attack will be by a small force, just 3-8 (d6+2) of these undead, which turn as Specials.

Desert Zombies: AC4; HD 4+1*; hp 24, 21, 12 (22, 14, 17, 18, 28); MV 60' (20'); #AT 2 fists; THAC0 15; D 1-8/1-8 + special; SA F4; ML 12; AL C; XP 200 each.

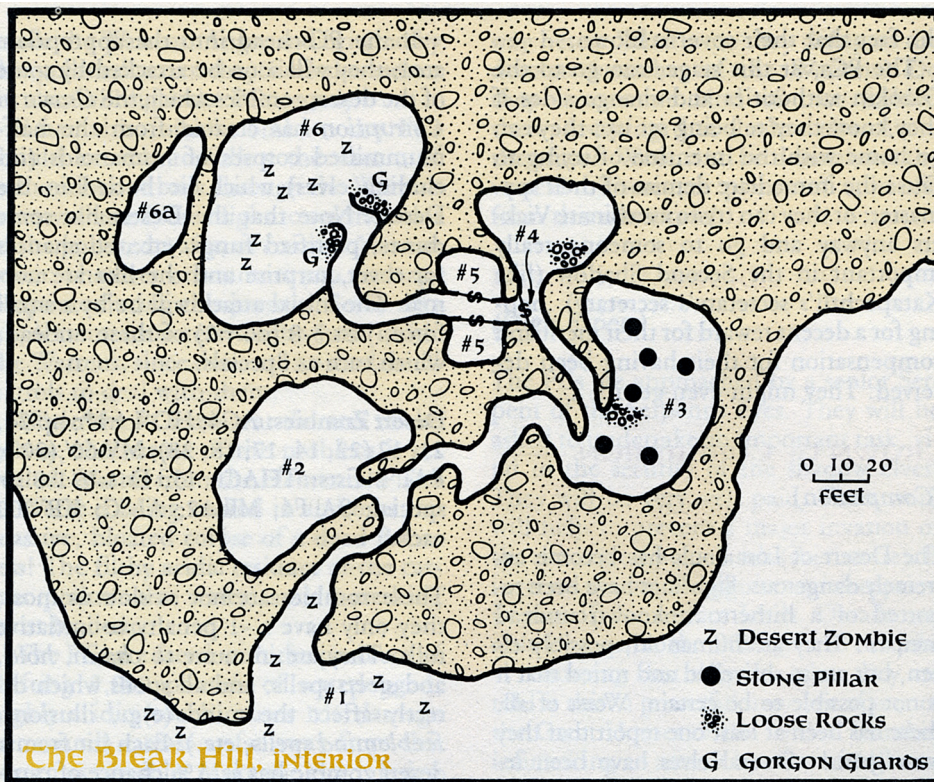
These zombies are not as slow as most; they only have a -1 penalty to initiative rolls. They are immune to *charm*, *hold*, and *sleep* spells, and all spells which directly affect the mind (e.g., illusions, *feblemind* spells, etc.). Each hit from a desert zombie has a 15% chance of causing a rotting disease (treat as mummy rot) to affect a PC, although the first symptoms don't appear for 7-14 (6+d8) days.

The desert zombies have no treasure of any sort. If tracks are looked for, these should lead towards the Bleak Hill where the *Crown of Corruption* lies.

Assuming the PCs kill these unusual undead, they will be attacked exactly 1 turn later by 3-8 wraiths (one wraith per desert zombie slain). This should be a general principle running right throughout this adventure: each desert zombie slain will cause a wraith to appear and attack its slayer 1 turn later. This makes desert zombies very dangerous, of course. If the PCs use spells sensibly to avoid desert zombies (e.g., magical *wall* spells to keep them at bay and run off), they should be awarded XPs as if they had destroyed the zombies.

Exactly where you place the Bleak Hill within the Desert is up to you. If you want to let the PCs have a straight run into it, place it not far from the River and have obvious tracks leading to it. If you want to place extra encounters in the way of the PCs, have the Bleak Hill hidden by *hallucinatory terrain*, stuck right at the back of the Desert (e.g., right underneath the relative position of the Alfheim boundaries). Another alternative would be to place the Bleak Hill in the ruins shown on the fold-out map. By adjusting desert zombie encounters and how easy it is to track their footprints, you can easily determine how long it takes the PCs to get to the Bleak Hill.

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If the PCs sleep in the Desert of Lost Souls, they will be subject to a mental magical attack. At a randomly chosen time, a low wind appears to pick up in this blasted land, faint moans can be heard, and then each PC is afflicted by illusions of a nemesis creature (that which he most fears—a huge energy-draining undead, a dragon, a beholder, etc.). Each affected character is allowed a saving throw vs. Spells at -2 (-4 if asleep and suffering a nightmare). If the saving throw is made, the PC feels a chill and loses 1d4 hit points but will feel normal after 1 turn. A PC who fails a saving throw loses 2d6 hit points, and has -1 penalties to all hit and damage rolls for the next 24 hours.

When the PCs get to the Bleak Hill, a determined resistance awaits them! The accompanying map in GAZ13 shows the details.

1. Desert Zombie Guards: Six desert zombies (14, 15, 19, 20, 26, 31 hp) are clustered in a ring as shown on the map. Note that Shallatarriel can see through their eyes. All Undead here will turn as Specials!

Wraiths will appear 1 turn after the PCs destroy these desert zombies, so you

must make sure of keeping excellent time-keeping here.

2. Druj: The power of the *Crown* has attracted this terrible undead creature (see *Dungeon Master's Companion*, p.37) to the area. This druj appears in the form of a shrivelled hand, and has 73hp. It has all the standard abilities of a druj. There will also be treasure here; see below on placement of treasure.

3. Rotting Horrors: This chamber has a roof supported by stone pillars which are covered in thick, furry mould. The mould is in itself harmless but, either side of the entrance, lurks two dusanu (see the *Creature Catalog*, page 65, or the MYSTARA MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM accessory). When they hear the PCs approaching, they will release their damaging spores. The dusanu have 41 and 47 hp, respectively.

4. Secret Entrance: This is the entrance to the Chamber of the *Crown*. It is magically trapped; if it is touched, a magical *Symbol of Death* appears on the door and will affect one PC looking at it (if there is more than one, choose randomly). *Find traps* or *detect magic* will reveal there is a magical trap here. *Read magic* kills the

spellcaster immediately (unless he has 76+ hit points). A successful *dispel magic* cast against 20th level spell use, or a *knock* spell, or similar, will bypass this trap.

5. Lurking Lairs: Behind each secret door lurks a pair of desert zombies, ready to attack the back of the PC party (with surprise) if the PCs walk past. At the same time, two spectres will fly down from a chamber above the passageway (hidden with hallucinatory terrain) and attack. The desert zombies have 14, 11, 10, and 25 hp; the spectres have 22 and 30 hp. Again, keep track of when zombies are slain and wraiths will later appear.

6. Chamber of the Crown: Here the shrivelled remains of Shallatarriel are kept on their feet by the hideous *Crown of Corruption*, pulsing with power and evil. Make the description of this awful, evil place truly graphic. This is a place where souls die, and a tremendous challenge to the PCs. Stats are given for Shallatarriel with the benefits of the *Crown* here:

Shallatarriel: AC -6; HD 9+18 (wizard 18); hp 71; MV 120' (40'); #AT 1 staff; THAC0 9; D 6-16 (2d6+4); SA E10 (automatic 1/2 damage from breath weapons); ML 12; AL C; S 13, I 17, W 17, D 12, Co 13, Ch 11; XP 10,225.

Shallatarriel strikes with a *staff of striking* +3 and wields a *wand of paralysis* with 11 charges. For protection he wears a *displacer cloak*. He has a scroll with three *dimension door* spells, and his own memorized spells are: Level I—*charm person, magic missile* (4 missiles; x3), *protection from evil, shield*; Level II—*detect invisible, ESP, invisibility, mirror image, web*; Level III—*dispel magic, fire ball, fly, haste, protection from normal missiles*; Level IV—*dimension door, ice storm, polymorph others* (x2), Level V—*feeblemind, hold monster, magic jar, teleport*; Level VI—*disintegrate, flesh to stone, projected image*; Level VII—*delayed blast fire ball, power word stun*; Level VIII—*power word blind*.

Shallatarriel is not alone or unprepared. He has a protective cordon of six desert zombies (as shown on the map), and lurking on each side of the entrance, in the alcove shown, is a Gorgon, summoned with a *create magical monsters* scroll. The

zombies have 11, 12, 17, 19, 21, 23 hp, the Gorgons have 33 and 52 hp. Shallatariel also has several spells running; these are *detect invisible*, *fly*, *haste*, *invisibility*, *mirror image*, *projected image*, *protection from evil*, *protection from normal missiles*, *shield* (to attempt to negate magic missile attacks on him). Importantly, the Shallatariel the PCs see is just the *projected image* (unless they have special magical assistance such as a *truesight* spell, etc.). This should give Shallatariel a major initial advantage. Be sure also to review the spellcasting powers and immunities the *Crown of Corruption* grants him (see below).

Shallatariel will begin combat with *dispel magic* to eliminate spell effects favouring the PCs (*bleed*, *mirror image*, *haste*, etc.). This spell will not make him visible since it is not a directly hostile spellcasting. He follows it with *power word blind* to eliminate one PC, and then *power word stun* to attempt to take out another PC. He then follows up with attacks such as *feeblemind*, *hold monster*, *polymorph others* and the like. If the PCs get within melee range, make absolutely sure you review all the powers of the *Crown of Corruption!*

Shallatariel has the ability to retreat into chamber 6a by use of his *dimension door/teleport* spells (and scroll). Within that chamber he has stashed 8 *potions of super-healing* which allow him to retreat there, gulp down lots of healing, and then to return to the attack. The PCs will not know where he is going—if they did, a spell as simple as *passwall* would get them into his retreat. It is from this chamber that Shallatariel will use his *magic jar* attack.

Play this evil spellcaster to the hilt. Overcoming him should be a great achievement, and a real triumph for the PCs. However, they only get his treasure if they get into chamber 6a; otherwise, their rewards are not all they could be!

The Crown of Corruption: This malefic gold crown is set with four huge rubies, which can be treated as soul crystals (two of 6th, two of 7th level, with 5d10 souls in each). No Radiance spells can be cast from it, however. Once per 48 hours, the *Crown* can cast a *charm monster* (saving

throw at -4) at one PC and, if the saving throw is failed, the PC will do all he can to put the Crown on—with all the terrible benefits and penalties this implies. The wearer of the *Crown* gains the following benefits: a natural base AC of -4; complete immunity to all *charm*, *hold*, *sleep*, *paralysis*, death magic (including *disintegration*) and gaseous attacks; and the ability to radiate both *fear* and *curse* (reverse of *bleed*) within 20 feet (separate saving throws needed). The wearer can also cast *animate dead* three times per day. The wearer of the *Crown* at once becomes a Chaotic Undead, subservient to the *Crown*, but retaining all class-based abilities.

What do the heroes do with this thing? How the Crown should be destroyed is an adventure in itself—up to you to determine! (As a cop-out, delivering it to the Temple of Rafiel will do.)

Treasure: Give the PCs the treasure you think they merit, and which is a fair reward for them. For the druj, you can roll treasure type as normal, but if the PCs find the interdicted chamber of the Crown they should find one or two unusual items. If you have a shaman PC hankering after a good weapon, leave a *mace +3* of the suitable alignment here, which also has the special power of casting *striking* and *cure critical wounds* (on its user only) twice per day each, for example. Put a couple of specials in here; the PCs deserve it. Overall monetary rewards for the whole dungeon should be some 10,000 gp per PC.

Crossing Paths (optional): On their return, the PCs should meet a well-equipped NPC party of enemies (for shadow elf PCs, a party of surface elves, and vice-versa). The NPC party is here to investigate the legends they have read concerning the *Crown of Corruption*, and they want the artifact. You should design the NPC party to give the PCs a really tough fight (about 80-85% of the PCs strength), and the NPCs will fight hard to gain the *Crown* for themselves.



