

THRESHOLD

The Mystara Magazine

STRONGHOLDS



The twenty-fifth issue of Mystara's premier magazine leads you to explore cities, palaces, castles and secret lairs, refuges or obstacles for brave adventurers!

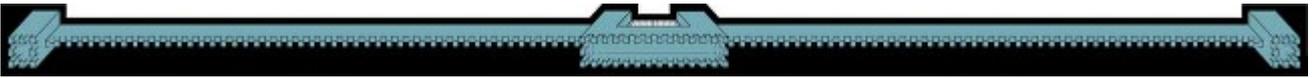
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THRESHOLD

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Issue #25: first published: May 2020, revised August 2022

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Editorial Credits

***Threshold* Editorial Team:**

Allan Palmer (AllanP)
Giampaolo Agosta (Agathokles)
Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)

Editors Emeriti

Andrew Theisen (Cthulhudrew)
Ashtagon
Angel Tarragon (The Angelic Dragon)
Geoff Gander (Seer of Y'hog)
Håvard
Jesper Andersen (Spellweaver)
John Calvin (Chimpman)
Joseph Setorius (Julius Cleaver)
Leland (Argentmantle)
LoZompatore
Micky
Robert Nuttman (RobJN)
Simone Neri (Zendrolion)
Thorfinn Tait (Thorf)
Troy Terrell (CmdrCorsiken)

THRESHOLD logo designed by Thorf

Editors Issue 25:

Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)
Allan Palmer (AllanP)
Giampaolo Agosta (Agathokles)

Layout:

Allan Palmer (AllanP)

Art:

Justin Pfeil
Dario Odillo
LadyofHats
Robin
V Shane
William McAusland

Cartography:

Allan Palmer
Giampaolo Agosta
Irving Galvez
Douglas Lanford
Robin
Sturm
Thorfinn Tait

Additional Reviewers & Proofreaders:

Allan Palmer (AllanP), Giampaolo Agosta
John Calvin (Chimpman), Robin, Sturm

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

The aims of *Threshold* magazine:

- to provide a venue for community members to present material
- to promote the Vaults of Pandius and the material there
- to increase the exposure of existing and new articles

Strongholds of Mystara

Despite the Covid-19 crisis which as everyone knows is affecting the whole world, we managed to produce another great issue of Threshold magazine. I assure you this was not a small feat as the editors were affected by the lockdown in their countries as everyone else, and I had the virus myself, even if fortunately with very mild symptoms. Nevertheless, we hope Threshold magazine, with your help and contributions, will continue on as we now have reached seven years of publication!

The next issue of Threshold, to be published by end 2020, will focus on another fundamental theme of fantasy roleplaying: Heroes, Villains and Organizations! Send your proposal to the Threshold mail (check Submission guidelines and mail on the last page of the issue) or write in the [Threshold proposals thread](#) at The Piazza forum

Even if we usually have no shortage of articles, we always need help for proofreading and editing the submissions. Indeed at the moment we are left with two active editors, therefore it is likely the issues schedule will have to be scaled back to two issues a year. So anyone willing to help the Threshold Editorial Team please come forward and let us know through the mail or in the above thread at The Piazza. Helping Threshold magazine certainly needs some time commitment, but is creative and rewarding work!

And now to the content of this issue: we look for the first time inside the Imperial Palaces of Thyatis and Alpharia, then we travel to the city state of Saffir in Norwold, the Stronghold district of Specularum, Port Blight in Karameikos, and then to the strongholds of the friendly and not-so friendly inhabitants of the Dymrak forest, continuing the detailed description of this region from the previous issues of Threshold magazine! After meeting a very evil knight, we will continue with the third and final part of the big tabletop conversion of the classic 1991 Mystara videogame, Warriors of the Eternal Sun. And finally we will continue exploring the many subsetings of Mystara with the third and final part of the article.

Special thanks also to Justin Pfeil (aka warriorneedsfood) the famous author of the ["Keep on the Borderlands"](#) webcomic and to Dario Odillo, who both provided original illustrations for this issue!

The Threshold Editorial Team and the authors hope you will enjoy this new issue as much as we enjoyed putting it together, and stay tuned for the next issue!

Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)
Editor, *Threshold Magazine* Issue #25

This Issue's Contributors

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

Kyle Knight (aka *Gravesguardian on The Piazza forum*) is wandering Thunder Rift dealing with the threats that spring up.

Irving Galvez (a.k.a. *Oleck*) Mexican player since the early 80s, amateur Mystara writer since 1996. The time passes and when the days of fantasy flew away with the age and you reach the stage of responsibilities, work, family and everyday problems, you look back and take those dusty books of D&D, and escape a moment to your childhood. Keep on playing!!!

Allan Palmer (a.k.a. *AllanP*) was first introduced to D&D a long time ago (but not quite in a galaxy far away) by a work colleague who set up a gaming group using the last version of the "blue book" rules. While dabbling with RuneQuest and Traveller along the way, he developed a liking for what would become the world of Mystara as the BECMI box sets were released. He has always been fascinated by maps. He is an IT professional and when not indulging in hobbies of panelology, retro tv watching and family history research, uses his various PC skills to consolidate the writings of others into the issues of Threshold.

Justin Pfeil draws comics, is a historical fencer in the Italian tradition, makes armor for his friends, and has played D&D since the Red Box was first published. His current project is a webcomic about characters attempting to survive The Keep on the Borderlands module from the players perspective.

Robin (at *The Piazza*, *Robin D elsewhere*) Female from 1962, she began playing D&D since its earliest days as far back as 1978, soon after becoming "addicted". Ultimately, she was intimately bound to the world of Mystara, because of its complex diversity. A current compiler of massive materials available on Vaults of Pandius & her "Breath of Mystara" blog; and former Teacher of Biology, Ecology, Chemistry, Physics, once travelling all over Europe as a stage dancer including house parties. Once called "The Fletcher" at UK GenCon by Bruce Heard for her extensive compilation in "Revenge of the Little Ones".

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

FROM the
Mystara
FORUM at



Some features in issues of *Threshold* carry a “From the Mystara Forum at The Piazza” tagline. These Discussion Boards are an active and dynamic home of creativity for the Mystara community and many other game worlds. We hope you will enjoy the articles that have arisen from that [website](http://www.thepiazza.org.uk/bb/index.php).

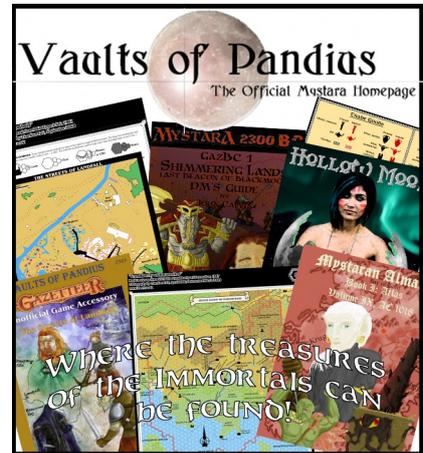


The Piazza
The Premier community
for discussion of
D&D Campaign Worlds
<http://www.thepiazza.org.uk/bb/index.php>



*FROM
THE VAULTS
OF PANDIUS*

Some features in issues of *Threshold* carry a “From the Vaults of Pandius” tagline. As one of our stated aims is “to promote the Vaults of Pandius and the material there”, we hope you will enjoy these revised or extended treasures from that [website](http://www.vaultsofpandius.com).



CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The Threshold editorial team invites all fans of the Mystara setting to submit contributions to the magazine's next issue. We are especially looking for contributions fitting the following themes:

Issue 26 - Heroes, Villains & Organizations

This issue will focus on NPCs and the Organizations that PCs can meet as enemies or allies in their exploits across Mystara.

Proposal Deadline: July 15th, 2020

Manuscript Deadline: October 15th, 2020

Issue Published: December 2020

Articles about other topics are still welcome and the editorial team will evaluate their publication for any upcoming issue, taking into account available space and the issue's theme.

Call for proposals for main themes of forthcoming issues:

Issue 27 - Theme to be determined

2021 issues themes are still to be determined, so we will soon create a poll on The Piazza! Let us know your preferences!

Proposal Deadline: January 15th, 2021

Manuscript Deadline: April 15th, 2021

Issue Published: June 2021

Threshold accepts and invites submissions of extended or revised versions of works having appeared on *The Piazza* or *Vaults of Pandius*.

Contributions may include, but are not limited to: Articles: short stories, short adventure modules, NPCs, historical treatises and timelines, geographical entries, new monsters and monster ecologies, etc.; and Illustrations: portraits, maps, heraldry, illustrations, etc.

Please refer to our [Submission Guidelines](#) on the inside back cover of this issue.

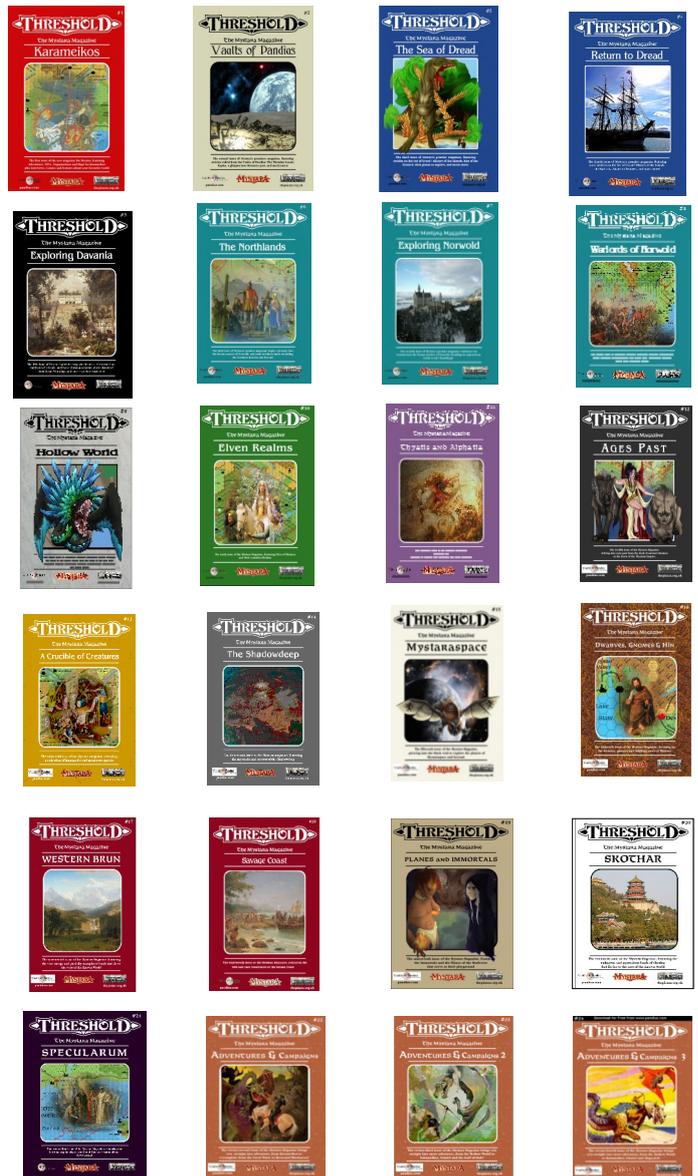
The *Threshold* editorial team strives for edition neutrality, but edition specific articles (e.g., conversions) are also accepted. statistics for new monsters and NPCs may be included in articles (e.g., adventure modules, new monsters or NPCs) in any version of Dungeons & Dragons. The editorial team also offers help in providing conversions to some specific rules set. including BECMI/RC, 2nd Edition, 3rd edition/Pathfinder. However, this material should be limited to a minimum. For most NPCs, it is sufficient to mention class, level, and alignment. For important NPCs, a one or two line stat block may be included.

FREE Downloads of Previous Issues

Previous issues of **THRESHOLD** - the Mystara Magazine, are available for download from the Vaults of Pandius website.

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

- [#1 - "Karamaikos"](#)
- [#2 - "Vaults of Pandius"](#)
- [#3 - "The Sea of Dread"](#)
- [#4 - "Return to Dread"](#)
- [#5 - "Exploring Davania"](#)
- [#6 - "The Northlands"](#)
- [#7 - "Exploring Norwold"](#)
- [#8 - "Warlords of Norwold"](#)
- [#9 - "Hollow World"](#)
- [#10 - "Elven Realms"](#)
- [#11 - "Thyatis & Alphatia"](#)
- [#12 - "Ages Past"](#)
- [#13 - "A Crucible of Creatures"](#)
- [#14 - "The Shadowdeep"](#)
- [#15 - "Mystaraspaces"](#)
- [#16 - "Dwarves, Gnomes & HIN"](#)
- [#17 - "Western Brun"](#)
- [#18 - "Savage Coast"](#)
- [#19 - "Planes and Immortals"](#)
- [#20 - "Skothar"](#)
- [#21 - "Specularum"](#)
- [#22 - "Adventures & Campaigns"](#)
- [#23 - "Adventures & Campaigns 2"](#)
- [#24 - "Adventures & Campaigns 3"](#)



A Mystara Glossary

The Editors present a list of common abbreviations that authors may use to refer to various Mystara-related game products and events:

- AC#** - Accessory series product (rules supplements, campaign sources, etc)
BECMI - Basic, Expert, Companion, Master, Immortals rules (by FrankMezter, 1983-6)
BX - Basic/Expert rules (by Tom Moldvay/David Cook, 1981)
B#, X#, CM#, M#, IM# - Basic, Expert, Companion, Immortal level adventure modules
CoM - [“Champions of Mystara” boxed set](#)
DA# - Blackmoor setting adventure modules
DDA# - Challenger series adventure modules
DMR# - Challenger series rules supplements
DMSK - “Dungeon Madter's Survival Kit”
DotE - [“Dawn of the Emperors” campaign boxed set](#)
GAZ# - Gazetteer series campaign sources
GAZF# - [Fan-produced campaign sources](#)
GRoF - the Great Rain of Fire, a cataclysmic event in Mysata's past that destroyed the ancient Blackmoor civilization
G:KoM - “Glantri: Kingdom of Magic” campaign boxed set
HW - [the Hollow World campaign setting](#)
HWA#, HWO# - Hollow World adventure modules
HWR# - Hollow World rules supplements
JA - [“Joshuan’s Almanac & Book of Facts” campaign source](#)
KW - the Known World campaign setting
K:KoA - [“Karamaikos: Kingdom of Adventure” campaign boxed set](#)
MA - [Mystara Almanac](#) (fan-produced)
MCMA - “Monstrous Compendium, Mystara Appendix” rules supplement
PC# - Creature Catalog campaign sources
PWA - “Poor Wizard's Almanac & Book of Facts” I, II & III(AC1010, AC101 & ,AC1012)
PSK - “Player's Survival Kit” campaign siource
RC - [“Rules Cyclopedia”](#)
RS - Red Steel campaign setting
SC - Savage Coast campaign setting
TM# - Trail Maps
VotPA - [“Voyage of the Princess Ark”](#)
VoP or Vaults - [The Vaults of Pandius](#) website
WotI - [“Wrath of the Immortals” campaign boxed set](#)

Readers may also find Dave Keyser’s [“An Index to Mystara Products”](#) and Andrew Theisens’s [“Mystara acronyms”](#) (both available at the Vaults of Pandius website) of assistance

Imperial Palaces and Castles of Thyatis and Alphatia

Using real world example to develop fantasy palaces and castles for the two major powers of the Known World

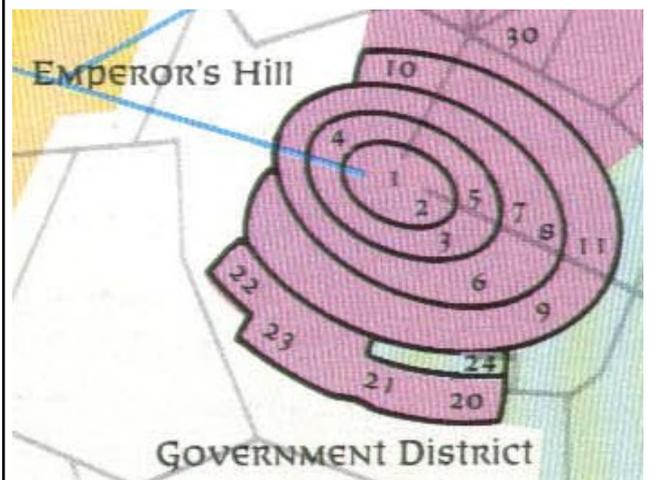
by Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)

THE IMPERIAL PALACES OF THYATIS

The “*Dawn of the Emperors*” boxed set describes the Imperial Palace of Thyatis on page 19 of the *Dungeon Master’s Sourcebook*, after the map of Thyatis city on page 18. The Palace is on the top of Emperor’s Hill, the highest point of Thyatis city, a five storey building complex built at the time of the first emperor, Zendrolion I, by dwarven engineers and workers. The Palace has more than one thousand residents, including the Imperial family, servants, soldiers, military officers with families, sages and specialists, workers, ambassadors, aides, courtiers, concubines and collaborators. The roof of the Palace has several means of defence, such as ballistae, catapults and banks of fireball and lightning bolts manned by wizards and elves.



Inside Thyatis Imperial Palace



Detail from the Thyatis city map in the “Dawn of Emperors” boxed set

ZENDROLION PALACE

As the model for Zendrolion Palace, I would use the Palace of Domitian which for many years was the main residence and government Palace in Imperial Rome. The original palace had at least three floors, maybe more. In canon Mystara the Thyatian Palace has five floors and I will include brief descriptions of each, even if the map only depicts the first floor, as that is all that remains of the Roman palace. Obviously today the destination and use of the different rooms in the original Roman palace is only supposed or unknown, and only in some cases it is known with reasonable certainty. Therefore I have decided freely what to put in the various areas of the Palace, which do not necessarily correspond to the historical truth. The Palace of Domitian is composed of three different constructions built at different times. Even if canonically Zendrolion Palace was described as one, I've included these divisions in its Thyatian counterpart.

Likely the Palace is protected not only by elite guards, including several wizards and clerics, but also by magical statues and magical wards, including at the very least wards against teleportation magic, opening of portals, summoning, invisibility, clairvoyance and gaseous forms. All personnel and guards also will have amulets of protection against mind control, ESP and charms and the guards were additional bracers, amulets or rings against the most common attacks, such as cold, fire and projectiles.

Basements

The Palace has two levels of basements, which are not included in the count of five floors. Indeed the two basements are not even connected to each other. The first basement in fact is simply used for storage, from weapons and armor to food and wine. This storage is guarded by the Praetorians and lies directly under their main hall on the first floor, and is separated from the rest of the basement, which is used by the Palace servants.

The second and lower basement is instead a state secret as it contains a significant part of the Imperial Treasury. Only a few people know this, while the public was led to think it contains only the tomb of some past emperors, which there are indeed. The Treasury contains not just gold and gems, but important magical objects, some say even artifacts, and the Imperial crowns and jewels when they are not worn. Only a few ministers, high ranking personal servants and the elite of the Palace guards have access to the Treasury, beside the Emperor and the immediate family. The Treasury is protected by traps, magic and by an elite group of trusted wizards and clerics. The few who know about the second basement also believe other defences could be triggered by unwanted visitors, including magical statues and terrible undead.

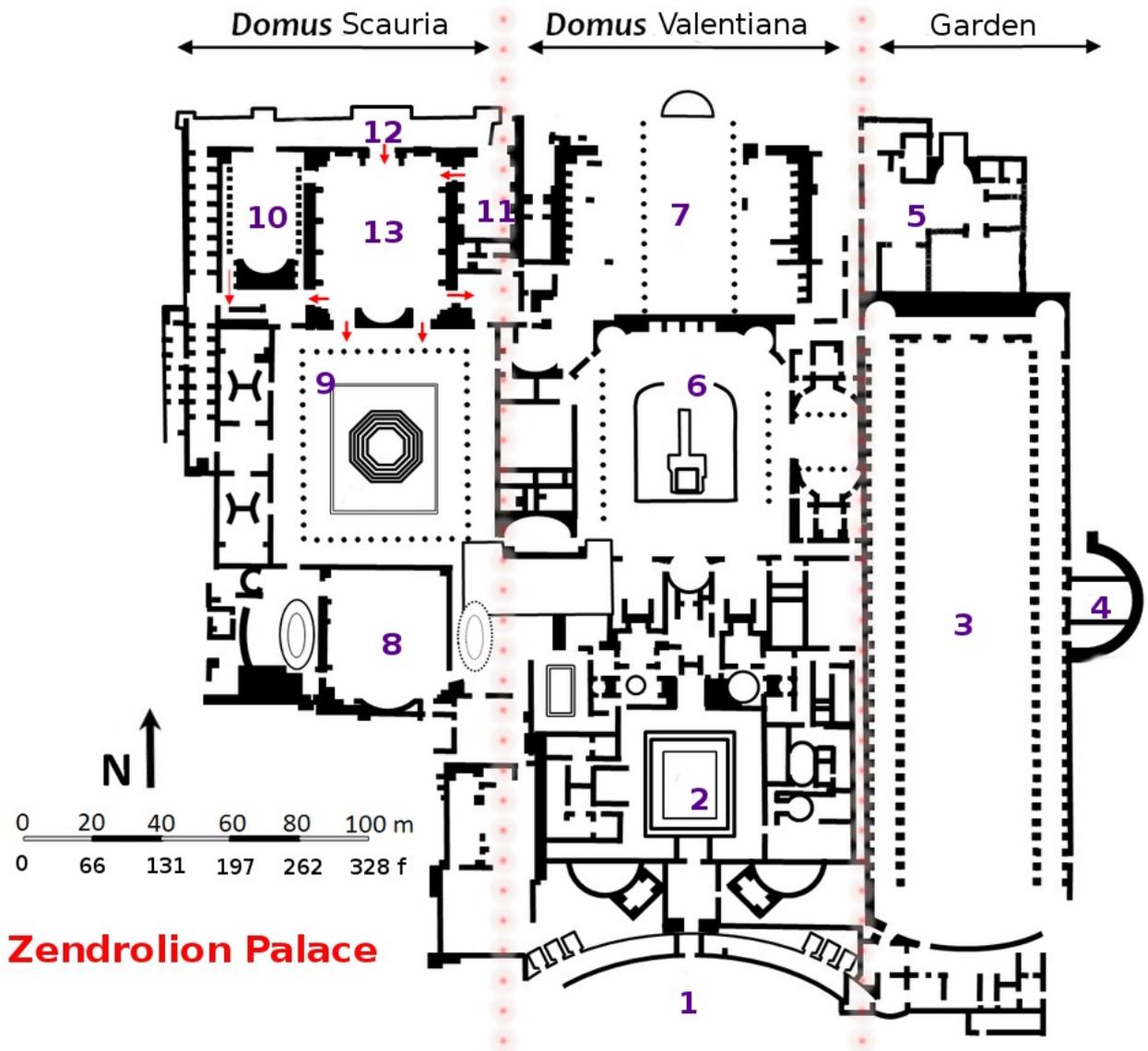
The basements are very old structures, often tracing back to pre-Imperial times, and so they often contain well preserved mural paintings, statues and possibly, old secrets and threats. Wizards and clerics of the Palace have long sealed any passage reaching down from the basement, but dedicated PCs could still be able to find some long lost forgotten passage..

House of Valentia (Domus Valentiana) and Garden, first floor

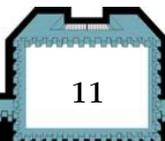
This area of the Palace was renovated by the Empress Valentia and bears her name. Originally it contained both the residence of the Emperor and his family on the second floor and the throne room on the first, but after the end of the first dynasty in 59 AC the 'official' part of the Palace was mostly moved to the western wing. It is now the 'private' area of the Palace.

Author's Note:

I am using Simone Neri's list of [Thyatian Emperors](#) from the Vaults of Pandius. There are alternative lists in the Vaults which gave different names to the dynasties. My supposition is that the Scauria part of the Palace was partially rebuilt by the second dynasty.



Zendrolion Palace





1 The great Exedra:

This semicircular row of high columns covering the whole five stories of the Palace is a magnificent sight from the whole southern part of Thyatis city, towering above the palace’s walls. The Emperor and his family appear in the second floor balcony in front of the exedra on official occasions to meet the crowd, even if it is normally only a selected crowd which is let into the small plaza below, inside the Palace walls. However the balcony is visible from many other squares around the city.

2 First Court and Paedagogium:

At the center of this area there is a square court open to the sky, surrounded by a three storied porch, with a big fountain in the center decorated by statues of mermaids and tritons. Palace stories say the statues can animate to defend the area from trespassers. The surrounding rooms are mostly the private apartments of high ranking personal servants of the Emperor and his family, who have their apartment right above on the second floor. Officials of the Praetorian Guard and the Rohal Guard¹ also have apartments here. The north western block of this area also contains the Palace’s kitchens, which extend to the basement and the second floor. The western block contains the Paedagogium, a school for Imperial page boys and girls, typically coming from Thyatian noble families, but even young slaves of exceptional intelligence are known to be educated here. The Paedagogium also extends up to the third floor.

¹ The Ostland honour guard created by Emperor Thincol Torion, see article [“The Rohal Guard - Ostland honour guard of Thincol Torion”](#) by Jesper Andersen at The Vaults.

3 The Great Garden:

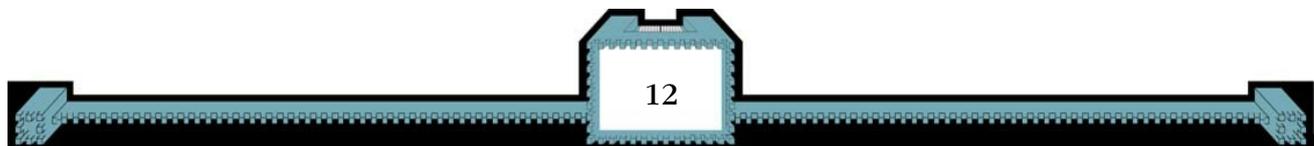
In the original Palace of Zendrolion this area was occupied by small gardens and guest apartments, but Emperor Augustin II in 85 AC decided to create a big space to run his beloved horses. The area was frequently modified by different Emperors and Empresses according to their preferences. Alexis I in 120 AC built a three storied porch which still runs around the northern, eastern and western side of the garden, decorated with statues of emperors, senators and heroes. Some emperors modified the garden to use it for gladiatorial fights. Emperor Marcus I in 459 AC built a theatre in the southern side. Gabrionus V removed the theatre in 913 AC and created a garden with a very complicated hedge maze and several fountains. The garden was heavily damaged during the Spike Assault of 960 AC. In the time of Thincol the southern part of the garden is again a horse corral with stables while the central and northern part has been rebuilt as a garden for the Imperial family, ambassadors and guests to walk in. The central part can also host temporary stages for performances and a banquet area in the warm summer evenings.

4 The Hemicycle:

This three floored domed building is both a guest apartment, a balcony and an observatory, as from here there is a beautiful view to the harbor of the city and the sea. As the first floor is open toward the garden it is also used as a gallery when a temporary theatre is built in the garden.

5 The Leontius House:

Built by Leontius II in 112 AC, this five story building, also known as the Ambassador’s House, contains a series of guest



apartments usually used for distinguished guests, such as important senators, personal friends of the Imperial family, ambassadors and the like. Even if this building has no permanent residents beside slaves and servants, many of the apartments are normally occupied.

6 The Second Peristyle:

This area was once the Throne Hall, but is now a court open to the sky surrounded by columns with a pool in the centre. In the middle of the pool there is also a small temple dedicated to different Immortals by different emperors, to Vanya in the time of Thincol I.

7 The First Peristyle:

This court with columns, dominated on the north side by a fountain decorated with a gigantic statue of the current emperor and covered on the floor by a magnificent mosaic map of Mystara, can be used both as a greeting hall for distinguished guests and as a banquet hall. Smaller banquet halls surround it to the east and west.

The Scaurian House (Domus Scauria), first floor

The western part of the Imperial Palace is dedicated to the second Thyatian imperial dynasty which rebuilt part of it after the destruction which followed the end of the first dynasty in 59 AC. This part was finally completed in 92 AC and became the 'official' part of the Palace, where there is the Imperial Throne, the Church of Thyatis and were, on the upper floors, clerks, heralds, ministers, Palace slaves and guards live, often with their families.

8 The Banquet Hall:

The main banquet hall of the current palace is decorated by precious columns of pink marble and beautiful mosaics, one on the floor representing monsters and one on the ceiling representing stars and constellations. The walls are painted with scenes of Thyatian history, and the two great fountains in the western and eastern courts are filled with statues representing allegorical scenes, the fight against the Milenians in the eastern one and the fight against the Alphatians in the western one.

9 The Great Peristyle:

This great court has a big pool in the center with an octagonal fountain, in which the Imperial family and distinguished guests can swim. The western and eastern side of the peristyle are occupied by smaller dining halls used daily by the Imperial family, important servants and guards when the number of diners is not big enough to justify the use of the Banquet Hall.

10 The Basilica:

This great temple is dedicated to all the Immortals of the Church of Thyatis. The list of the Immortals revered by the Church has varied through times². Daily functions are held here for the Imperial family and the inhabitants of the Palace. The floors above are the apartments of the resident clerics and acolytes, some of which also belong to the Praetorian Guard. The basement under the Basilica contains an ancient Nithian temple, now used as sacristy of paraments and magical objects.

² See Marco Dalmonte's version in "[Church of Thyatis](#)" at the Vaults of Pandius. Other lists by fans can also be found in the Vaults.

11 The Praetorian Hall:

This is a common room for the Praetorian Guard, where some equipment is kept and the guards may rest and eat, and also meet during off times. The Rohal Guard, however, is not welcome here and has its quarters around the First Court of the House of Valentia. The upper floors contain the apartments of the guards. To the south of this area there is also access to the big wine cellars of the Palace.

12 The Vestibulum:

This is the antechamber of the Throne Hall, magnificently decorated by wall painting and statues and obviously heavily guarded. Visitors and postulants to the Emperor typically wait here to be received.

13 The Throne Hall:

This enormous hall is decorated by eight statues of Immortals, currently Vanya, Tarastia, Asterius, Valerias, Khoronus, Odin, Ixion and Kagyar, and by other marble bas reliefs depicting important Thyatian victories. The southern wall has a niche containing the Imperial Throne, an imposing chair in marble and platinum. Praetorian and Rohal Guards are always present, obviously in bigger numbers if the Emperor is receiving.



Room in the Palace

The Second Floor

The second floor of the Palace contains the Imperial Apartments right above area 2 and 6 of the first floor, while the other areas of the second floor above the Domus Scauria contain the apartments of high ranking officials, guards, wizards and clerics, who can easily reach the Imperial apartments in case of intrusions. The last time it happened was during the Spike Assault of 960 AC, when the Palace's defences were overwhelmed and the apartments heavily damaged. Emperor Thincol has since renewed them with many memorabilia of his native city, Oceansend, and his time as a gladiator. The four major and four minor Ministers (Magistri³) have official apartments here and on the third floor, even if most of them do not actually live here as they have villas elsewhere on the Emperor's Hill, and use the apartments only in cases of works extending to the late evening and the night, or after parties in the Palace to which they were invited.

The Third Floor

The apartments on this floor are mostly inhabited by middle ranking officials, courtiers, pages and servants, and some are reserved for guests, including nobles and distant relatives of the Imperial family. Even if less rich and prestigious than the rooms of the second floor, the decorations of this floor are still artistic marvels and provide lavish accommodation. Obtaining work in the Imperial Palace is not easy, and a candidate has to obtain admission to the Paedagogium as a child, or a personal

³ See "[Thyatian Senators](#)" by Giulio Caroletti from *Threshold Magazine* issue #3

recommendation from a senator or a high ranking noble of the Empire.

The Fourth Floor

This floor contains the apartments of low ranking officials, servants and slaves. The less important slave of the Imperial Palace would still appear extremely rich and well fed to the peasants of the empire. Even the slaves in the Imperial Palace enjoy uncommon freedoms and privileges, including extensive personal possessions, money and free time, so they are typically fiercely loyal to the Empire and are unlikely to accept bribes of any kind. Servants and even slaves can leave the Palace occasionally, but are thoroughly examined with magic upon their return to avoid impostors. Most of them however live in the Palace with their families. Palace slaves can marry, even with free partners with special permission of the Emperor, which is easily granted, especially if the free individual already lives at the Palace. Palace slaves can save enough money to buy their freedom relatively quickly, and many do so. The population of Palace slaves is around 30% of the total Palace inhabitants and it changes quite often, as Palace slaves who buy their freedom or are freed by the Imperial family are often appointed to bureaucratic positions around the Empire. The Emperors in fact know very well that former Imperial slaves are typically much more loyal to the Imperial family than the common official nominated by local nobles, governors or the Senate. The position of Imperial slave is therefore greatly envied, and to supply a capable and intelligent slave to the Imperial Palace is also a source of great prestige for slave traders and common people. For this

reason it is not uncommon for parents to try to sell particularly gifted children to Imperial Palace officials, and the major slave traders send their representatives with their most prized slaves to the Palace every day.

The Fifth Floor

The fifth floor contains the apartments of the middle to low ranking Palace guards, who also tend to the various aerial defences on the Palace's rooftop. Differently from any other military personnel of the Empire, the Palace guards have the special permission to sleep in individual rooms with their families, effectively small independent apartments. A relevant section of them, however, is always on guard duty, and normally by day the families and children stay on the central part of the floor around the internal courtyard, with dedicated stairs to permit an evacuation to the lower floors in case of attack. This both ensures the safety of the guards families and avoids any hindering of military operations. Obviously to become an Imperial guard is a great honour for a Thyatian soldier, and only those who have distinguished themselves with exceptional heroism normally receive such an appointment. Under past emperors a relevant percentage of the guards received the appointment through personal friendships or bribes rather than personal merits, but that's no longer the case under Thincol.

Other Palaces and Buildings

Other Imperial Palaces are not canonically present in the description included in *“Dawn of the Emperors”*, but the real Palatine Hill has other structures, so if a DM wishes to go with a Thyatis city roughly as big as Imperial Rome, he/she may decide to include on the Emperor Hill the other historical palaces described below. Such buildings alternatively could also be placed in the Hightop, Gold and Silverlight districts.

Domus Juliana

Inspired by the real House of Tiberius, it was a two storied smaller palace built in 54 AC by Emperor Julian, which wanted to keep his private house separated from the official Palace. It should be located north west of Zendrolion Palace and smaller. Used only by some emperors, renovated by Augustin II in 90 AC, it later became mostly a military residence under the Isaurica dynasty (117-313 AC), then abandoned for a century. Subsequently a temple dedicated to Djaea under the Dorania dynasty (412-557 AC), abandoned again after 799 AC and then partially demolished and rebuilt. Now it is used as the seat of the Imperial Revenue on the upper floor and as a Library specializing in atlas and geographic books (originally furnished in 197 AC by Empress Valeria I) on the first floor. It also has an extensive garden used by the inhabitants of Emperor’s Hill for walks and rest.

Domus Valeriana

Inspired by the real House Severiana, it is a magnificent palace originally built and inhabited by Empresses Valeria I and Irene (197-211 AC) and is now mostly used for the thermal baths it contains and as a guest residence for important ambassadors, nobles or relatives of the Imperial family. Tredorian lives in an apartment here, discreetly watched by spies and guards when he leaves the Palace grounds. This Palace is also renowned for its beautiful fountains and the beautiful facade with three orders of columns, visible from the whole south east of the city.

Temple of the Great Mother

Inspired by the namesake real building. According to tradition a temple dedicated to Ordana was built here by the first Thyatians who reached Brun and it has since stood on Emperor’s Hill. It contains a famous artefact, the Black Stone, whose powers are known only to the temple’s high priestess. The temple is surrounded by a beautiful garden and traditionally is also a guest house for any visiting elven ambassador, noble or elven friend of the Imperial family.

House of Lucinius

Inspired by the real House of Augustus, it is a palace with two internal courts and extensive mural paintings. It was inhabited for a short time by its builder, Lucinius, who ruled Thyatis before he was killed by Zendrolion. Briefly used as Imperial Palace also by Zendrolion while his own was being built, it later became the school and

seat of the Imperial Wizards, and it is still used in this way. Visiting wizards are often hosted in the building and Demetrium too has his main residence here, even if he also has a room in the Palace.

Temple of Tarastia



Inspired by the real Temple of Apollo. It was built and dedicated by Empress Valentinia in 21 AC and it has stood over the centuries, even if some emperors tried, in vain, to rededicate it to Vanya. The story says the temple contains important prophecy books which some emperors tried to destroy, always failing, when they discovered the books predicted their deaths.

Domus Praeconum

Inspired by the namesake real building. Built by Emperor Stefan I in 193 AC, the House of the Heralds is a school for prospective heralds, often the starting point also for many sons and daughters of senators wishing to try the ambassador career. Admission to the school is a highly prized honour.

The Castra, Thyatian fortresses

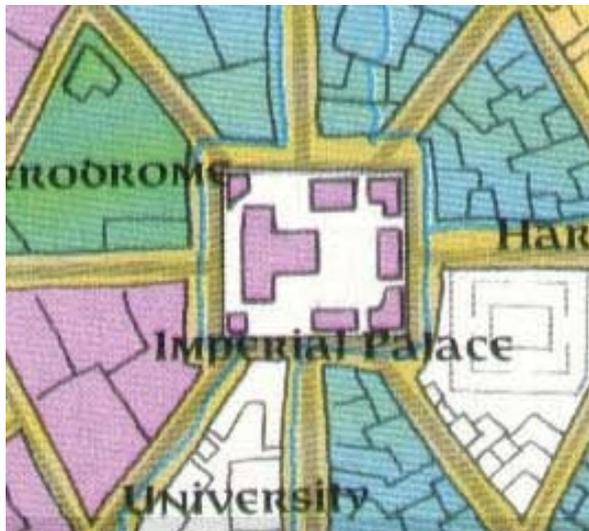
The extensive description available for the classic Roman castle and military camps can be easily used as a model for the Thyatian ones. The many Byzantine castles still well preserved in modern Greece as well can be an excellent source of inspiration⁴. The basic military camp built on plain terrain often evolved into a full fledged fortified community with granaries and a small castle in the centre. Other kinds of fortresses were built instead on natural hills exploiting the existing steep rock to make the walls higher and harder to climb.

Below: two example fortresses



⁴ See the [“List of castles in Greece”](#) and [“Castra”](#) articles on Wikipedia

THE IMPERIAL PALACE OF ALPHATIA



Detail from the “*Dawn of Emperors*” Sundsvall city map, note that the map is oriented with the north to the left.

In contrast to the map of Thyatis, in “*Dawn of the Emperors*” there is a very basic outline of the Imperial Palace of Sundsvall. In the map a main, T-shaped building can be seen, surrounded by open space, two small buildings in the north west and south west corners and five more bigger buildings from the north east to the south east. This outline may be inspired by some real world example or completely invented, but anyway some real world ruins of Middle Eastern civilizations are certainly appropriate for the visual aspects of the Palace. The symbol of Alphatia in “*Dawn of Emperors*” in fact is the lamassu⁵, a mythological creature and common decorative element for Assyrians, Babylonians and Persians. The ruins of Persepolis and Dur-Sharrukin⁶ are

⁵ See the “[Lamassu](#)” Wikipedia article

⁶ See the “[Dur-Sharrukin](#)” and “[Persepolis](#)” Wikipedia articles

indeed very appropriate for the Alphatian Imperial Palace as the monumental lamassu now at the British Museum and at the Louvre were indeed found in such sites.

Note that for some reason in D&D the name lamassu was assigned to a slightly different creature while the mythological lamassu is called shedu. So from now on the iconic Alphatian creature will be called shedu.

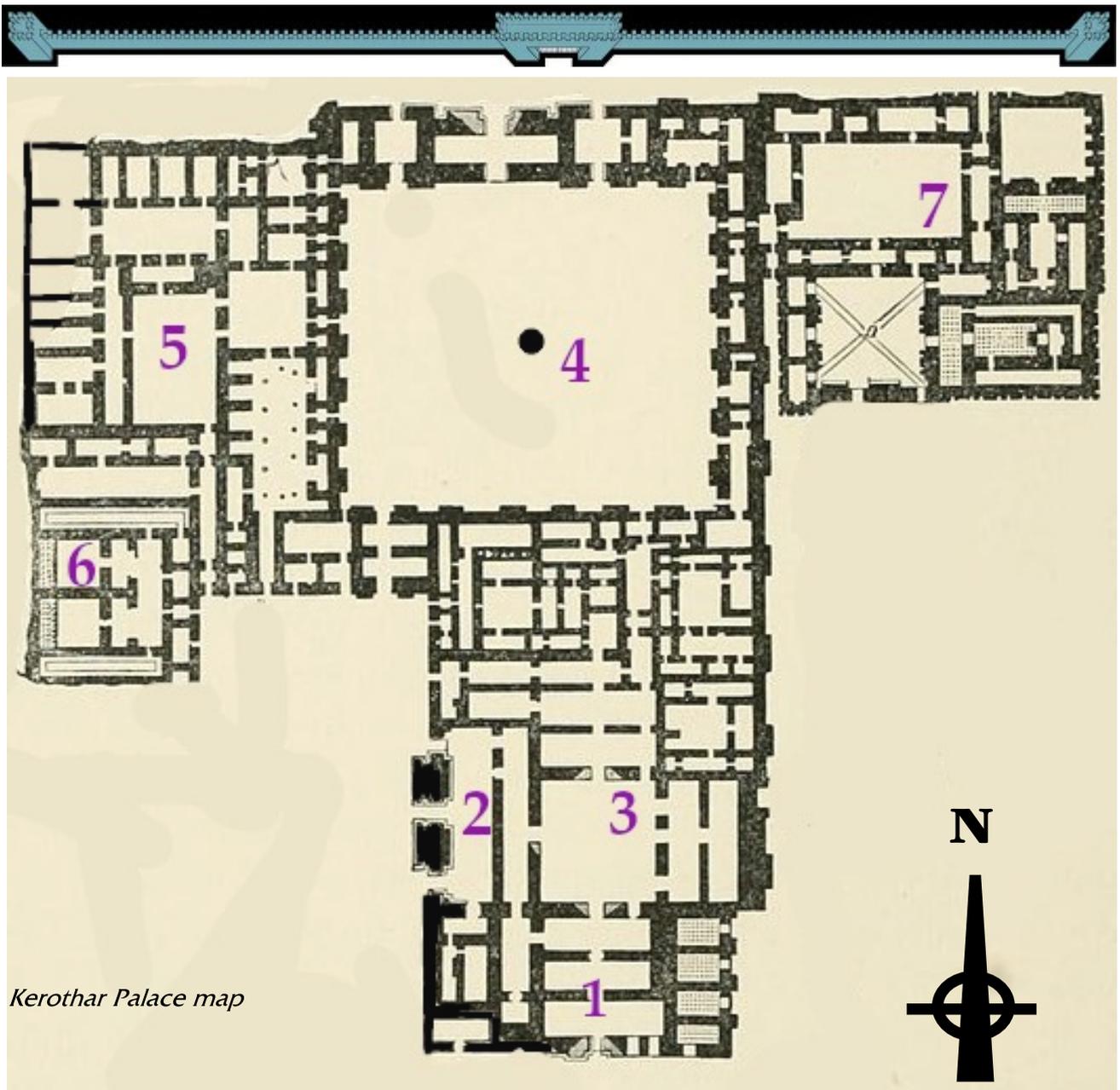
The description of the Palace in “*Dawn of the Emperors*” says the complex is a huge walled enclosure containing the Palace proper, outlining residential structures for residents, servants and slaves, a landing field for airships, stables for horses and other beasts and government buildings⁷.

Kerothar Palace

Traditionally built by Kerothar I⁸ after Landfall, but probably over an already existing native structure which greatly influenced the architectural style. The Palace is seven stories high and each level is slightly smaller than the one below, creating great balconies which are filled with trees and flowers, the famous hanging gardens of Sundsvall, common also in other palaces around the city.

⁷ Note also the description of Sundsvall and the Palace written more recently by Bruce Heard in his blog posts: “[The Hidden City of Sundsvall](#)” and “[The Imperial District of Vertiloch -- Updated July 9th](#)” where he imagines there is a ‘true’ Sundsvall and a ‘false’ one to confuse invaders, the latter complete with a phantasmal Imperial Palace.

⁸ See the list of “[Alphatian Emperors since Landfall](#)” by Jennifer Guerra and LoZompatore in the Vaults.



As expected in Alphatia, the Palace is full of magical protections, against summoning, teleport, portals and mind control. However, the wizards of the Imperial family and the other nobles living in the Palace are able to use such spells on themselves, servants, slaves and intruders. The Imperial Guard is protected by such magic, even the non-spellcasters, as Torenal. The Guards also have other protections against fire, cold, electricity and normal projectiles. The

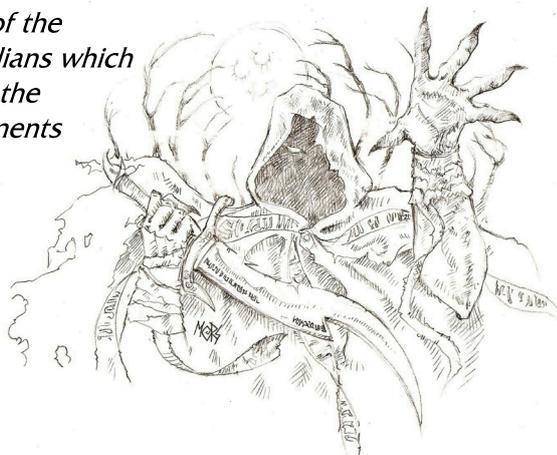
Palace has seven floors and three basements. There are stairs leading to other floors but also several 'Levitation tubes' to quickly reach the upper and lower floors. These tubes can be used by anyone, but most of them reach only the public areas of the Palace. Only a few lead to the secret basements and the Imperial apartments, and can be used only by members of the Imperial family or high ranking officials and ministers.

The Palace is also populated by several gargoyles and magical statues, some of which are sentient. Some servants and slaves may be able to command such magical servants for practical purposes. Magical servants cannot be turned against the nobles living in the Palace, but can be turned against other spellcasters, even by servants and slaves. Among the latter there are also several humanoids and even magical monsters or alien creatures coming from other worlds and planes.

Basements

There are supposedly three levels of basements under the Palace, one used for storage, one for magical treasures and weapons, one with tombs of previous emperors and even more ancient native kings. The first basement is accessible to all Palace personnel, while the second and the third are heavily guarded by magical doors with password and Symbol spells. The rumor in the Palace is that the second and third basement are also defended by mysterious guardians, undead or magical creatures, which have always defeated any intrusion. Some past emperors discovered passages to the Shadowdeep under the basements, but all of them were later sealed, or supposedly so.

One of the Guardians which roam the basements



First floor

The first floor of the Palace is the main public space, relatively speaking as normally only nobles can have access to it. This floor is magnificently decorated in every room with animated statues, bas reliefs and paintings.

1 Vestibules:

These three halls are the main access to the Palace, where visitors typically wait to be received by Imperial officers or the Imperial family. Often these rooms are furnished with food and magical displays to entertain visitors during the wait.

2 Monumental Entry:

This is another entry, decorated on the outside with gigantic statues of shedu which can animate in case of dangers. This entry is normally used only in special occasions, such as marriages, appointments of new Ministers, or to receive Alphatian Kings and Queens and important foreign personalities.

3 The Guards Hall:

This hall is so named because it is where Imperial Guards are usually present in full uniforms. In case of very important visitors, General Torenal will be here and a full honour guard will accompany the visitor to the Throne Hall. This normally happens for Kings and Queens only, both Alphatians and foreigners. The rooms north of the Hall are normally used by ministers and officers to meet among themselves or with the Imperial family. All are lavishly decorated and often have magical servants and furniture.

4 The Throne Hall:

This gigantic hall is the seat of the Imperial Throne (on the west wall) and is dominated by a very big statue of Alphatia in the center, with a small fountain surrounding it. In the north wall there is another monumental entry to the Palace, which however is normally used only by the Imperial family and close relatives, or if for some reasons a very important visitor must quickly reach the Throne Hall. The ceiling of the Hall is another wonder, with images of the skies of Mystara and of other worlds and planes constantly changing and moving. By day it shows images of light skies, by night stars and constellations. All around the walls there are magical paintings depicting scenes of Alphatian history, which animates when an onlooker gets close to them. There are also the statues of all the previous emperors and empresses, which can talk if interrogated. They are not really sentient statues, just magically programmed to answer as the true emperor or empress could have answered, according to what is known of their personality. Some give funny or rude answers depending on the question. For example the statue of Tylon IV refuses to comment on the Alphatian defeat by Thincol Torion in 960 AC. The statues however have a different set of answers only for the ruling Empress, to whom they answer truthfully and extensively in the case of questions dealing with Imperial emergencies. The rumor says that all the statues can fight intruders, if necessary, even the great statue of Alphatia which normally does not animate nor speak.

5 The Banquet Hall:

This is the main official dining room of the Palace, even if in cases of dinners with lots of attendees the Throne Hall has been used in the past for this purpose. All around this hall there are several other dining and sitting rooms populated by human, humanoid and magical servants and by many kinds of pastimes, from simple cards and dice to strange magical games and windows which look over other lands and planes. In a party evening while a more mundane palace would host dancers and jugglers, the Imperial Palace of Alphatia has gremlins mini theatre, no gravity rooms, degustation of magical liquors, shape-changing parties and any other sort of oddity.

6 Temple of Alphatia:

This is the Palace's main temple of the Immortal. Powerful magical objects are stored here and some say even artifacts. The great statue of Alphatia here, different from the one in the Throne Hall, can speak if interrogated by the ruling Empress or Emperor, offering advice from the Immortal herself, if she is willing to speak. Several clerics of the Immortal live in the floors above the temple and most of them are also members of the Imperial Guard.

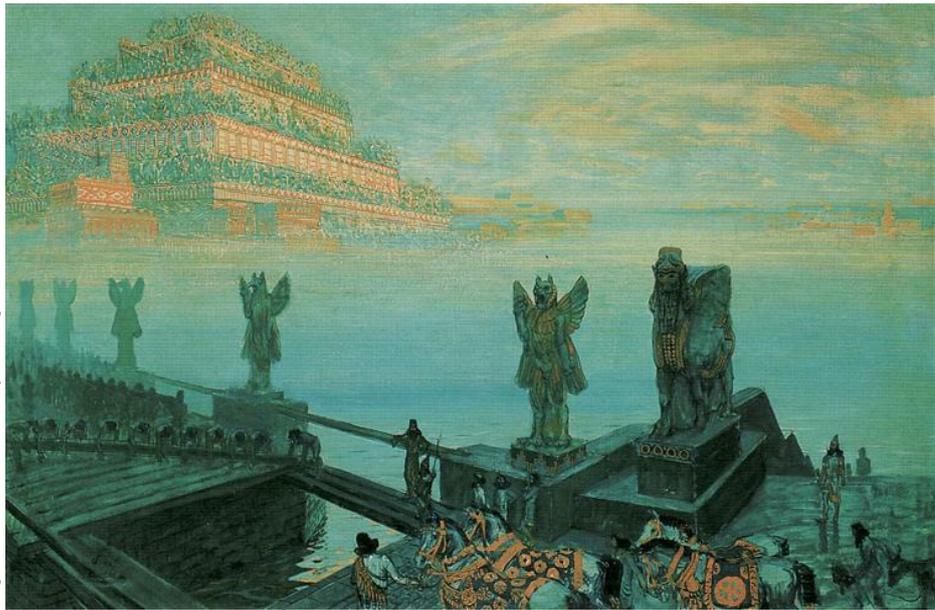
7 Dance Hall:

This hall is sometimes used for music and dance, with magical or human players, but as the whole east wing contains the private apartments of the Imperial family, it is normally used so only for relatives or reliable friends of the family. The rooms all around it are instead magical laboratories and libraries for the use of the Imperial family.

East Wing, second to seventh floor

The whole west wing of the Palace contains the private apartments of the Imperial family. Despite being reserved for them, the apartments contain a relevant number of servants, slaves and magical creatures, and several Imperial Guards on duty. In the lands where magic is not common, the nobles typically live on the first or the second floor while the upper floors, harder to reach with stairs, are reserved to servants. This is not the case in Alphatia, where 'Levitation Tubes' make upper floors much more accessible. The lowest floors of this wing are generally used as living rooms, libraries, laboratories or guest apartments for visiting relatives. All rooms are kept immaculately clean by the Palace staff even if some of them have not been used in centuries.

The upper floors, fifth to seven, are the apartments of the Empress and her children. Eriadna lives on the seventh floor, Zandor on the sixth, Mariella on the fifth. The fifth floor would also contain Tylion's and Tredorian's apartments, but as Tylion has not used them in decades and Tredorian is now in Thyatis city, Mariella has effectively 'invaded' them. Obviously not even Eriadna knows this, but Tylion is still living at the Palace in his guise of Terari with an apartment in the west wing. The Imperial apartments contain a treasure in art and magical objects of many kinds, and are the only rooms of the Palace which contain some



View of the Palace from the streets of Sundsvall
magical portals, which are normally invisible or disguised, for the exclusive use of the Imperial family. The rooftop is a beautiful garden of fountains, flowers and butterflies, often full of pegasi. Part of the rooftop over the East Wing however is occupied by the Observatory, a spiral tower which is the tallest structure of the Palace, and which contains all sorts of astronomical and magical contraptions.

Central Hall, second floor to rooftop

The area of the Palace above the Throne Hall of the first floor is an identical, gigantic space up to the seventh floor. These enormous rooms have been used in a variety of ways by emperors and empresses during the history of Alphatia. Some as private swimming pools, some as portals to other worlds, or as elaborate illusions which look like other lands and worlds, as galleries of magical and mundane art, as party halls for selected visitors and so on. Some appear to be open to the sky over

Sundsvall, even if they actually have an invisible ceiling. Currently Eriadna has the Hall on the seventh floor filled with art from all over Alphatia, Mystara and beyond. It is indeed one of the most beautiful museums in Mystara. The Empress is willing to let visitors see it, even commoners or low-ranking officers, if it suits her mood.

Zandor uses his Hall on the sixth floor as an 'Illusion Aerodrome' where he can try the most dangerous flying contraptions without suffering real harm. Distinguished officers and wizards with specific flying experience are often permitted to try this magical aerial training ground.

Mariella uses the Hall for a different purpose every week, but most often for lavish displays of clothes and jewelry, or for wild parties of any kind.

The rooftop contains another garden with a beautiful fountain, which is rumored to have a portal leading to faerie lands, and where indeed sometimes nixies appear. The garden can be visited by all nobles, guests and inhabitants of the Palace, but sometimes it is reserved for the use of the Imperial family.

West and South Wings, second to seventh floor

These wings of the Palace are inhabited by servants, slaves, Imperial Guards, secretaries and other officers whose presence in the Palace is necessary, often with their families. The second floor of the west wing also contains the extensive kitchens of the Palace with a small army of cooks and wait-

resses. As is the case in Thyatis, even in Alphatia the Imperial slaves enjoy privileges unknown to other slaves in the Empire and even to many common citizens. No spellcaster of any rank for example can kill or maim Palace slaves. Even before Tylion, previous emperors and empresses had enforced this rule, punishing any offender with high fines and compelling them to seek resurrection for the murdered slave. Tylion IV decreed instead that the murder or a Palace slave constituted Treason, with the usual punishment of *feblemind* and reduction to slavery. He applied the punishment to two Arogansa wizards. Eriadna maintained the same law, and no further incidents happened. Differently from other slaves around the Empire, the slaves of the Imperial Palace can own money and possessions and can marry. However, they are not freed nor can they buy their freedom, unless there are exceptional circumstances. They cannot leave the Palace either, but they enjoy free time to be spent with family, friends or in the gardens. Tylion and Eriadna, who are known for their democratic attitude toward commoners and slaves, have even granted them the possibility to leave the Palace, but only in groups and by magical means or by airship, to avoid the chance that some enemy of the Empire may kidnap them for informations or to gain access to the Palace. Tylion and Eriadna have even freed some personal slaves, but all the ones they freed remained voluntarily in the Palace as free servants. No slave trader or commoner can offer slaves to the Palace, only the Palace Minister can buy them, and he/she always does so outside the Palace.

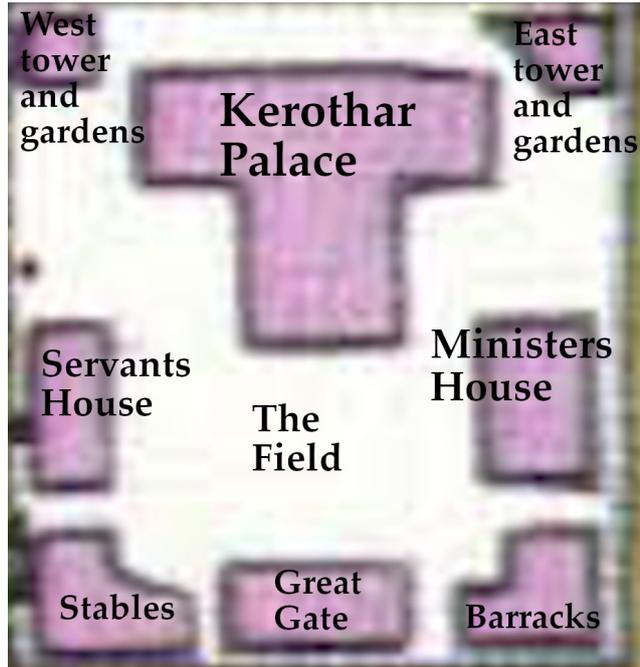
Becoming a Palace servant is a coveted position, but in this case too there is no

obvious way to apply for the job. Palace servants are often the sons and daughters of previous servants, or are personally chosen by the Palace Minister among exceptional commoners or poor wizards of the Empire and colonies. Palace servants usually become quite rich, and some eventually retire and buy some fine house in the countryside. Many however have stayed in the Palace for generations, out of loyalty for the Imperial family. Differently from the slaves, they can walk in and out the Palace, but they have to suffer a long and tiring magical examination upon their return, so they do not do it very often unless it is for official duties, such as buying special merchandise or delivering and picking up items and messages.

Children of slaves and servants who manifest spellcasting abilities become nobles and in the case of slaves are usually able to buy the freedom of their parents and siblings too. They can also easily find a job in the Guard or in some other Palace position, or be free to leave it.

The fifth to seventh floors of the West and South Wings contain many apartments for palace wizards, clerics, nobles and distinguished guests. Asteriela Torion, for example, has a big apartment where she lives with her lady-in-waiting, Galatia, on the seventh floor of the West Wing, while Master Terari has an apartment on the fifth floor.

The rooftops of these wings are beautiful gardens reserved for the inhabitants of the fifth to seventh floors. The gardens that are open to guards, servants and slaves are the ground floor Western and Eastern garden around the Palace.



Kerothar Palace map oriented with the north up

West and East Towers and Gardens

The towers are mostly used for military purposes, as lookouts and to store mundane and magical artillery, but the gardens surrounding them and indeed the whole northern half of the Palace courtyard are a favourite walking spot for the inhabitants of the Palace, from slaves to ministers. Certain access hours however are reserved for the high ranking officers and ministers.



The gardens around the towers and the Palace

Servants House

This five storied building is inhabited by all the servants who do not need to be constantly present in the Palace, mostly accountants, repairmen, cooks, cleaners, gardeners. It also contains some meeting halls and public-like rooms where the servants, both those living here and those living in the Palace, can meet and mingle. Slaves have their own meeting rooms in the Palace but also a sort of pub here that servants can enter too. Slaves can enter some but not all the common rooms of servants, or are permitted to do so only on certain days and times. If a servant marries a slave, the slave becomes free so it is not uncommon for a slave to try to raise a servant's interest in him or her.

Ministers House

The Ministers live and work in this magnificent Palace, whose first floor is also called 'The Hall of the Hundred Columns'. Each column possesses a specific, harmless magical effect, such as evoking a person's favourite scent or giving visions of the past or future. The other seven stories of the building are occupied by a ministry, from Palace on the first to Defense on the second, then Kingdoms and Dominions, Treasury, Trade and finally Magic, which also has an observatory on the rooftop. Ministers also often have personal estates elsewhere in Sundsvall or in the Empire, but are often present when they have to attend to some matter of state. The position is demanding and not permanent, usually ministers, who are personally chosen by the Empress from among faithful Alphatian nobles, agree to cover their post for a maximum of 5 years or, more rarely, up to ten.

The Field

The great space east of the Palace is also a landing field for airships. The Princess Ark docks here when visiting the Imperial Palace and normally at least the Imperial Yacht 'Tylari' and the Imperial man-o-war 'Wings of Vertiloch' are always docked here. The 'Tylari' is a leisure yacht, but can effectively fly very fast if necessary, while the 'Wings' is a very heavily armed warship with boltmen of the Imperial Guard.

The Barracks

This is the main barracks of the thousand men and women strong Imperial Guard. Usually more than half of them are on active duty in the Palace or along the walls, but here they can rest and meet in the first floor's pubs and common rooms. Families of guards do not live here but in the Servants house or sometimes in the Palace in the case of families of officers. Guards who have family on Palace grounds may spend up to two days a week with them and also enjoy some free time during the day and on vacation weeks each year. General Torenal has an apartment in the Palace (when he is not with the Empress) but is often here, even during the nights in cases of specific training drills or alarms.

The Stables

This structure does not host just horses, but several other creatures. Griffons, hippogriffs, pegasi, some harpies, pegataurs and gargoyles, a drolem and two sphinxes, who are indeed the keepers of the place. The

(Continued on [page 43](#))

The City-State of Saffir

by Giampaolo Agosta (Agathokles)

INTRODUCTION

Saffir appears in the Mystaran canon for the first and only time in the accessory supplement AC10: *“Bestiary of Dragons and Giants”* as the setting of the adventure “Krasniy the Red”, featuring a Red Dragon and aerial combat. The adventure is not given an explicit setting, let alone a location in Mystara. However, due to the presence of a Red Dragon ruling a human town and of the name Krasniy (which merely means “red” in Russian), the idea of setting Saffir in Norwold became popular in the Italian Mystara Message Board, and was compiled into a “mostly canonical” map of Norwold¹. The position of Saffir in that map makes it rather interesting, as it lies at the border between the Heldanner-populated, Alphatian-controlled Strand coast, and the Ransarn river valley, inhabited by the Vrodniki and the Vatski. Moreover, Saffir lies on a trade route from Lighthall to the interior of Norwold, which is the main access to the Dragon Kingdom of Wyrksteeth, the Vatski Rodina, and even the Kingdom of Ghyr.

In this article, I try to provide a more in-depth view of this city-state, which can easily serve as the home base for a long campaign in Norwold, especially for Basic

and Expert level characters (or the equivalent tiers of other rules sets). In this view, the original adventure serves as a turning point, allowing the PCs to take over the city itself as they reach name level, as proposed in the adventure itself. However, the town can serve as the location of many earlier adventures, and its positioning allows the Dungeon Master to easily insert a number of existing scenarios.

HISTORY

AC 830 Vatski from the Wyrksteeth cross the mountains at Ershal Pass and invade the plains south-east of the Final Range.

AC 834 After four years of conflict, the Vatski invaders are routed. Their leader, knyaz Volodymyr, is killed in single combat by the Shepherd hero, Hrotgarmr. Some of the fleeing Vatski settle along the Saffir Stream, most flee back beyond the Final Range.



¹ S. Neri et al., [Norwold Region](#) article at the Vaults of Pandius,

AC 868 Arbadnasior the Learned, an Alphanian mage, founds Saffir as a tower, which he builds in a night with his magic. Around the tower a village is formed to host an Alphanian garrison and supply lines for the planned conquest of the Ransarn Valley.

AC 870 The *Long Winter*: the second Ice Queen, Frota, begins her reign. Saffir is isolated. Lord Arbadnasior blows up himself and his castle during a magical experiment aiming at mitigating the cold. Elshartendior the Bold, the commander of the Alphanian garrison, becomes Governor of Saffir.

AC 872 The forces of Akra the Ice Witch, led by the Frost Giant Skamkel, occupy Saffir as the center of the southernmost province of Akra's reign. Eadradnaz replaces Elshatendior, who is captured by Skamkel, as Governor-in-exile, then Lord, initiating the Eadradyevich line.

AC 874 Eadradnaz dies in battle against the Ice Queen Frota, and is replaced by his son Eadradeeth the Broad-Shouldered.

AC 892 Eadradeeth dies of old age, is replaced by his daughter Amphiba.

AC 903 Lady Amphiba is slain by Premidar the Greedy, who names himself Knyaz of Saffir, and initiates the Borodyevich line. He is succeeded by his son Yarogor and later his grandson Premimir.

AC 942 Premimir Yagororevich is killed by a dragon on a hunting trip in the mountains.

Civil war ensues among the supporters of Premimir's daughter, Premipolka, and those of his younger brother Mistislav. Both are killed.



The Court of Premidar

AC 943 The warring factions accept the rulership of Sveinald Ingvarsson, second son of Ingvar of Ljóshöll, who becomes the first Knyaz of the Igorevitch line.

AC 959 Svein Sveinaldsson (also known as Svetya Svyatoslavich) succeeds his father Sveinald upon his death.

AC 982 Igor Svetyevich succeeds his father after a successful reign which consolidates Saffir's position. He is already quite old.

AC 983 After Igor Svetyevich's sudden death, his sons Volodymyr and Svyatopolk accuse each other of murdering the Knyaz. The High Druid Predgora Yurevna is called to judge the matter. She exiles both brothers, and installs Vladidar Dobrynich, a distant descendant of Premidar the Greedy, as the new Knyaz.

AC 985 Alphanian settlers and soldiers cross the Western Sea of Dawn and occupy Ljóshöll, renaming it Lighthall. A part of the local Heldanner population, led by the late jarl Eilif Eiriksson's sister, Thjohild Eiriksdottir, petitions Knyaz Vladidar to resettle in Saffir, boosting the town's population. Vladidar begins new defensive works, including a city wall.

AC 990 Alphatian troops under the command of Dunadale commander Piras Erila march on Saffir. Vladidar and his troops defend the city, but Vladidar is killed by Alphatian magic.

AC 991 With no direct heirs to Vladidar, a city council is formed, composed of Bishop Volopolk the Reverent, leader of the Temple of Dazhbog², Thjohild Eiriksdottir, representing the Heldanner population, Premigor Volodyevich, leader of the Knights of Perun, a veterans' organization, Toric Belfkarats, Valphiik the Gnome, Volomyr Dobrelkovich and Sudik Nevidarovich, representatives of the town's guilds.



The City Council

AC 992 Ericall is named King of Norwold by Empress Eriadna of Alphatia. Ambassadors from Thyatis and Alphatia reach Saffir, trying to persuade the local government to join either side. Ambassador Manlian Aulianites of Thyatis, leveraging a mix of resentment against the Alphatians, contacts with the Thieves' Guild, and oratory, outperforms Ambassador Erar of Alphatia, and Saffir declares itself autonomous and not part of the Kingdom of Norwold.

² See [Threshold Magazine issue #7](#) for more detail on the equivalence between Dazhbog and Ixion; also see notes 3 and 5.

AC 997 Theobold Redbeard is named governor of Lighthall. He sends an army led by Commander Tsalana to siege Saffir. Valphiik the Gnome, a council member in charge of the fortifications, is killed in the siege, and Volomyr and Pregomir are gravely wounded.

AC 998 With few options left, the Saffir council is ready to concede defeat. However, a mercenary captain, Krasniy the Red, appears before the council on request from ambassador Aulianites, offering his help, funded in part by the Thyatians. The council wavers, but, under pressure from Thjohild and Sudik, Bishop Volopolk consents to sign the contract. Krasniy's Heldanner and Vatski mercenaries join the defenses, with the support of a powerful Vatski sorcerer, Volopolk the Wary, and several trained wyverns, griffons, and hippogriffs. The aerial cavalry is decisive in routing the Alphatian, and Krasniy himself captures Commander Tsalana as she tries to flee the field.

After the cheerings for the victory subside, Bishop Volopolk notes that the payment offered by the Thyatians to Krasniy was only a small part of the overall cost, and a large victory bonus kicks in that was overlooked in the contract. Basically, Krasniy now owns the town. The Bishop tries to protest, but disappears when the Temple of Dazhbog explodes, allegedly due to explosives hidden in the crypt. Krasniy is named Knyaz of Saffir by a much reduced council, as four of the original members are replaced by Krasniy's puppets. Krasniy finally dissolves the council, and incorporates his mercenaries as the Saffir Guard.

The Rulers of Saffir

Ruler	Years	Style and line
Arbadnasior the Learned	868-870	Lord
Elshartendior the Bold	870-872	Governor
Eadradnaz, Skamkel	872-873	Governor-in-exile Frost Giant Jarl
Eadradnaz, Skamkel	873-874	Lord (Eadradyevich line) Frost Giant Jarl
Eadradeeth the Broad-Shouldered	874-892	Lord (Eadradyevich line)
Amphiba	892-903	Lady (Eadradyevich line)
Premidar the Greedy	903-919	Knyaz (Borodyevich line)
Yarogor Premidarevich	919-928	Knyaz (Borodyevich line)
Premimir Yagororevich	928-942	Knyaz (Borodyevich line)
Premipolka Premimirevna, Mistislav Yagorevich	942	Pretenders of the Borodyevich line
Sveinald Ingvarsson	943-959	Knyaz (Igorevich line)
Svein Sveinaldsson (Svetya Svyato- slavich)	959-982	Knyaz (Igorevich line)
Igor Svetyevich	982-983	Knyaz (Igorevich line)
Vladidar Dobrynich	983-990	Knyaz (II Borodyevich line)
Bishop Volopolk the Reverent	991-998	President of the City Council
Krasniy the Red	998-current	Knyaz (Dictator)

THE CITY-STATE OF SAFFIR

Saffir is a medium sized town, with circa 3000 inhabitants. It is a major trade center, sitting on the route from Lighthall, the nearest port, and the Ransarn river valley, but due to Knyaz *Krasniy's* tyrannical rule, it is difficult to acquire costly equipment (maximum equipment value of 300 gp, total value 75000 gp). It is also illegal to trade or even possess legally magical items.

The city-state of Saffir controls the valley of the eponymous river, as well as the Ershal Pass, which gives access to the valley of the Ransarn river. Overall, the city military protects an area over 2,000 square miles, circa half of which is actually settled, with another third being lightly inhabited borderlands. Besides Saffir, eight forts control the Ershal Pass, four mines in the Skýfjall and in the Lirovka's Alps, the road to Lighthall, and the trail to Idhunvik and other villages to the south.

Military Forces

Saffir's military is mostly composed of mercenaries, including the Saffir Guard, a highly trained (average level 3) force composed of 120 men, mostly heavy infantry, except a squad of medium air cavalry with 20 hippogriffs, as well as 2 griffon and 2 wyvern riders. *Svyatopolka the Audacious*, a Vatski warrior-woman, commands the Saffir Guard.

The main body of the army is composed of a mix of light infantry and archers, for a total of 600 men (25% of which are armed with bows). Following the Thyatian military doctrine, each hundred is led by a captain, and all captains report to a single commander, *Sigurd Kolbeinsson*, a charismatic Heldann Shepherd veteran.

Finally, 45 artilleryists man the ballistae and catapults in Saffir and in the forts. Almost 60 auxiliaries, including two wyvern trainers, round up the army.

Of these troops, circa one third of the Saffir Guard, two hundreds of infantry and archers, 25 artilleryists and 20 auxiliaries, are quartered in Saffir, while the remaining troops man the forts.

Furthermore, Krasniy has hired a company of 30 cossacks from the Peseny Centaur Hetmanate. The cossacks provide land cavalry support, which is otherwise not available in the standing army, and serve as outriders, patrolling the borderlands and hunting down goblin bands from the Gnomstal Forest. The company is divided in three lances of 10 centaurs each, one of which is a level 2 *uryadnik* (sergeant). The company is led by an *otaman*, *Ovlur* (Cen-

taur 4). The cossacks are armed with lances and short bows.



Ovlur, Centaur Otaman

City Locations

Arbadnasion's Tower (ruin): this ruined building is what remains of the tower of Arbadnasion, the Alphatian founder of Saffir, and its associated constructions. The upper stories of the tower were obliterated by the explosion that killed the mage in 870 AC. The ground floor is hard to navigate, and the rooms are all but destroyed, but there are accesses to the basement, which is mostly preserved, albeit dangerous, as the wizard was -- like many of his peers -- as a secretive man with a penchant for magical traps.

Temple of Dazhbog (ruin): The Temple of Dazhbog was once an imposing building, with an octagonal main hall surrounded by slender towers and surmounted by a golden dome symbolizing the sun. However, it was destroyed in a mysterious fire.

Spire of Volos: This newer temple is a three story tower, supported by tortile pillars and surmounted by an onion-shaped dome, tessellated with gleaming green, red and black tiles. Inside, draconic motifs decorate the walls, and a round altar dominates the main hall, which is two stories



Saffir

high. A hidden stairway leads to the upper floor, where the offices of the priests are found. The temple of Volos is favored by Knyaz Krasniy over the other religions of Saffir, and it is therefore suitably decorated. The building itself is surrounded by a small grove of willow trees.

Forge of Volund: This squat, one-story temple dedicated to the Heldanner god Volund, also known as Svarog by the Vanatics, is built of large granite blocks. Its windows are closed by dark iron bars, and the doors are also built of the same metal, finely decorated with mythological scenes. The altar is shaped as a massive anvil, and pillars are shaped in the form of huge armored men, holding two-handed swords pointed down in front of them.

Shrine of Perun: This open area is dominated by a large, ancient oak tree, under which the worship of Perun³, the thunder god, is conducted. The priests of Perun have a medium sized hall adjacent to the area, where they house wandering godar.

Blue Feather Inn: This is the better regarded of Saffir's two inns, managed by *Aðalbjartur* (♂ NM, N), an Heldanner, and his wife *Zaida* (♀ F3, L), a former adventuress from the south. The inn usually hosts several members of the Saffir Guard, as there are currently no barracks while Krasniy's castle is under construction. *Aðalbjartur* is a handsome, honest, but cowardly man, whereas *Zaida* is a wilful woman, albeit far from her adventuring days. The

³ Thor for the Heldanners. The equivalence is acknowledged by both peoples.

inn itself features a large hall, a kitchen, and several rooms in the upper story.

Welibik's Emporium: This shop is managed by the gnome *Welibik*. It is a small, single-window business, crammed with all kinds of imported goods, from liquors to pottery, from jams to tapestries, from parchment to chalk. The gnome and his family also produce small clockwork devices, mostly amusing pieces such as mechanical singing birds, carillons, and the like. Welibik also manages an illegal, if profitable, trade in magic items -- especially potions -- but is extremely wary of spies and informers.

Pandrum's Bakery: Pandrum (♂ NM, N), a common Alphatian man in his forties, manages this bakery producing both Alphatian style white bread and Vrodniki black bread. Pandrum is a supporter of the old city council regime, but keeps his opposition to the Knyaz to himself for now, as the mercenaries of the Saffir Guard have already imprisoned other, more vocal opponents of the Knyaz.

Magist Volopolk's Tower: Volopolk the Wary, the most powerful mage in Saffir (and the only one operating legally), owns this walled compound, topped by a slender tower complete with a onion-shaped dome. Strange aromas and weird noises often come from this building, which is widely shunned by the saffirians. The Magist does not entertain visitors, and deals only with the Knyaz himself, his right-hand woman, Svyatopolka the Audacious, and the Elf alchemist, Mendel. Officially, the alchemist is only allowed to provide ingredients to the mage, but neither is especially scrupu-

lous, and Volopolk occasionally sells potions to Mendel.

Guildhall: This is one of the oldest buildings in Saffir. Its ground floor is built in small stone blocks, with two upper stories constructed in painted wood. The Guildhall houses the council of merchants, which used to be the main political power in the town. Currently, it is mostly a social club, since Krasniy radically curbed the ability of the merchants to influence the city policies.

Mendel's Apothecary: The Elf Mendel manages this apothecary. He is a skilled alchemist and herbalist, and carries (illegally) a few magical potions which he procures from Volopolk the Wary. Mendel is not especially in favor of Krasniy's rule, but his livelihood depends in large part on the Magist's willingness to trade through him alone, so he will go to any length to stay on the Magist's good side.

Ilya the Blacksmith: Saffir's smithy is managed by Ilya Alexievich⁴ (♂ F6, N), a former adventurer of mixed Thyatian and Vanatic descent. The smithy is centrally located, near the ruined Temple of Dazhbog and the Forge of Volund. The smith mostly sells tools and horse shoes, as the weapons production is reserved for the Knyaz's militia.

City walls: The city walls once encompassed the whole town. After the last Alphatian attacks, several gaps are being filled by construction squads. The guard keeps a close watch on the gaps to prevent any unauthorized entrance to the city. Still,

⁴ This character is called Eli in Bestiary of Dragons and Giants. I've changed it to a more appropriate form for a setting in Norwold.

these are the easiest points where to smuggle in or out of Saffir people or goods, as the gates are heavily guarded.

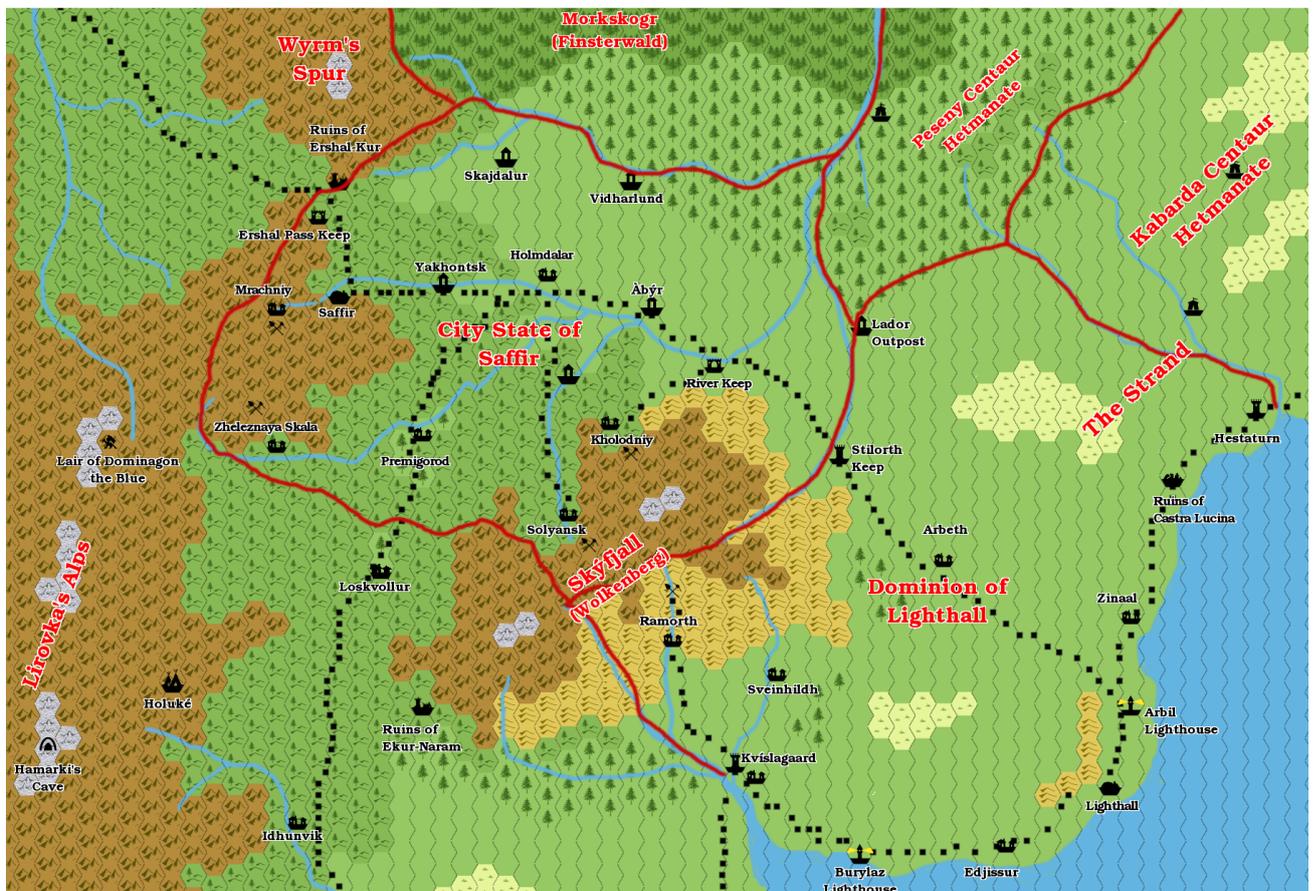
Krasniy's castle (under construction). The castle construction site is located on a hill overlooking the town. It is being worked on by circa 40 people, usually overlooked by 4 guards.

Nearby Locations

Ershal-Kur: This ruin was once part of the line of fortifications built by the Alphatians to prevent attacks on their coastal colonies by barbarians and humanoids from the inland regions. It was abandoned after the demise of Prince Gaernil for lack of personnel. The last defenders set up a number of traps to prevent outsiders from entering the

keep and its dungeons, and retreated to Saffir. Rather than brave the magics of the Alphatians, the later rulers of Saffir built the Ershal Pass Keep.

Ershal Pass Keep: This fort was built during the reign of Svein Ingvarsson to guard the Ershal Pass to the Ransarn river valley. It is a simple but effective fort, with a main stone keep and wall surrounding a number of small buildings, and a wooden palisade protecting the village around it. The village itself has circa 50 inhabitants, but given the dangerous position, a company of the army, 20 Saffir Guards, and the main force of the Cossacks are stationed here to contain the Gnomstal goblins and the Vrodniki raiders from endangering the trade.





Vatski Knight

River Keep: This fort was rebuilt recently, and is composed of a single stone tower and a large wooden stockade protecting the barracks. An entire company of infantry is stationed here, to protect Saffir from Alpathian aggression. A small village of 50 people has formed around the keep.

Holmdalar: A large village (100 inhabitants) in the plains between River Keep and Saffir, Holmdalar has a predominantly Heldanner population. It is protected by a detachment of 20 Saffir Guards, who reside in a defense tower and in the local inn, and half a company of infantrymen, who are headquartered in a set of wooden barracks.

Premigorod: The largest village (100 inhabitants) in the hills south east of Saffir, it was founded by one of the princes of the Boryevich line. The population, much like Saffir itself, is of mixed Vanatic and Heldanner stock. Half a company of infantrymen and 20 Saffir Guards protect this village and the southern border from a small keep.

Zheleznaya Skala: A large mining village (circa 100 inhabitants) up in the Lirovka's Alps, it is the only village in the Saffir area with a small Mountain Rakasta population (about 10% of the population). It is

defended by a detachment of 20 Saffir Guards, 25 infantrymen, and one artillery crew, who man the small castle overlooking the mine. Silver and iron are the main product of the mines.

Three smaller mines are located within the territory controlled by Saffir, one in the Lirovka's Alps (**Mrachniy**, another iron mine) and two in the Skýfjall (**Kholodniy**, a marble mine, and **Solyansk**, a salt mine). All are served by smaller villages (around 50 inhabitants) and protected by detachments of 25 infantrymen.

GOVERNMENT

Saffir recently transitioned from an oligarchic republic to the dictatorship of Krasniy the Red, a mercenary captain who took power after saving the city-state from the Alpathian invaders. A typical Vanatic strong man, Krasniy rules primarily through his military commanders, Sviatopolka the Audacious and Sigurd the Handsome. Although he shows several signs of eccentricity, Krasniy is an intelligent if tyrannical ruler, and keeps magical and clerical power at hand, through his court mage, Volopolk the Wary, and the cult of Volos, the dragon god of change and renewal.

The Court

The Court of Knyaz Krasniy is temporarily headquartered in the Town Hall, while the Knyaz' Castle is under construction.

Knyaz Krasniy the Red (♂ Red Dragon, 10 HD, C). A red dragon able to take human form, Krasniy appears as a tall, burly human with red beard and hair. He dresses

primarily in red, both for personal taste and to create a memorable persona. Krasniy has been sent to take control of Saffir as a proactive defense project by one of the ministers of the Dragon King Eruptar of Wurmsteeth. However, he also has a personal side project -- he is collecting treasure to power his next Ceremony of Sublimation. He started by raising tax money from the city, but has now reached the second cycle, and has redirected his interest towards magical items. As a result, he is spending more of the City-State's revenues towards building projects -- in particular his caste -- which he believes will be useful in the third cycle, and has restricted magic use in the city, to ensure that as many magic items as possible are brought to his treasury.

Volopolk the Wary (♂ Vrodniki Magic User 10, N). A powerful Vanatic magician, Volopolk Dobredarovich hides his humble origins behind a shroud of mysticism. He has aligned himself with the Dragon Kingdom of Wurmsteeth, which he believes is the best ally against the encroaching Alphatian Empire, to the point of becoming a follower of Volos, the Pearl Dragon. He is well aware of the magic prowess of the Alphatians, and desires nothing more than to see them thrown back beyond the sea. As the Court Mage to Knyaz Krasniy, Volopolk is free to operate, although he rarely performs magic in public. His spellbook includes quite a bit of elemental magic stolen from Alphatian magicians, through judicious applications of the Feeblemind spell.

Svyatopolka the Audacious (♀ Vatski Knight 10, N). A middle-aged mercenary from Stamtral, Svyatopolka Glebovna raised in rank and experience through a decade of

minor wars and skirmishes. For a warrior, she is quite unimposing, and is more of a tactician than a frontline fighter. She compensates for her lack of personal strength with a good selection of magical items, as well as with a broad expertise in weapons. Like the Court Mage, she is aware of Krasniy's true nature and is an agent of the Dragon Kingdom. Svyatopolka is a passable aerial rider, and rides one of the Knyaz' griffons.

Sigurd Kolbeinsson the Handsome (♂ Heldann Shepherd Fighter 8, L). A charismatic Lupin from the south, he started out as a sea reaver in the Western Sea of Dawn and north to the Great Bay, where he got bounties posted on his head for piracy from Alpha and Gaudavpils. He therefore retreated to Stamtral as a mercenary officer, where he met Svyatopolka the Audacious, who hired him to lead the Saffir army. Sigurd operates also as the chief administrator for Krasniy, dealing personally or through his captains with the guildmasters, the clergy, and the village chiefs.

The Saffir Guard

Lieutenant **Kari Glumsson** (♂ Heldanner Fighter 7, N). A man who rose through the ranks in mercenary companies that serve (or plague, depending on your point of view) the Duchy of Stamtral, Kari is an expert swordsman, and one of the four lieutenants under Svyatopolka's leadership in the Saffir Guard, the élite mercenaries composing Krasniy's personal guard. A wound suffered in an early battle left him with limited physical strength, but he compensates with excellent reflexes and a sturdy build. A courageous warrior, he is perhaps a bit too rash for a commander.

Lieutenant **Malshedira** (♀ Foresthome Elf 6, N). Malshedira commands the castle garrison at Zhelznaya Skala, and acts as the village governor as well. Disfigured by a fire in her forest home during her childhood, Malshedira left the forest for good, and has an almost pathological fear of fires and forests (she also hates fire magic, and has none in her repertoire). She is a passable rider, and a good mounted warrior on both horse and hippogriff. Contrary to Kari, she is a cautious commander, and like controlling the garrison from her keep, with a hippogriff ready to fly in case of danger.

Sergeant **Vladipolk Volkhovich** (♂ Vrodniki Fighter 4, L). An ethnic Vrodniki from a tribe in the upper course of the Ransarn river, Vladipolk is an experienced mercenary, having served in infantry, cavalry and archery units. He is also trained in aerial riding, and rides a hippogriff in battle. As befits a stereotypical Vrodniki barbarian, he is courageous to the point of foolhardiness, but also generous to his friends and forgiving to defeated enemies. Vladipolk commands one of the Saffir Guard units that patrol the town. His hippogriff is generally ready for flying from the barn behind the town hall.

Sergeant **Vsek Olegovich** (♂ Vatski Fighter 4, N). Vsek is a mercenary from the Duchy of Lazarsk, where he was recruited as a young boy by Svyatopolka the Audacious. He idolizes the warrior woman, on whom he has had a crush as long standing as hopeless. A former smith's apprentice, Vsek is not the strongest or wisest warrior around, but has been able to overcome his limitations through constant practice, which has made him one of the Guard's best shots with a crossbow. A good leader and woods-

man, Vsek commands the Saffir Guards stationed at the Ershal Pass Keep.

Boroda Viachekovich (♂ Vatski Fighter 3, N). A comic figure in the Saffir Guard, Boroda has been affected by digestion problems ever after a stint as a sea reaver. This made him not only less resistant to fatigue, but also disgusting, due to his terrible breath and continuous farting. His ignorance is also legendary, as the poor Boroda tends to talk too much and make a fool of himself. He does have some "redeeming" qualities: his luck at cards (actually due to his fast fingers) and his ability to instinctively second guess others. Boroda can be usually found at the Blue Feather Inn, drinking or playing cards with other members of the Saffir Guard.

Hallfrid Fjólnirsdottir (♀ Heldann Shepherd Fighter 3). A Lupin female, Hallfrid is a skilled fighter and a reliable member of the Guard. She's also a follower of Thor, reveling in physical ability and sports -- she is the most tireless tracker in the Guard, and a good wrestler and weightlifter for her small size and light build. She is also rumored to be the fiancée of Captain Sigurd Kolbeinsson.

Orm Thorgilsson (♂ Gnomish Snoutzer Fighter 3, L). This short, bushy-moustached Lupin is supposedly the Guard's foremost investigator. Endowed with a brilliant mind, an energetic character, and his race's resilient build and tracking ability, Orm's real asset is actually his ability to bully reluctant witnesses and suspects into confessing whatever he needs. He can be usually found honing his bowman skills -- something he claims serves to calm and focus his mind -- when he is not on active duty.

Svala Knutesdottir (♀ Heldanner Fighter 2, N). Svala is a Heldanner huntress, and a good shot with either bow and crossbow. She is familiar with the Strand region, but has chosen to retire to guard duty after suffering from a training accident. She's often found on duty at Saffir's city gate.

Yuri Igorovich (♂ Vatski Fighter 3). The last son of a minor boyar from Lazarsk, Yuri was never particularly bright, nor interested in much except hunting in the forests in the western reaches of that duchy. He joined the Lazarsk army, but in spite of his efforts in training, he was discharged without special honors after an uneventful spin. He enrolled in the Saffir Guard mostly because the pay is higher than in other similar units. Yuri is not particularly well liked by the other Guardsmen, due to his noble origins.

RELIGION

Saffir has long been open to many cults, due to its position at the crossroad between Vanatic, Heldanner, Alphatian, Elven, Dwarven, Gnomish, Mountain Rakasta and Lupin civilizations. In recent years, the Knyaz has sponsored -- albeit without too much fanfare -- the cult of Volos and subtly opposed those of other Immortals. The Temple of Dazhbog got the worst, as it burned down a few months ago in a mysterious fire. The guard has not managed to pinpoint the culprit yet, although rumors say that explosives were hidden in the temple basement, and the disappearance of the Bishop Volopolk the Reverent has been hinted to be related to the fire.

Temple of Volos

Hierarch **Dobrelko Svetyevich** (♂ Vatski Cleric 5 of Volos, N). A flabby, prematurely balding priest, Hierarch Dobrelko is the highest ranking priest of Volos in Saffir. He only recently took his position, after the Knyaz funded the renovation of the Temple of Volos. A mediocre theologian, the Hierarch is also in charge of meting justice in Saffir, a role he undertakes with greater energy than his physique would indicate -- although most of his efforts are spent bossing around his assistant Sudislava.

Initiate **Sudislava Rostivolodvna** (♀ Vatski Cleric 1 of Volos, N). Sudislava is more intelligent and wise than her boss, but is not very personable, and is rather lazy, which accounts for her lack of progress in the cult hierarchy. The daughter of a well-to-do Saffirian merchant, she is very committed to the philosophies of Volos, and her paranoid mindset suits well the current state of Saffir.

Temple of Dazhbog

Bishop **Volopolk Radodarovich the Reverent** (♂ Vatski Cleric 7 of Dazhbog, N). The bishop of Saffir is a noble man slightly over 50 years old. This loyal and courageous priest disappeared after the fire that destroyed the temple building, leaving many suspicions on the events of that night. Officially, his whereabouts are unknown, although the guards tend to spread rumors -- that he fled the city, or that he died in the fire. The truth is that Knyaz Krasniy holds the bishop prisoner in his dungeon, hoping to force him to reveal the location of the temple treasury -- which does not exist, as

the Temple of Dazhbog is a relatively poor organization.

Coadjutor **Putypolka Volkhovna** (♀ Vrodniki Cleric 6 of Dazhbog, L). The second highest-ranking priestess of Dazhbog in Saffir, Putypolka is now the head of the cult, after the disappearance of the bishop. A middle-aged woman of Vrodniki descent, she is very familiar with the temple business, and would be well able to run it without the bishop, except that the temple is reduced to a ruin. An unsuspecting soul, she cannot make heads or tails of the bishop's disappearance.

Vsek Volodyvolodovich (♂ Vatski Cleric 3 of Dazhbog, C). The son of Volodyvolod, a member of a lesser branch of the Borodyevich house, Vsek initially enrolled in the army, and fought in the Lighthall-Saffir conflict. He contracted the brown plague during the siege, and joined the Temple of Dazhbog after the Bishop healed him. Contrary to Putypolka, he is not a trusting soul, and suspects foul play in Bishop Volopolk's disappearance. However, he has not been able to prove it, yet.

FORGE OF VOLUND

Forgemistress **Bifis Bombirak** (♀ Dwarf Cleric 7 of Volund⁵, L). A Wurkrest Dwarf from the Wurmsteeth Range, Bifis is a former adventurer, having traveled far from her homeland. She does not share the isolationist stance of her clan, being a fair and trusting soul. She's Saffir foremost expert on speleology and geology, as well as an expert smith. Bifis chafes under the Knyaz's restrictions on weapons, and would hand

⁵ Watland for the Heldanners. The equivalence is acknowledged by both peoples.

over the custody of the Forge of Volund to another priest, if there was one willing to take over. Unfortunately, she is the only available priest of Volund in Saffir.

SHRINE OF PERUN

Faric Wharikarats

(♂ Dwarf Cleric 1 of Thor, N). An aspirant warpriest from the Barrad clan, Faric belongs to one of the families who have not returned from exile to Stonepeak, the northernmost dwarven kingdom. His parents are too poor to move back



to Stonepeak, and put their confidence in Faric's ability to win sufficient gold to pay for the resettling. Faric has been a member of the army, where he honed his tactician's skills, and is an expert mountaineer. In his desire to restore the family fortunes, he is likely to embark in a quest beyond his current skills.

Premigor Volodyevich (♂ Vrodniki Fighter 6, L). The guardian of the sacred oak, Premigor Volodyevich is a veteran of many wars, as well as the leader of the Knights of Perun, an organization of veterans -- he led them during the Lighthall-Saffir war, and was gravely wounded in battle. Lacking experienced priests, he leads the cult of the god of thunder.

ROGUES, REGENTS, AND RASCALS

The Thieves' Guild

Guildmistress **Volgerd Erlendsdottir** (♀ Gnomish Snoutzer Thief 9, N). Head of the Thieves' Guild is an unassuming Snoutzer female, Volgerd. Hailing from a penniless family, she started out as an adventurer, campaigning across Norwold's wilderness, until her weak constitution led her to contract brain rot. She stopped in Saffir to recover, and never left the city. Volgerd worked her way into the local guild, relying on a combination of strength, skill, and deception. Should this not suffice, she keeps a store of magical items, including potions of human control and polymorph self, from her adventuring days.

Rhorvald Hareksson (♂ Heldanner Thief 5, N). Rhorvald is the guild's primary smooth-talker. A charismatic and handsome Heldanner in his mid-thirties, Rhorvald poses as an adventurous merchant, although he rarely leaves the city. He settled in Saffir after being caught during a complicated con in Lighthall, an experience which made him somewhat more careful, and a lot more ruthless in covering his tracks. Contrary to some other thieves, Rhorvald has no compunction about resorting to violence when necessary.

Sudik Nevidarovich (♂ Vatski Thief 4, N). Sudik is, officially, a member of the Merchant's Guild, specialising in stonemasonry. A very tall and strong man, he looks well in the stonemason's role. However, he achieved his success only thanks to his membership in the Thieves' Guild, as the

thieves have helped him by sabotaging his competitors and providing him with access to funds and information which allowed Sudik to get major contracts with the Saffir government for the restoration of the city walls. In return, Sudik provides covers for several members of the guild, as well as conferring a large quota to the guild coffers.

Thalrisa (♀ Elf 4, C). A beautiful elf woman, Thalrisa is the most popular singer and actress in Saffir. She performs at the Blue Feather Inn, and takes advantage of her charm to acquire all kinds of useful information for the guild. When she is not performing, she moonlights as a thief. Besides her stealth, she also packs useful magics, including a sleep spell.

Vselko Zivonovich (♂ Vrodniki Bard 3, L). The son of a Vrodniki chief, Vselko left his tribe to pursue a musical career. He is a mediocre performer at most, but is a competent thief, and one able to follow orders, which makes him precious to the guildmistress.

The Merchants' Guild

Bilibin (♂ Earth Gnome NM, L). Bilibin is a gnome caravaner based in Saffir. He travels routinely to Lighthall and to Midway Haven, and less frequently to the Ransarn Valley. He knows well the geography of southern and central Norwold, and is a shrewd negotiator. Bilibin likes to hire adventurers as guards, often offering incentives such as discounts on used armor or weapons. Bilibin's family also owns a general store in Saffir, which is mostly manned by his brother, Welibik.

Welibik (♂ Earth Gnome 2, N). Welibik is Bilibin's younger brother. An alchemist and veterinary by trade, he does not leave Saffir as often as his brother, manning the shop when Bilibin is away. Welibik knows a lot about the local personalities, but also about famous people around Norwold, thanks to his idle talks with customers and visitors. While not a paranoid character, he is very perceptive, which has helped the family business to escape the notice of the Saffir Guard.

Mendel the Alchemist (♂ Elf 2, N). Mendel is a Foresthome Elf who settled in Saffir twenty years ago. A passable alchemist, he is also able to use some magic, mostly of the type that helps identifying magical objects and writings. Mendel was wounded and scarred during the war, and supports the rule of Krasniy, since he has since obtained a monopoly on the provisions to the tower of the court mage. He also runs an illegal trade in potions, mostly provided by Volopolk himself to track the potential buyers.

Toric Belfkarats (♂ Dwarf 2, N). Toric is the foremost jeweler and one of the richest craftsmen in Saffir. He used to be a prospector, and participated in the Lighthall-Alphatian war as an officer of the militia, distinguishing himself for his tactical acumen. However, he is a terrible miser, even for a dwarf. Toric is the current guildmaster of the Merchants' Guild, an organisation that collects all the merchants and craftsmen in Saffir.

WANDERERS AND MAGES

Zivon Volkhovich (♂ Vrodniki Bard 9, C). Zivon is an itinerant bard of Vrodniki origins. He spends the winter in Saffir, then travels the Ransarn river valley to the Vatski Rodina during spring, and returns in autumn. A former adventurer, Zivon's musical skills are not on par with his other capabilities as a swordsman, hunter, and outdoorsman. He is relatively reliable as a guide, but is not a trusting soul, and takes offence at the smallest slight.

Yuri Svyatogorovich (♂ Vatski Fighter 1, L). A large young man from the Vatski Rodina, Yuri is an adventurer for hire. He is a trained outdoorsman, and has traveled beyond the Great Bay as a kid with his father, a merchant from Vvolstograd. He is an honest hireling and a courageous warrior, as well as a generally cool person to have around. However, a training accident left him a bit short on his breath, which may prove a liability in the field. Furthermore, while Yuri is not rash, he is not the most insightful person around.

Volomyr Dobrelkovich (♂ Vatski Magic User 5, L). A tall young man of Vatski background, Volomyr is not the typical Magic User. He is trained as a Skald, but he is not as cultured as you would expect from a wizard, and his magic is mostly achieved through talent rather than study -- it is possible that Alphatian, Elven or even more exotic blood ended up in him, as his family is not native of Saffir, and very little is known about it. Of course, to the people of Saffir, Volomyr is just the village fool -- when Krasniy took over, Volomyr feigned insanity as a result of wounds suffered in the war. He is actually scouting visitors to

Saffir for powerful adventurers who might be able to overthrow the dictator.

Vyshemira Putyslavna (♀ Vrodniki Magic User 5, C). A member of the secretive sisterhood of the Ice Witches, Vyshemira has recently infiltrated the city, looking for a magic item coveted by the Ice Witches leadership⁶. The witches suspect that the Knyaz may have the item, or may be trying to acquire it, which would explain his policies towards magic items. If their first hypothesis proves true, Vyshemira will have to steal it from the Knyaz's coffers, a very dangerous proposal. As such, the Ice Witch is likely to trick some unsuspecting adventurers into stealing it for her.

Vseata Bryachislavich (♀ Vatski Thief 4, N). A tall woman in her mid-thirties, Vseata is the hereditary boyarin of Premigorod, a vassal village to Saffir. A good huntress and swordswoman, Vseata visits the city frequently either escorting caravans or to curry the favor of Knyaz Krasniy. The boyarin is a persuasive and brilliant politician, but like many politicians she is not to be trusted, as she is prone to deception and not at all loyal to the Knyaz or even the city.

⁶ The nature of this object is left vague on purpose. It could be, for example, the Sentinel, if the DM wishes to set the UK *Adlerweg* series in or near Saffir.

ADVENTURES IN SAFFIR

The City-State of Saffir is an ideal location for a party of adventurers in the Basic and Expert range. The city is controlled by a tyrannical overlord, but not one who will immediately force the player characters to confront him or leave. Actually, Krasniy may well try to recruit the characters to act as agents in various matters, as suggested in the original adventure.

This section provides guidelines for adapting a number of suitable published modules to Saffir.

In Saffir itself, **Abardnasior's Tower** may be a suitable location for a low-level adventure. Actually, a ruined wizard's tower or other abode is a typical location for an adventure, and several published ones may be easily adapted. From BECMI, the first part of B12: *"The Queen's Harvest"* fits quite well. Replace Kavorquian with Abardnasior, and you have a simple adventure ready, with minimal adjustments needed. Replace Kaerin Penhaligon with Krasniy or one of his underlings. Krasniy wants the magical items, of course, but also the tiara, which is the original crown of Saffir, to legitimize his rule. Kavorquian's notebook may be replaced with a logbook from Abardnasior, detailing some of the events of the foundation of Saffir, and the research of the Alphatian mage. It might point the PCs towards the Ice Witches and the magic item they search (see the entry for Vyshemira Putyslavna in the Wanderers and Mages section).

Alternately, the Goodman Games' *Dungeon Crawl Classics* (DCC) series contains a suitable adventure, "*The Ruins of Castle Churo*"⁷. Replace once more the titular wizard with Abardnasior, and the monsters with a band of goblins, most likely sponsored by the Ice Witch Vyshemira to penetrate Abardnasior's dungeon.

Outside Saffir, you can stage a lost dwarven hall in the mountains near **Mrachniy** or **Zhelezhnaya Skala**. There are several suitable modules. From BECMI, you could use XS2: "*Thunderdelve Mountain*". This is a solo module, but can be adapted for an adventuring party in the mid-Expert range. Thunderdelve becomes one of the main settlements of the lost Syrrak clan⁸.

As an alternative, the DCC series contains a suitable module for low-level characters, "*Forges of the Mountain King*"⁹. As for XS2, replacing the lost dwarven clan with the Syrrak clan is easily done. You may want to replace the evil dwarves of the adventure with something else, in particular gnomes corrupted by the evil at the heart of the Gnomstal Forest, but dwarves will work too.

In both cases, the PCs might simply hear rumors about the dwarven halls by one of the bards in Saffir, such as Zivon Volkovich, or be recruited by a dwarf, for example Toric Belfkarats, Faric Wharikarats or Bifis Bombirak, or by agents of Krasniy the Red,

who is on the lookout for magical items, or, finally, by Vyshemira the Ice Witch, who is also collecting lost magics.

Ershal Pass Keep can serve as the base location for a Basic-level wilderness campaign. In BECMI, you could easily adapt B2: "*Keep on the Borderlands*". The cultists of Chaos here come probably from the Gnomstal Forest, or they may be followers of the Black Queen of Alphak's Volcano.

Otherwise, the DCC series has a sort of remake/homage to B2, "*Into the Wilds*". The adaptation of this module is quite easy, as the goals are very similar to those of Keep on the Borderlands.

Finally, the Keep might also be used for an adaptation of the AD&D 1e adventure, UK3: "*The Gauntlet*". In this case, you will want to adapt the preceding adventure in the Adlerweg series, UK2: "*The Sentinel*", to Yakhontsk, Holmdalar or another suitable village near Saffir. The creator of the titular Gauntlet would be the Ice Queen herself, of course, and the goblinoids come from the Gnomstal Forest. The Sentinel, on the other hand, would have been created by Abardnasior and other Alphantian mages.

⁷ This adventure is written for the d20 rules set.

⁸ See "[The Skaufskogr and Beyond](#)" in *Threshold Magazine* issue #7 for more details on the Syrrak clan, and "[The Skars' Legacy](#)" in *Threshold Magazine* issue #10 for a way to link the Syrrak dwarf to a larger campaign in the nearby Skaufskogr region.

⁹ This adventure is written for the 4e rules set. Its encounters are rather oddly balanced for that rules set, however, so you might be better off porting it to BECMI.

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Imperial Palaces & Castles of Thyatis & Alphatia

(Continued from [page 25](#))

most numerous population are the thousand pegasi of the Imperial Guard. The pegasi often roam free all over the Palace and beyond, working also as natural look-outs for any danger coming to Sundsvall. All the creatures here are loyal to the Empire and will fight to defend the palace if necessary.

The Great Gate

This is another building used as barracks and artillery storage, but also a magnificent gate rising over the walls with shedu statues and an impressive drawbridge.

ALPHATIAN CASTLES

A great source of inspiration for Alphantian castles would be the fortresses built by the Parthians the Sasanids and other dynasties of ancient Iran, some of which are very well preserved⁹. Obviously as Alphantian castles they should also have a relevant population of pegasi, magical monsters and magical weapons.

⁹ See a comprehensive [“List of castles in Iran”](#) on Wikipedia.

A Travellers' Guide to Specularum

THE STRONGHOLD DISTRICT - PART I

by Allan Palmer
with Giampaolo Agosta (agathokles)

Author's introduction

This article stems from the work that Giampaolo Agosta (agathokles) and I posted on the Piazza Forums some time ago. That work, adding detail to the city of Specularum, had been inspired by the proposal by Bruce Heard (in his days at TSR) for a line of "city books" adding background to the major cities of the Known World. Those of accessories never materialised. However, the fanon output from Giampaolo and myself, along with relevant material at the Vaults of Pandius collected from other Mystara fans, was eventually compiled into the "Speculatum" themed issue #21 of Threshold Magazine. That issue included maps of each city district which I had developed from the original city map layout first published in GAZ1: "The Grand Duchy of Karameikos". These local maps showed the placement of buildings across the blocks. Each district had a few notable buildings marked and some had further detail described.

At the back of my mind I had felt it would be an interesting exercise to flesh out the neighbourhood with some more detail - adding to those establishments already placed, the other businesses, workplaces and facilities that would provide some depth to an area. The intent was to provide

some assistance to a DM running an adventure in Specularum, giving them some background information that they could use to (a) guide their players through the city, being able to tell them what shops they pass by, (b) where players can find certain establishments if they ask for them, and (c) perhaps give the DM an encounter springboard using one of the businesses or its proprietor.

Realistically it would not be practical to identify every single building - some of the buildings would be purely residential, others might be shops or businesses (some including residential accommodation) and others would just be workplaces. Giampaolo and I had calculated population figures for each city district. I consulted several references, and using those figures calculated the number of basic building types in the district. Then I set about deciding which businesses appeared where and trying to justify their positioning.

Most of the identified buildings are just noted for the business that operates there. Some have brief details of the proprietor - thanks, in part, to a "Specularum Merchant Generator" tool developed by Giampaolo. This tool incorporates the traits system from GAZ7: "*The Northern Reaches*" to add some personality to these NPCs.

The Stronghold District

This area of the city is seen by many as the root of the Traladaran people and their culture, traced back to the "Dark Age" around 800 BC. Over the centuries it has risen to prominence, led by the Radu clan. The district was the first area of the city to be fortified with stone walls. It has a strategic position overlooking Mirror Bay and the Volaga River, as well as being the major entrance/exit to the city for overland travelers coming from or going to the east.

The district's population is the smallest of the city's wards. In 1000 AC, it is estimated that this part of the city has 1,200 residents.

The majority (approximately 80%), as might be expected, are Traladaran; around 12% are Thyarian; and as the result of inter-cultural marriages in the years since the arrival of Duke Stefan, the last 8% are "New Karameikans".

See the articles ["A History of Specularum"](#) and ["Walking the Wards"](#) in *Threshold* Magazine issue #21 for more detail on the history and appearance of the Stronghold District.

Newcomers will note the impressive east wing of Radu Manor standing on a rise



directly in from of them as they enter through the gate. They may also notice, in the formal garden between the Manor and the entry road, a short column with a bust mounted on it. The eyes of the bust are directed directly towards the gate, as if watching all who enter.

If the travellers are bringing goods or merchandise for the Stronghold Districts' businesses, their carts will be directed eastward following the perimeter wall and around the residential blocks and on to the warehouse area on the southern side of the district.

Those who have business within the district are directed into the local streets, while those who have objectives lie in other parts of the city are directed along the wide route, known locally as the Broad Way, that follows the northern perimeter of the area to another city gate that provides access beyond the Stronghold District. This roadway skirts several business establishments on its southern side as it sweeps round towards the Stronghold Gate on the district's western side. Practically all the buildings along this route offer services that would be of interest to adventurers arriving in (or leaving) the city.

At the eastern end of the Broad Way stands the **Stronghold Inn** (S6) which offers food, drink and lodging to guests. It is run by a family that is related to the Radu clan. The large stables next to it provide for guest's mounts and is also where Anton Radu's carriage is kept when not in use.

Adjacent to the stables are a **wheel/cartwright** (S18), a **blacksmith** (S19) and the premises of a **rope and net maker** (S20/21).

Continuing along the Broad Way are:

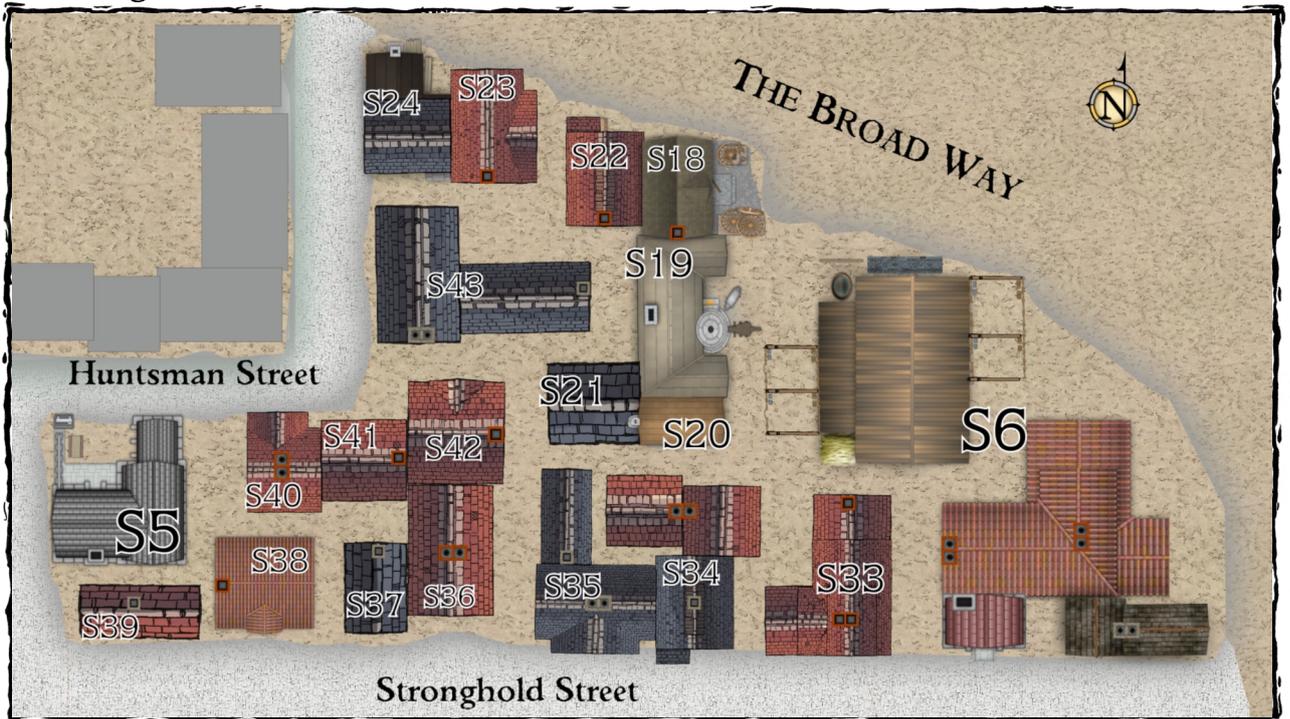
Cobbler (S22) – After travelling across the wildlands to the city, an individual's footwear may need some repair having suffered in various terrain and in varying weather. The cobbler makes boots good for life in the city as well as sprucing up those that will be worn by departing adventurers and others setting off on travels.

Undertaker (S23) – Adventurers arriving in Specularum may bring with them the remains of a fallen comrade. The undertaker deals with all faiths provides services to ensure the remains are celebrated and dealt with in the appropriate manner. Additionally, the undertaker may arrange for the transport of the remains to the deceased's homeland. There are opportunities here for employment to carry out such transportation. Who knows what might (secretly) accompany the departed on their journey?

Jeweller (S24) – One of many similar businesses across the city. This strategically placed operator can purchase gems from arriving adventurers. Of course, any wise traveller would consider seeking out the best offer from a range of establishments first, but their need to exchange the jewellery they have acquired might outweigh this. The shop also sells jewelled items to its customers – perhaps they need a gift to present to someone, or perhaps the gems may be better accepted than hard currency. The proprietor is *Ilya Vasilov*, [Male, Neutral Human Traladaran], a member of the Goldsmiths' Guild known for being cautious but unreliable; he supports the Radu faction.

Pawn Shop (S25) – This business offers secured loans to people, with items of per-

The Stronghold District - Block 1



The Stronghold District - Block 2



sonal property used as collateral. If an item is pawned for a loan, within a certain contractual period the pawner may redeem it for the original loan plus some agreed-upon amount for interest. If the loan is not paid within the time period, the pawned item will be offered for sale to other customers by the pawnbroker. Such loans may be inviting to arrivals who have little currency with which to procure food or lodging or other requirements. Pawning may also be an option for departing the city and needing a sum of money to fund their travel.

Gambling Hall (S26) – Those individuals without items to pawn might try their luck at one of the games of chance on offer at this establishment. Those who have acquired some wealth (as the result of adventuring or of some other employment) may be enticed to see if they can increase their fortune. But the odds are always against them here.

Physician (S27) – Those arriving in the city may be suffering from some illness or injury. The physician offers possible diagnosis and recommended treatments – perhaps necessitating the services of a local apothecary, cleric or magic-user. Characters preparing to leave the city may consider a “health check” by a physician before they set off, arming themselves with an array of salves, potions and the like to stave off potential harm.

The Golden Sceptre tavern (S2) – a drinking establishment that offers liquid refreshment and temporary rest for those entering the city, or the opportunity to celebrate a departure.

General Merchant (S28) – A store stocking a range of supplies from food to basic equipment. Ideal for those setting off on their travels to stock up with last minute requisites, or for those returning to the city to replenish exhausted items.

Moneylender (S29) – Finances are always important. Those leaving Specularum may have a need to obtain additional funds to buy needed items or services. Whilst others entering the city may need some injection of finance to be able to survive. If they have nothing to sell or pawn, this institution may be their solution, providing some guarantee can be arranged. The Veiled Society may be the ones who offer such an arrangement.

Fortune teller (S30) – What awaits the traveller on their journey across the wildlands, or in the streets of the metropolis? Perhaps the fortune teller can advise them?

Linguist (S31) – With many cultures both ancient and modern across the Known World, adventurers may need the services of a specialist to decipher or translate documents and tomes they that they have “acquired” during their exploits. Or some may need assistance in unravelling clues they need to embark on a new journey.

Cartographer (S32) – In similar fashion to his neighbour, the linguist, this specialist is able to provide maps to assist travellers as they venture across the Known World. Information gained from arrivals in the city enable new or updated maps to be developed.

The Beastman's Axe tavern (S1) – A popular place for drinking, eating and meeting others, this tavern faces the

The Stronghold District - Block 3



Stronghold Gate that allows access between the walled Stronghold District and the city's North End District, which in turn gives free movement to other areas including the Merchant District and the main harbour and docks. Travellers entering from the Duke's Road and not being seduced or lured by what the Stronghold District offers can move on into other parts of the city to conduct business, seek lodging or refreshment, or perhaps employment (of various kinds).

Likewise, the Stronghold Gate allows those within the city a passage to the Duke's Road where their journeys can take them north and east through the wilds of Karameikos and beyond. Such travellers may find the businesses along the Broad Way useful in providing last minute purchases of equipment, provisions or services.

Those bringing goods and supplies into the Stronghold District from other parts of the city or beyond will be directed south from the Stronghold Gate to the area of warehouses and granaries, from where the Radu clan arrange the distribution of the materials. This storage area is close to a gate in the southern perimeter wall of the district which provides access to a group of jetties on the north side of Mirror Bay. Goods (and passengers) can be loaded or unloaded from vessels using these jetties that are overseen by the Radus.

Going south from the Beastman's Axe are a **Barber** (S53), an **Armourer** (S54), a **Forge/Smithy** (S55), before coming to the **Stronghold Stables** (S3). In the centre of this block is a **Tannery** (S56) operated by *Andrei Vladescu* [Male, Chaotic Human Traladaran], known for being cautious but sus-

picious. Adjacent to the tanner's workshop is the premises of energetic but greedy *Grygory Petrov* [Male, Lawful Human Traladaran], a **Leather worker** (S57). Nearby is the **Saddlery** (S58) operated by *Irena Aleksos* [Female, Neutral Human Traladaran]. Irena is a former adventurer and used to be a party scout. Although reverent she is known to be deceitful. Next to Irena's establishment is a **Belt maker** (S59). This workshop is run by one of the few non-Traladarans in the Stronghold District: *Antonianus Angelian* [Male, Neutral Human Thyatian]. Energetic but vengeful, Antonianus owes money to the Goldsmith's Guild. Vladescu, Petrov, A;ekos and Angelian are all members of the Leathersellers' Guild and support the Radu faction

Further up this street are more businesses; they include the **Jewellery Shop** (S60) of, modest but sometimes rash, *Pavel Radianev* [Male, Neutral Human Traladaran], and beyond are a **Quilter** (S61), **Skinner** (S62), **Basket maker** (S63) and a **Chimney Sweep** (S64). The latter is a potential source of local information as his trade takes him into many houses in the district, affording him the opportunity to see and hear things that the residents might wish to keep secret.

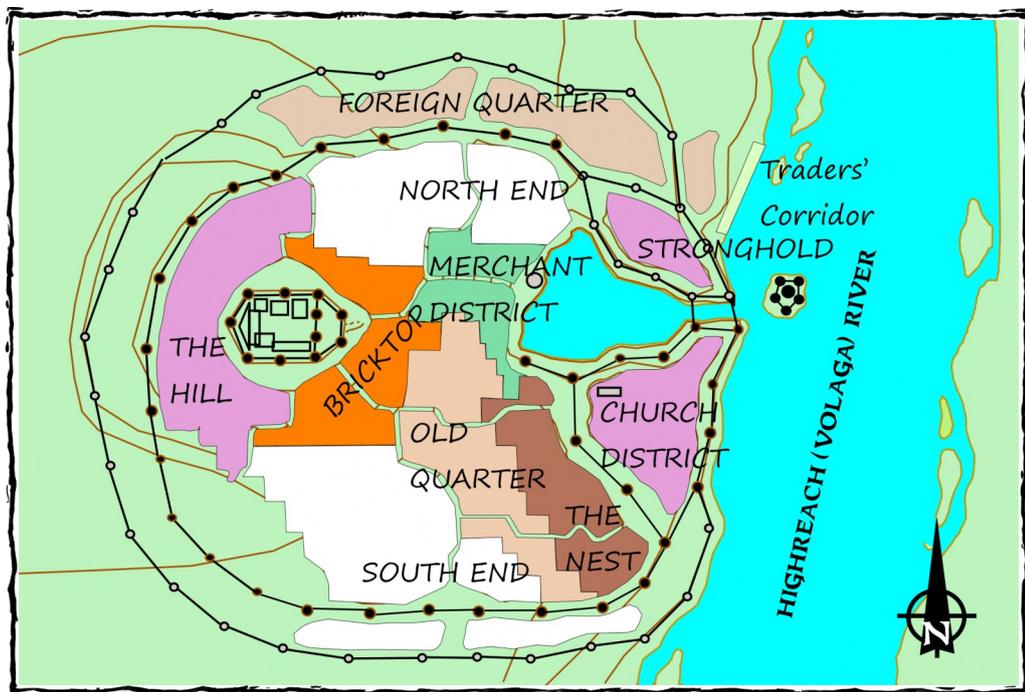
Across the street are a **Weaver** (S52), **Scabbard maker** (S51) and **Weapons maker** (S50)/ The last two businesses often providing repairs to weapons damaged during exploits than making new ones. Turning east, this block has the premises of a **Broom maker** (S49), **Rat catcher** (S48) and a **Purse maker** (S47). Further along is the **Mercer's shop** (S46) of *Darya Ourov* [Male, Lawful Human Traladaran], a member of the Tailors' Guild known for

being modest but vengeful. After this is a **Barber** (S45) often catering to users of the next-door **Bath house** (S44), somewhere that travellers can clean themselves after enduring the time on the trails across the country.

Across the street is a **Laundry** (S43) that can refresh the dirty clothes of a traveller or of a local worker. A **Brothel** (S42) is sited in the alley next to the Laundry, offering relaxation to those in need of intimate company. The nearby **Perfumer** (S41) counts the working girls as some of his regular customers. The neighbouring **Apothecary** (S40) has many potions for both visitors and staff of the brothel as well as other citizens. **The Huntsman Tavern** (S5) is run by *Zweis Irenescu* [Male, Lawful Human Traladaran], a member of the Tavernkeepers branch of the Innholders'.

Along the southern side of this block can be found a **Candle and Lamp maker** (S39), a **Soap maker** (S38) and a **Cheese maker** (S37). The cautious but deceitful *Zweis Aleksianescu*, [Male, Chaotic Human Traladaran], a former adventuring healer, now a member of the Bakers' Guild operates a **Bakery** (S36) here. The adjoining **Fishmonger** (S35) is *Theodosius Sulovich* [Male, Neutral Human Traladaran], known to be a member of the Radu faction. A **Grocer** (S34) and a **Butcher** (S33) are also found on this side of the street.

To Be Continued



Map of the city of Specularum showing the location of the Stronghold District

PORT BLIGHT

by Irving Galvez (Oleck)



“Home sweet home. Nothing like taking a cold beer after being day out on the swamp. My small kingdom growing slowly but with control.”

from Mirko Novalicov.s Diary

HISTORY

Port Blight was originally founded in 988 AC as a retirement home for an ex-pirate. Mirko Novalicov devoted part of his life to amassing fortunes and enemies, so he now chooses to live in an inhospitable place. At first, he lived with only 10 members of his

crew. Used to physical activity, he felt softened in their new home and decided to start exploring the swamp. His first trips were to the areas near the Achelos River, where he discovered the burned village of Gorica, the village of Korat and the dangerous Island of Rosentos, where he lost two companions.

From there the party eventually met the Gator Men, a warrior race that controlled much of the swamp. And with this, the doors were opened to meetings with the Troglodytes and the Cay-men, with whom they began setting up trading arrangements in the swamp. And finally, he contacted the Lizardmen.

Mirko opted to remain neutral against all humanoids and this earned him respect and ease of commercial activities throughout the swamp. Faced with this new challenge, Mirko built the first dock to house his riverboat together with warehouses to store goods.

Eight years ago, Mirko found a drifting raft in the swamp carrying people who were escaping Fort Doom and decided to offer them a place to call home. Luckily for the ex-pirate, most of them were farmers and there was also a woodworker. With the farmers came new possibilities to trade and the carpenter began to build more structures within what Mirko called his territory.

One day a Minrothad pirate ship appeared, it had sustained great damage as it had been attacked by Five Shires ships. Mirko offered them help and the pirates offered goods they had on their ship in exchange. The captain was so grateful he promised Mirko that he would inform other colleagues that they could sell their products and trade there. Mirko built a bigger dock and seeing that it was no longer just a house, he decided to name the place Port Blight. Over time the port grew, and illegal trade flourished. He agreed on a trading pact with the Caymen so that everyone traded in different products and thus brought benefits to the whole swamp.

Gradually more refugees arrived from Fort Doom, and the place began to attract attention from the Black Eagle Baron. He sent a scout to investigate, but because he did not bring back any alarming news and having noticed that illegally obtained items could be sold there, the Baron chooses not to concern himself with Mirko's port.

However, with the growth of the port came new problems; Mirko felt that it was becoming a focus of attention. He decided to limit the arrival of new settlers. He made a law where only those people who had craft skills could become residents of the port. Others were only given asylum for a while and then they had to find a new home. Recently Mirko contacted his old friend Yasen of the village of Luln, a good black/armor/weaponsmith, and with these skills, Mirko plans to start selling weapons in the swamp taking advantage of all the existing conflicts.

THE PORT

(Pop. 65 humans and sometimes other Swamp Folks)

Port Blight is fortified with palisade walls. It has 6 watchtowers that completely protect all the surroundings. It has 3 entrances: by foot to east and west, and by water south (the docks).

The population is made up of craftsmen, farmers, fishermen, and port workers. There is a small tavern named "Croc Nest Tavern" (food, drinks, and rooms), a leatherworking shop, an alchemist's shop and there is a small carpentry/shipbuilder workshop that also repairs ships. There are several farms outside the palisades.

It is common to see Caymen or Gator Men at times, but never lizardmen.

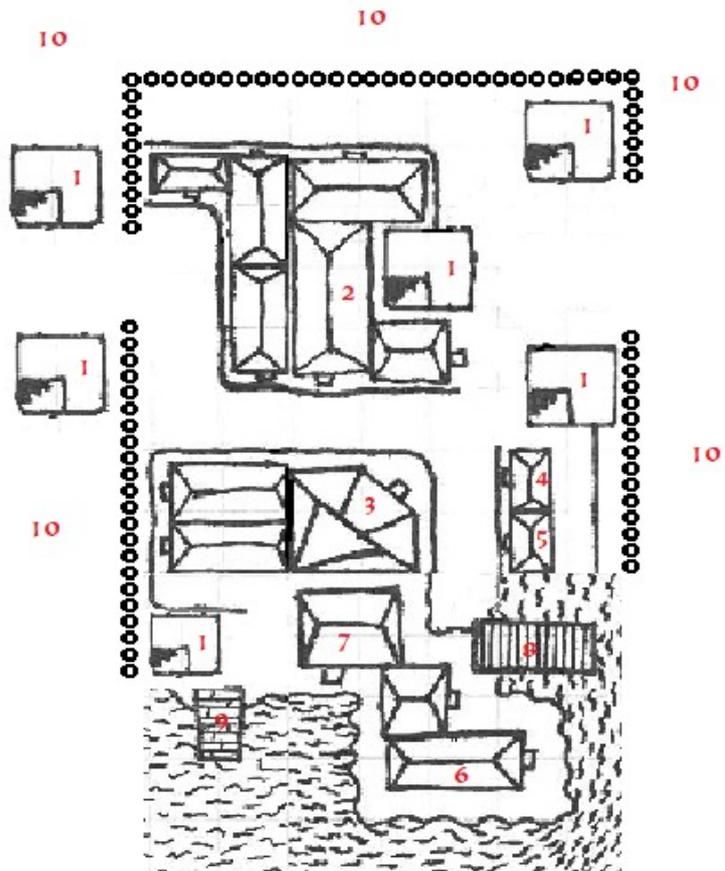
The port consists of two docks, one small (normally occupied by Mirko's riverboat, "Flaky Pearl"), and a much larger one for

merchant/pirate ships. Near the dock, there is a warehouse that also functions as a general store.

Port Blight Map Key

1. The watchtowers and rooms of the guards.
2. Mirko's house.
3. Croc Nest Tavern
4. Leather Working Shop.
5. Potion Shop.
6. The Carpentry.
7. The Warehouse
8. Big dock.
9. Mirko's Dock.
10. Farm

Note: The rest of the buildings are homes.



THE LAW

Mirko is the judge at the port. What he says is taken as a resolution to any arguments. There have not been problems but normally Mirko tries to hear both sides and attempts to reach a mutual agreement. If there is a severe crime it means that you are expelled from the community. Mirko enforces a set of rules which he calls "The Golden Rules", that are written on one of his house walls.

The Golden Rules

- ◆ My community is my space; I respect the space of others.
- ◆ I won't do things that I don't want someone to do them to me.
- ◆ If my community is in danger, I must be willing to die for it.
- ◆ My work is fundamental to community development so there is no time to waste.
- ◆ If I see anything wrong, I must warn immediately.

For people or humanoids that are visitors, the only rule that prevails is good behaviour at the Port. Guards will say to sailors what you have in your ship is your problem but a slave ring inside Port Bright

is prohibited. Also, outsiders cannot enter the port with weapons, they must leave them at the ship or in the watchtowers.

ECONOMICS

Trade activity is the primary source of income in Port Blight. Most of the revenue comes from trade in the port and in the swamp. Apart from this activity, on a smaller scale is the production of food and fishing, activities that are primarily to feed the community.

MILITARY

The guards keep order in the port and are the military force to defend it. The army consists of 16 archers and 5 fighters. But Mirko trains every citizen to use a weapon in case the community is in danger all men and women are capable of fighting.

KNOWN NPCs OF PORT BLIGHT

Mirko Novalicov

Mirko was 10 years old when he escaped, hidden in a ship, from Fort Doom. He made his way to the Minrothad Guilds where he learnt merchant skills and travelled on a pirate ship for a period. Over time he became a skilful pirate and bought his own ship. He sailed through the Sea of Dread gaining a reputation as a feared pirate but usually spared the lives of those who did not join him. Sometimes he was known to attack ships with slaves to free them, just because he always remembered where he came from.

After living a while as a pirate, Mirko returned to Karameikos but he was soon hunted for his past, which always followed him wherever he was going. He could not find peace in any civilized part of Karameikos so he founded Port Blight, a small settlement located in Blight Swamp, near the Five Shires in the Gulf of Halag.

He is a 10th level Chaotic fighter, skilled in sword (STR 16, INT 13, WIS 9, DEX 10, CON 16 and CHA 13) and has merchant skills. This man is opportunistic. While swamp folks look at him with respect, he normally does what brings him more money. Mirko is known to sell information if the correct price is spoken.

Jadranko Levitsky

Mirko's second-in-command. Jadranko, was born in Specularum. He became a sailor on a merchant ship but after working years on that ship, he resigned and went to live in Minrothad City. There he met Mirko and became his friend; he became part of his crew and after his captain retired, he decided to stay with him at Port Blight.

Jadranko is the leader of the militia at the port, and when Mirko goes away to trade, he stays in charge at the port. He also trains the residents on how to use weapons.

Wilburn Morse

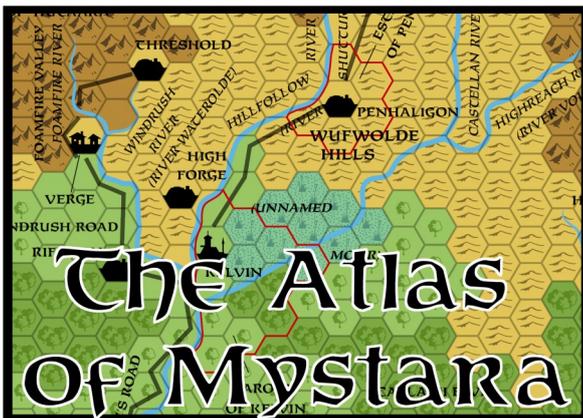
Wilburn is a human from Minrothad, he was also part of Mirko's crew. He oversees the operations of the port and the warehouse.

Vlado Sajic

Vlado lived most of his life at Fort Doom. One night he escaped with his family on a raft he built there. After rowing several days, he was found by Miko and was taken to Port Blight. He was a carpenter, so he started to work with Mirko, helping him with the construction of several houses. Now he is the port carpenter and also repairs ships.

Jaksa Sajic

Brother of Vlado, he usually works as the tavern keeper at the "Croc Nest Tavern". He is also skilled in woodworking so when needed he goes to work with his brother.



Mapping the world of Mystara
ONE hex at a time...

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Encounters in the Dymrak Region

Adventuring in south eastern Karameikos



Compiled and created by Robin
Editorial assistance by AllanP

Editor's Note

This article continues the author's compilation of material about the Dymrak region of south-eastern Karameikos (see issues #23 and #24 of *Threshold Magazine*). Here the author combines published canon and fanon work with their own material to provide DMs with references that can be used to develop encounters that their PCs may have while travelling through the region.

Overland Movement in Karameikos

To assist in evaluating travel times and physical obstructions on PCs journeys across different terrain, DMs may refer to [this blog post](#) by the author which describes an expanded system for overland movement using material and text from the terrain movement tables on page 88 of the *Rules Cyclopedia (RC)* and from the "Trail & Road Conditions" section of accessory TM1: "Western Countries Trail Map" to explain the characteristics of the different route types.

CANON ADVENTURES IN THE DYMRAK REGION

A number of published canon adventures can be located in this region. It may be possible to use "The Barrel" inn (from *Threshold Magazine* issue #23) as a base of operations for PCs to return to between quests and adventures.

Adventures B10: "Night's Dark Terror", DDA4: "The Dymrak Dread", and "The Valley of the Silver Princess" (version in B1-9: "In Search of Adventure") are canonically placed in this region.

The adventure "The Abduction of Princess Sylvia" from module B9 ("Castle Caldwell and Beyond") can be placed within the Dymrak region with minor work by the DM.

The other adventures from module B9 are largely located near Threshold. Adventures B11: "King's Festival" & B12: "Queen's Harvest" are located near Stallanford, north of Penhaligon, to the northwest of the regional map. Likewise Guido's Fort, from B5: "Horror on the Hill", is located upriver from the Barony of Kelvin (from B1-9 ver-

sion) and is beyond Lumm. However, PCs could potentially use *"The Barrel"* (from *Threshold Magazine #23*) as a base to return to regularly, even if there are some more logical venues nearer the adventure sites.

Although *"Elwyn's Sanctuary"*, one of the adventures from module B9 is placed in the neighbourhood of Threshold (see B1-9: *"In Search of Adventure"*), that is not to say a similar temple exists elsewhere, in similar circumstances and is forgotten. A DM could run the adventure in the Dymrak without too much adjustment (different monsters, changed opponents, etc.). It seems clear that Leptar in the original module feels competent in seizing control of Chardates' temples and followers. So, he might attempt this wherever he can, and try to turn any temple or shrine to Chardastes in Karameikos into the faith of Leptar. Those shrines and temples to Leptar marked on the regional map may already have been subjected to this change.

If this option for the adventure is chosen, the DM should use the bell from the original as a special healing item that only functions in areas that have been blessed or consecrated by priests of Chardastes. If the bell is disturbed or moved from its holy location, it will need to be cleaned (literally and figuratively) of evil influences and then re-consecrated by a Chardastes priest using the various *Ceremony* spells¹.

From *Creature Crucible* accessory PC1: *"Tall Tales of the Wee Folk"*:

The adventures *"A Night Out in the Forest"*, *"The Hanging Hideout"*, *"Sith Bruaigh"*, *"Cattle of the March"* (near the Marshlands),

¹ More information can be found in ["Pages of Virtue"](#) (pages 234-244)

might need some minor adjusting to a location in the Dymrak Forest and *"Lake of Lost Dreams"*; *"A Blight on the Forest"*, and *"The Lost Seneschal"* will need some more adjustment, but can also be placed in this vast region.

From *Creature Crucible* accessory PC2: *"Top Ballista"*:

Scenarios from the adventures *"Tabi Hunt?"* and *"Scream of Terror"* (notably *"Den of the Basilisk"*, *"Lair of the Harpies"*, and *"Crash Landing"*), can be played without major adjustments, and optionally using *"The Barrel"* (see *Threshold Magazine #23*) as the PCs' base. These scenarios can easily lead to other adventures described in this source.

From *Creature Crucible* accessory PC3: *"The Sea People"*:

The adventures *"Friendship Bonding"*, *"The Nixy Grotto"* can be played nearly anywhere along the coast. Without too much alteration the following adventures can be played at the named locations on the regional map: *"The Ruins of the Taymora"* - Gorlosos Island, *"The Sea Hag"* - Pyrehouse Rock, *"The Sunken Ship"* - Pyrehouse Rock, and *"Island of the Dry Skins"* - Smuggle-coast near Skull.

From *Creature Crucible* accessory PC4: *"Night Howlers"*:

The adventures *"Lupin Attack"*, *"The Moonflower Ruse"*, *"Bringing in the Herd"*, *"Sheep in Wolf's Clothing"*, *"The Black Horse"*, *"Good Intentions"*, and *"A Hunting We Will Go"* can be easily adapted by changing the location and identities.

The ["Penhaligon Trilogy" novels](#) can also be a great source of adventures in this

ENCOUNTERS in the Dymrak Region



Robin's 1-mile hex map of the Dymrak region of south eastern Karamaikos
For more details see Threshold Magazine issues #23 and #24
[The original compilation map](#) is available at the Vaults of Pandius

region. However, the DM will need to read the novels carefully and interpret them into a series of adventures for his campaign's PCs that complements those of the books' heroes. Note that this trilogy occurs roughly at the same time as "*Wrath of the Immortals*" and X10: "*Red Arrow, Black Shield*". Karameikos is really in turmoil during these years and can be a great continuing source of small adventures that do not impact the major developments of WotI.

The *Poor Wizard's Almanac* series contains several small adventure suggestions for the Dymrak region in their calendar sections.

The *Dungeon Magazine* adventures "*Tarfil's Tomb*" (issue #27) and "*Voyage of the Crimpshire*" (issue #59) are partially placed in the mapped region of the Dymrak and "*The Barrel*" (*Threshold Magazine* #23) can be used as a base for PCs to operate from.



Sprite

ENCOUNTERS

The accompanying tables list the creatures that may be encountered in the region and are based on the information provided in GAZ1: "*The Grand Duchy of Karameikos*".

Encounters - Most of that listed here for the Dymrak Forest can be used elsewhere with ease. However, as the tables are tailored to the region, the list may or may not include creatures relevant to the campaign setting the DM uses, or may need adjustment to the chances of encounter.

An encounter occurs if the DM rolls 1 on 1d6. The DM checks once every hour during the day or once every three hours during night. An option is to roll for each 1-mile hex traversed and use the hourly checks if remaining in one location for longer. If an encounter occurs, it will be at a distance as per the *Encounter Distance Table* on page 93 of the *Rules Cyclopedia*.

Determine which type of creature is encountered from its appearance frequency; roll d% to determine frequency: 1-60% = Common, 61-85% = Uncommon, 86-95% = Rare, and 96-00% = Very Rare. Check the relevant Encounter Frequency table and choose the creatures applicable to the current location. Note that Undead will only be encountered in tombs/a dark location or at night. The number of creatures appearing is as per the source information for that creature in that location.

Most animals prefer to flee before attacking, unless protecting young. Humanoids are rarely alone, and one or more (family or group members or group) will be nearby.

ENCOUNTERS in the Dymrak Region

Encounter Table - Common Frequency

Encounter	Location	Source Notes
Animal Herd (Deer, Elk, Goat)	Anywhere	As per RC157 or MMMC2 page 40-41, Deer 45, Elk 48, Goat 49
Animal Herd Domesticated	Anywhere settled	As per RC157 or MMMC2 page 40-41, Cow/Ox 54, Goat/Sheep 58, Pigs 59, Horse 62
Bandits	Close to roads	as per RC158, F or T level 1 to 10! See RC6-12
Bat	Anywhere(Dark/Night only)	as per RC159 or MMMC2 page 92-93
Black Bear	Anywhere	as per RC159 or MMMC2 page 105-107
Boar	Fields & Hills Dungeon	as per RC162 or MMMC2 page 44
Callarii Elves	west of Syereb River, Clayanya, Scalania	Elves of the Book as per Gaz 7 Alfheim, Lvl 1-8. Mostly ground living, horse breeders, traders
Dwarf	Mountains, settled areas	as per RC Lvl 1-5
Giant Beetle(any)	anywhere as per creature description anywhere	as per RC160 or MMMC3 page 690-695, 697
Goblin	Anywhere	as per Gaz10 Level 1 to 6 See Descriptions below for clan varieties
Horse(wild)	Grasslands	as per PC or MMMC2 page 62
Hobgoblin	Anywhere but close to settlements	as per Gaz 10 Lvl 1 to 4 Often living together with any Goblin Tribe, mostly low in number and functioning as (body)guard
Merchants (Animals+Wagons)	Any Road	1d20 as per RC193-194 (Trader) Lvl 1-4 PC, Race, Class and Lvl as per RC6-12. (keep animals& wagons and crew in mind)
NPC party (Lvl 1-3)	Anywhere	As per RC198 Race, Class and Lvl as per RC6-12
Orc	Hills & Mountains	Variant tribes (Black-Web Tribe Local) as per Gaz 10 Lvl 1 to 4
Pixy	Forest Only	as per PC1 Lvl 13 or MMMC6 page 1655-1660
Rat or Giant Rat	Anywhere(including vessels)	as per RC201 or MMMC2 page
Skeleton (any)	Anywhere	as per RC204 or MMMC4 page 1135-1137. These are 60% humanoid skeletons, 10% animal skeletons and 30% human skeletons.

ENCOUNTERS in the Dymrak Region



Encounter Table - Common Frequency - *continued*

Encounter	Location	Source Notes
Snake, Normal poisonous	Anywhere but water	as per MMMC2 page 410
Sprite	Woodlands	as per PC1, Lvl 1-4 or MMMC6 page 1661-1672
Vyallia Elves	East of Rugalov river, Haven, Scalania, Calyanya	Elves of the Book as per Gaz 7 Alfheim, Lvl 1-8, mostly tree living, hunters, farmers
Wight	Kelvin Moors, Dungeons	as per RC212, PC Class and Lvl as RC6-12, or MMMC4 page 1197-1199
Wolf	Anywhere but water	as per RC212 or MMMC2250-252
Zombie(any)	Anywhere but close to settlements/roads	as per RC213, or MMMC4 page1154. These are 60% humanoid zombies, 10% animal zombies and 30% human zombies.

Encounter Table - Uncommon Frequency

Encounter	Location	Source Notes
Banshees, Lesser	Moor/Hills	as per MMMC4 page 1111-1112
Bandits	Close to towns/cities & wilderness	as per RC158, F or T level 1 to 10! See RC6-12
Bat, Giant	Anywhere(Dark/Night only)	as per RC159 or MMMC2 page 92-95
Boar, Giant	Fields & Hills	as per RC162 or MMMC2 page 44
Brownie	Forests & Farms	as per PC1, Lvl 1 to 3
Centaur	Firemane Tribe North of Dymrak, Stormwind Tribe Mid Karameikos. Three other Centaur tribes exist in Karameikos yet more not, than rarely enter the area of the map	as per PC1, lvl 1 to 4
Callarii Elves	Anywhere but west of Syereb River, Clayanya, Scalania	Elves of the Book as per Gaz 7 Alfheim, Lvl 1-8. Mostly ground living, horse breeders, traders
Chevall	any grassland	as per B10 adventure
Dwarf	Anywhere but Mountains, settled areas	as per RC Lvl 1-5
Dryad	Anywhere wooded but settlements	as per PC1 Lvl1 to 5
Faun	Forest & wooden hills only	as per PC1 Lvl 1-3
Frog (Giant)	Kelvin Moor, Along Rivers in forest	as per MMMC2 page 362-363, 366



ENCOUNTERS in the Dymrak Region

Encounter Table - Uncommon Frequency - *continued*

Encounter	Location	Source Notes
Gargoyles (all variants)	Ruins, towers & castles only	as per RC178 and MMMC5 pages 1403-1416
Gelatinuous Cube	Dungeon	as per RC161 or MMMC3 page 1007-1009
Ghoul	anywhere	as per RC178 or MMMC4 page 1176-1184. These include 80% normal ghouls, 5% vapour ghouls, 5% elder ghouls, 5% ghastrs, 5% other (like agarat).
Gnome	Roads, Hills, Mountains	as per RC180
Green Slime	Dungeon, Petrified Forest, Creeks, Ponds	as per RC161 or MMMC3 page 1010-1011
Grey Ooze	Dungeon, Petrified Forest, Creeks	as per RC161 or MMMC3 page 997-1001
Griffon	Anywhere but settled, sea, woods, unless tamed	as per RC181
Harpy	Hills/Mountains	as PC2, Lvl 1-4
Hill Giants	Hills, Broken Lands	as per RC179
Hsiao	forest close to Hsiau complexes	as per PC1, Lvl 1 to 5 or MMMC6 page 1908-1913
Leech(any)	Creeks, Marsh, Moor, Pond	as per RC188 or MMMC page 1066-1067
Ochre Jelly	Dungeon, Petrified Forest, Creeks, Dark Forest	as per RC161 or MMMC3 page 1014-1016
Living Statues (any low HD)	Only old ruins, dungeons & Tombs	as per RC208, or MMMC5 page 1416-1433
Merchants (Animals+Wagons)	Any Medium or better Trail	2d6 as per RC193-194 (Trader) Lvl 1-4 PC, Race, Class and Lvl as per RC6-12. (keep animals& wagons and crew in mind)
NPC party(Lvl 4-6)	Anywhere	As per RC198 Race, Class and Lvl as per RC6-12
Redcap	Forest, woodlands	as per PC1 Lvl 1 to 3
Rock Python	Hills & Mountains	as per RC204 or MMMC2 page 399
Snake; Giant Rattler	Hills	as per RC204 or MMMC2 page 418
Snake, Pit viper	Anywhere but water	as per RC204 or MMMC2 page 415
Snake; Rattle-snake	Hills	as per MMMC2 page 419
Spider, Crab	Anywhere but settled areas	as per RC206, or MMMC3 page 568
Spider, Giant Shroud	Hills & Mountains	as per B10 or MMMC3 page 585
Spider, Hairy	Anywhere included settled areas	as per MMMC3 page 574
Spider, Large	Anywhere included settled areas	as per MMMC3 page 574

ENCOUNTERS IN THE DYMRAK REGION

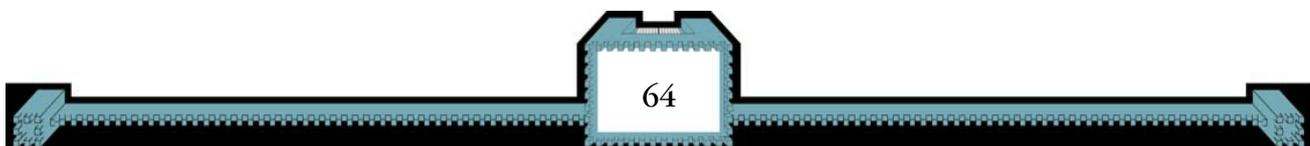


Encounter Table - Uncommon Frequency - *continued*

Encounter	Location	Source Notes
Stirge	Any Moor/Bog/Fen, Dungeon/Caves	as per RC208 or MMMC3 page 639-642
Stone Giant	Wufwolde Hills	as per RC179
Tabi	Witchlands, Near Rugalov River	as per PC2, Lvl 1-3 or MMMC6 page 1914-1919
Toad, Giant	Kelvin Moor, Forest	As per RC209 or MMMC2 page 368
Toad, Rock	Caves, Hills	As per RC209 or MMMC2 page 370
Treant	Woodlands	as per PC1 Lvl 1-4 or MMMC3 page 961-984
Troglodytes	The Jungle	as per RC210
Water Ogres	Kelvin Moor, Volaga River	as per description here
Wolf, Dire	anywhere but water	as per RC212 or MMMC2 page 253
Weasle, Giant	Anywhere	As per RC212 or MMMC2 page 454
Werewolf	Anywhere	as PC4, Lvl 1-4 PC Class and Lvl as per RC6-12
Wererat	Settled areas	as PC4, Lvl 1-6 PC Class and Lvl as per RC6-12
Witch	Witchlands	as RC6-12 MU Lvl 1-16 or use GSM on witches.

Encounter Table - Rarwe Frequency

Encounter	Location	Source Notes
Black Hags	Witchlands	as per RC182 (witch level 12+) See also GSM
Black Pudding	Dungeon	as per RC161 or MMMC3 page 1021-1023
Coltpixy	Anywhere (forest preferred)	as per PC1
Devilswine	anywhere	as PC4 Lvl 1-6 PC Class and Lvl as per RC
Dryad	wooded close to settlements	as per PC1 Lvl 1 to 5
Frog (Giant)	Elsewhere but Kelvin Moor, Along Rivers in forest	as per MMMC2 page 362-363, 366
Ghost	Anywhere	as per RC182-183 or MMMC4 page 1322-1325
Ghost, Animal	Anywhere	as per MMMC4 page 1326-1327
Ghost, Lesser	Graveyards, place of Death, or special	as per MMMC4 page 1316-1317
Ghoul	Close to Eastron road/Rugalov	as per RC178 or MMMC4 page 1176-1184. These include 80% normal ghouls, 5% vapour ghouls, 5% elder ghouls, 5% ghastrs, 5% other (like agarat).



ENCOUNTERS IN THE DYMRAK REGION

Encounter Table - Rare Frequency - *continued*

Encounter	Location	Source Notes
Goblin	Close to settlements/roads	as per Gaz10 Level 1 to 6 See Descriptions below for clan varieties
Haunt, Lesser	Anywhere where a violent death has occurred	as per MMMC1316
Hippogryph	spillover from northern hills only	as per RC184-185
Hsiao	elsewhere but forest close to Hsiau complexes	as per PC1, Lvl 1 to 5 or MMMC6 page 1908-1913
Leech (any)	Creeks, Marsh, Moor, Pond	as per RC188 or MMMC page 1066-1067
Leprechaun	Anywhere but water	as PC1 Lvl 1-3 or MMMC6 page
Living Statues (any high HD)	Only old ruins, dungeons & Tombs	as per RC208, or MMMC5 page 1416-1433
Lizardmen	Kosivikh Fens, Kelvin Moor only	as per RC189
Merchants (Animals+Wagons)	Any Trail	2d4 as per RC193-194 (Trader) Lvl 1-4 PC, Race, Class and Lvl as per RC6-12. (keep animals& wagons and crew in mind)
Nosferatu	Anywhere but streaming water, blessed grounds	as per Gaz1/RC, PC Class and Lvl as per RC or MMMC4 page 1281-1301
NPC party (Lvl 7-9)	Anywhere	As per RC198 Race, Class and Lvl as per RC6-12
Phantom	Anywhere where a violent death has occurred	As per MMMC4 page 1108-1110
Shadow	Dungeons	As per RC203 or MMMC4 page 1113-1115
Sidhe	Anywhere but Human Settlements	"Like Humans they might have 1d4, 1d6 or 1d8 hp/HD as per class, also following the commoners system as most will have 1d4/HD unlike humans) average Lvl 1-6. Further as per PC1 Also see; http://pandius.com/commoner.html
Skeleton (any)	Close to eastron Road/Rugalov	as per RC204 or MMMC4 page 1135-1137. These are 60% humanoid skeletons, 10% animal skeletons and 30% human skeletons.
Spectre	Anywhere	as per RC205, Character Class and Lvl as per RC pages 6-12, or MMMC4 page 1229
Spider, Black Widow	Where humanoids live	as per RC206 or MMMC3 page 568
Spider, Giant Wood	Woodlands	as per MMMC3 page 583
Stirge	Elsewhere but Any Moor/Bog/Fen, Dungeon/Caves	as per RC208 or MMMC3 page 639-642

ENCOUNTERS in the Dymrak Region



Encounter Table - Rare Frequency - *continued*

Encounter	Location	Source Notes
Toad, Giant	Elsewhere but Kelvin Moor, Forest	As per RC209 or MMMC2 page 368
Toad, Rock	Elsewhere but Caves, Hills	As per RC209 or MMMC2 page 370
Troglodytes	Kelvin Moor	as per RC210
Vyallia Elves	Anywhere but East of Rugalov river, Haven, Scalania, Calyanya	Elves of the Book as per Gaz 7 Alfheim, Lvl 1-8, mostly tree living, hunters, farmers
Werefox	Anywhere	as PC4, Lvl 1-4 PC Class and Lvl as per RC6-12
Witch	Elsewhere but Witchlands	as RC6-12 MU Lvl 1-16 or use GSM on witches.
Zombie (any)	Close to settlements/r-oads	as per RC213, or MMMC4 page1154. These are 60% humanoid zombies, 10% animal zombies and 30% human zombies.

Encounter Table - Very Rare Frequency

Encounter	Location	Source Notes
Merchants (Animals+Wagons)	Anywhere off-road	1d6 as per RC193-194 (Trader) Lvl 1-4 PC, Race, Class and Lvl as per RC6-12. (keep animals& wagons and crew in mind)
NPC party (Lvl 10+)	Anywhere	As per RC198 Race, Class and Lvl as per RC6-12
Poltergeist	Anywhere	as per RC182-183
Pooka	anywhere but water	as per PC1 Lvl 1-8 or MMMC6 page 1771-1781
Unicorn	Woodlands	as per RC211 or MMMC6 page 1880-1896 (never attacks unless it is evil and dangerous to the forest)
Wolf, Silver	Woodlands	As per MMMC2 page 267

In the tables, those **creatures in red are generally opposing or aggressive**, those in **green are mostly positive**, those in black are neutral and rarely attack humans (including demi-humans or humanoids), preferring to retreat if given the chance.

Average levels are as per source or as suggested in the table which applies to 99% of the creatures mentioned; only 1% may be higher as per source given and determined by the DM (these are mostly leaders or special ones). Creatures are normally limited to appearing in the area described below, but examples may appear elsewhere at the DM's discretion.



Key to source abbreviations used in the Encounter Tables

RC## : *Rules Cyclopedia* page number

GAZ10 : "The Orc of Thar" Gazetteer

PC1 : "Creature Crucible

-Tall Tales of the Wee Folk"

PC2 : "Creature Crucible - Top Ballista"

PC3 : "Creature Crucible -The Sea People"

PC4 : "Creature Crucible - Night Howlers"

The "Mystara Monster Manual Compilation" (MMMC) works by the author which combine material from many canon and fanon D&D sources together with real world information providing a widely detailed source for all manner of creatures that might be encountered:

MMMC1 : [Information](#)

MMMC2 : [Animals](#)

MMMC3 : [Lowlife](#)

MMMC4 : [Undead](#)

MMMC5 : [Constructs](#)

MMMC6 : [Fairykin & Wee Folk](#)

GSM : ["Great School of Magic in detail"](#)

The actions of the PCs may change this basic behaviour in either direction. If normal animals attack, they do so only under duress, out of fear, to protect their offspring, to defend their territory, or as a swift attack to capture prey.

Animals on the hunt rarely attack continuously out of self-preservation. They mostly make one swift and potential deadly attack (pinning down the target, chokeholds, poison bites, single deadly wound, entraping, etc.) and retreat if any danger presents itself. Often such hunters then follow the target to seek another attack

opportunity when the earlier attack starts affecting the intended prey. The following are examples of such behaviour. Wolves attack the neck and limbs, while cats pin down their prey or make chokeholds; both these hunters retreat until the inflicted wound has done its job when an initial swift attack fails to kill. Spiders and snakes use poison and await the target to become affected. Spiders entrap and make a single attack.

Creature Morale

The optional rules for checking the morale of creatures are detailed on pages 102-103 of the *Rules Cyclopedia*. That section identifies *when* a morale check should be made, some suggestions as to *what* bonuses or penalties might be applied to a check, and what the *outcome* of a check is. Here are this author's *additional* suggestions for morale adjustments:

If a single creature...

has sustained its first wound:

-1 penalty to its morale score;

has become 25% wounded: -3 penalty;

has become 50% wounded: -4 penalty;

has multiple opponents: -2 penalty

added to any other penalties;

Additionally, for groups of creatures, the DM can make a morale check:

at the beginning of the first combat round
(to see if they are going to attack at all);

when the first member of the group has

fled or is slain/incapacitated: -2 penalty;

when 25% of the group have fled or are

slain/incapacitated: -4 penalty;

when 50% of the group have fled or are slain/incapacitated: -6 penalty;

If the DM's morale check roll is greater than then a group member's morale score, all the creatures that are able will attempt to flee the encounter.

Controlled animals have a +1 to +2 bonus to their individual and group morale, depending on the intensity of the control and safety that the animal feels in this (DM decides).

Normal animals only fight to the death if trying to survive or defend offspring (ML+3). Even if they see PCs as prey, they are very careful not to get wounded themselves. If morale breaks, the creatures will run away if able, even if this means leaving offspring.

Experience gained for fleeing animals is 50% of normal experience gained if slain/defeated.

If the DM wants to have animals using their very dangerous natural attack forms refer to MMMC1 pages 29 to 36 and MMMC2 for the individual animals. A PC should never underestimate an animal. As an example, from its basic statistics a simple wolf may not be a real threat to the average PC; however, when using all its skills of cooperation, and natural attack forms that simple wolf can be extremely dangerous. It is not unheard of for a group of wolves to defeat experienced characters by attacking limbs and throat. Remember that if a fallen character remains prone for 1 round before getting up, they will have saves -4, THAC0-2, AC+4, and cannot move away.

THE DYMRAC GOBLINS

The Goblins of the Dymrak Forest are split into several different tribes. They rarely cooperate and are competitive. More information on these tribes can be found in "[Goblinoid Tribes of Karamaikos](#)" by Giam-paolo Agosta. Many of these goblins are under direct or indirect control (by Dominated dragons) of Argos the dragon, and many have gained help from the evil witches or the Hags of the witchlands. All these goblins will capture and enslave prisoners until they are too weak to be of use or will eat them. Some prisoners will become undead, of the witchlands by goblin wicca/wokani or shaman thereafter.

Of the goblin tribes described below, only three (Ghnaska, Jaggadash and Kloss-Lunk) have been known to occasionally attack "[The Barrel](#)" inn and the southern settlements and farms of the Dymrak region. The other tribes live further away and are more likely to harass the Vyalia elves and Haven settlements. The tribes are differentiated by their appearance and other minor details. A DM can use the statistics provided to further flesh out the characteristics of the tribes.



Goblin



Hobgoblin

General Statistics for Dymrak Goblins
(variations noted in each Tribe's description)

AC: 8 without armor,
If using Armor Value Rules use average AV0 for thin leather, cloth, AV1 wolf fur armor, or thin leather armor AV2 for Leather armor AV3 for leather with metal or bone armor-pieces, and very rarely AV4 for chain mail or metal mismatch armor made out of armor remnants, if not AC is reduced by the above AV values. Chain mail is mostly stolen from human or elven victims and cut to size, cut-off remnants are sometimes stitched to leather armor with or without bone pieces.
01-50% HD1 Hp 1d6,
51-75% HD2 Hp 2d6,
76-88% HD3 Hp 3d6,
89-94% HD4 Hp 4d6,
95-98% HD5 Hp 5d6,
98-00% HD6+ 1d6Hp/HD to 8, then +1Hp/HD (no con),
Mv 90'/30' (unhindered in undergrowth),
AT 1 Hand axe, spear,
THAC0 As F/HD,
ML6+1/3HD+1 with leader (10max)
AL 85%CE, 10%NE, 5%CN,
XP as F/HD

Poison:

If a tribe has access to it, many of the Dymrak goblins may use various kinds of poison. A single goblin will only have one variety of poison, enough for 1d10 uses, which it will carry in a small organic or clay bottle among its possessions. Only evil characters use harmful poison.

Note on Poisons for DMs:

See page 66 of the fan compilation "[*What Can be Bought*](#)" for details of poison varieties, and page 67 for information on herbal antidotes. A character with a Herbalogy, Healing, or Survival (of such terrain) skill can find appropriate antidotes after 1d4+6 Turns of searching on a successful skill roll.

In the Dymrak region, as a precaution against poisoning, a PC can buy regular antidotes from the Vyalia elf settlements, from Rugalov market, or from a local Apothecary.

Possessions:

Each individual goblin encountered carries:

- Preferred armor/weapons (as per tribe description);
- A number of Gp and Sp coins* (as per tribe description);
- 1d4 trinkets (DM decides);

If the tribe uses poison (as per tribe description), a small organic or clay bottle containing 1d10 applications of one of the poisons used by the tribe;

If the individual is a Leader, they will carry 3 times the above possessions;

If the individual is a Bodyguard, Shaman or Wicca, they will carry 2 times the above possessions;

If the individual rides a Dire Wolf, they carry 1d3 meaty bones (wrapped in leaves, paper or skin);

A Shaman or wicca also has 3d12 magic components**;

There is a 50% chance that the individual has some food (wrapped in leaves, paper or skin) or a jug of drink/soup (DM decides); There is a 75% chance that the individual has one miscellaneous item***

In a tribal lair, in addition to any carried items, there will be:

- a cache of armor/weapons, coins and trinkets equivalent to the total number of all members of the lair x2 (the DM can roll or choose once for each category and then multiply by the lair total);
- a larder (or pile) of various foodstuffs, the number of items being equal to 1/2 total number of all lair members; the food comprises 'fresh' day or dried week rations wrapped in leaves, paper or skin, as well as drink and soup; Important to know this is ample enough to fully sustain the tribe, and as such goblins are always hungry.
- a store of miscellaneous items***, the number of which is equal to twice the total of all lair members;
- Shaman and wicca members of the tribe each store have 6d12 of their magic components** in the lair, (dried on the ceiling or in pots and boxes) for spell/potion research/fabrication, and at least 2 cooking pots, tinderbox/flintstone and 3d4 large spoons/fork to stir and spoon their broth.
- If the lair uses dire wolves or worgs, there are always 1d3 meaty carcasses of animals (or victims) stored close by the wolfpen;

*The coins have been stolen from , or plundered from graves or tombs in the region (as a result of the graverobbing, 50% of these coins are 100 years or more old.

**Components used by shaman and wicca

include feathers, stones, bones, organs, berries, etc.) for spell / potion research / fabrication;

***Miscellaneous items carried by individuals or found in lair include: 40'+1d4x10' rope, backpack, large sack/bag, small sack/bag, cooking pot, herbs/spices, tinderbox/flintstone, waterskin (water/blood/wine/milk/broth), etc. (DM option); For other examples see "What Can Be Bought" pages 31-35.

Ghnasska (Red Blade) Goblins

Source: *Adventure module B10*

These goblins have all their weapons painted with a thick waterproof red paint made from tree bark and blood. They wear animal leather and animal Leather armor and also often wear dire wolf robes. They are under the Dominion of Dragon Blerindith. The tribe is in regular conflict with the Jaggadash Goblins. The Ghnasska are afraid of snakes and hsiao; they dislike water.

The tribe is composed of 700 goblins: 385 (55%) are in or near the main lair indicated on the regional map, 175 (25%) are divided over 3 minor lairs in Pine Woods east of the Tomb Hills (not on the map), 70 (10%) are in 3 minor lairs in the Tomb Hills, and the other 70 (10%) in 2 minor lairs in the Jungle of Blerendith,

AC: These goblins refrain from using armor better than leather (AV2) as it hinders their actions.

Preferred weapons: axe, spear, stone dagger. Each goblin has 1d2 weapons.

Poison Use: This tribe does not normally

use poison but might be inclined to if they feel outnumbered by multiple or stronger opponents. They would have to buy poison from other local goblins which will take 1d4+2 days.

Possessions: as standard description, with 2d4/HD worth of Gp in gold or silver coins per goblin.

Dire wolves: The Ghnasska ride a dark grey/black variety of dire wolf which has larger fangs, giving +1 to bite damage (non-magical).

Jaggadash (Viper) Goblins

Source: *Adventure module B10*

These goblins have distinctive cheek tattoos. They are under the Dominion of the Dragon Arksmoos, who is under the Dominion of Dragon Argos. The tribe is in regular conflict with the Kloss-Lunk and Gnhasska Goblins. They are not afraid of snakes, but of owls/hsiao, and have a great dislike of water.

The tribe is composed of 600 goblins in 6 hordes: 5 of about 100 each, totaling 480 (80%) in Witchlands east of the Thunder Mountains, and the remaining horde of 120 (20%) west of Thunder Mountains.

AC: rarely uses any other armor than snake leather or boars leather (AV 1 or 2), used to attack from behind barricades/bushes/walls AC-3

Preferred weapons: warhammer, throwing daggers, short bow, sling, net. Each goblin has 1d3 weapons.

Throwing oil-beetle bottles (all those in 10' radius of impact Save Deathray +Dex adjustment or suffer blisters that give -2 THACO for 24 hours, no cure) Throwing distances:

S 20'=+1, M 40'=0, L 60'=-1, (see oil-beetle in RC160 or MMMC3 page 695)

Some (30%) of these goblins might carry and throw a small poisonous snake at the intended target to distract and maybe wound/poison. These adders are as per MMMC2 page 253, see above throwing distances. Any thrown adder will likely bite any warm-blooded creature it detects on landing in the following round.

Poison Use: Sharp weapons (daggers, arrows, etc.) are always coated with adder snake poison; SV Poison or 1d10 damage at 1/r next round (Save halves damage, and reduces onset to 3 rounds), Also; ML6+1/(3HD+1) with leader (10max).

Possessions: as standard description, but add goblin/halfling sized armor, 1d4/HD worth of Gp in gold or silver coins, 2 stone daggers, 1 ointment of poison (to apply 10x on sharp weapon (DM: use of poison is an Evil act), 1d4 clay oil-beetle oil bottles, small sack with 1 adder (if not thrown already) per goblin.

Dire wolves: These goblins very rarely use dire wolves (as these tend to eat their beloved snakes), but are not afraid of them and might ride them elsewhere after obtaining one.

Kloss-Lunk (Wolfskull) Goblins

Source: *Adventure module B10*

These goblins have distinctive wolfskin robes and wolf leather clothing, and often wolf leather armor as well. They are under the Dominion of Argos. The tribe is in regular conflict with the Jaggadash and Krimderah goblins. They are afraid of snakes, Hsiao, and dislike water

The tribe is composed of 400 goblins; 360 (90%) spread out over the Petrified Woods,

40 (10%) in caves close to Anzor Lake (west of Petrified Woods),
 4 to 6 of these goblins are able to become werewolves due to their piety (as suggested by GAZ10: *"The Orcs of Thar"*). These werewolves are not infectious, and are a granted gift/blessing from their Immortal, Wogar. Use the PC4 information to add werewolf shape/abilities, but lower THAC0 and damage by 1. These werewolves are no larger than a normal wolf and can be controlled/dominated by real werewolves. In all other aspects they are equal to the true werewolf.

AC: These goblins refrain from using armor stronger than AV4 as it hinders their actions.

Preferred weapons: hand axe, spear, sling, stone dagger, (the tribe despises metal weapons). Each goblin has 1d2 weapons.

Poison use: These goblins dislike the use of poison out of 'honour' principles.

Possessions: as standard, but wolfskin robes, goblin/halfling sized armor, 1d6/HD worth of Gp in gold or silver coins (most coins they own are from an unknown ancient mint - obtained from the local ruins), 2d4 trinkets(DM decides) per goblin.

Dire wolves: The Kloss-lunk goblins ride a brown or grey 9' variety of wolf. This variety has an increased movement rate of +30'/10'.

Krimderah (Green Raiders) Goblins

Source: *Sturm's 3.2-mile hex Karamaikos map*

These goblins have a distinctive greener skin (due to their diet, see below). They use camouflage of green /brown organic paints extensively (surprise 1 on 4) to

blend into the environment. They also paint themselves to prevent sunburn, as they often act during daylight (something uncommon for goblins as they would suffer a penalty of -1 on THAC0 and lose the benefit of infravision). Instead, these goblins have good tracking skills, and are relentless and careful as hunters, and use 'mercy' kills. Although these goblins are mostly hunters (of wildlife), sometimes they harass the Haven settlements, for tools, harvest, or victims to eat. These goblins prefer to eat anything mixed together into a weird soup; this includes not only herbs, roots, fruits and vegetables, but also animals, and humanoids, which are preferably cooked alive. The longer this soup ages, the better it tastes, yet most goblins cannot bear to leave it sitting after being cooked (when the meat falls from the bones) for more than a few turns before their appetite get the best of them. Even though other goblin tribes also make goblin stew, this version seems even palatable to humans, but not to demi-humans, and not when demi-humanoids are cooked within.

The Krimderah are under the Dominion of Dragon Argos, although Dragon Kavoski (under the Dominion of Argos) tries to gain dominion over the tribe. (*Argos might be inclined to allow this out of reluctance to use the goblins; better to let someone else under his control use them than not use them at all*). These goblins are afraid of oozes, local hags and witches (to them one and the same), and hsiaou, and have a dislike of water, including rain (*when they prefer to stay inside or seek cover*). The tribe is in regular conflict with the Kloss-Lunk and Lek-Aremh goblins, as well as the local harpies.

The tribe is composed of 400 goblins; 280 (70%) in the main camp and nearby caves

in the western Haven Cliffs; 120 (30%) reside in the pinewoods direct south

AC: These goblins refrain from using any armor other than light leather (AV0 to 1 at best).

Preferred weapons: short bow, darts, dagger, net, string traps, lures. Each goblin has 1d2+1 weapons.

Poison use: These goblins will use poison coatings on weapons when they have such poison (15% chance / month to buy 10 applications of poison A, S, OO, or PP from harpies, or hags).

Possessions: as standard but there is a 15% chance that each Krimderah encountered will have 1d10 applications of a poison.

Worgs: This is the only goblin tribe in the south of Karameikos using this rare wolf sub-breed which is active during the day-time. They have 12 adult worgs available and try to gain more from the Black-web orcs in the north (outside of map), who breed these vile evil beasts.

Kosivikh (Dread) Goblins

Source: *Adventure module DDA4*

These goblins have a distinctive amber/yellowish skin tarnished by mud/algae in a speckled green-amber/yellowish-black pattern. They also make use of tattoos. This tribe originates from Thyatis, and after being attacked by a group of adventurers, they split up and one section arrived in the Dymark in 1002AC. These goblins cooperate with a small (40) clan of lizardmen. The Kosivikh are unnecessarily violent (+1 to *Morale, initiative and THACO*), unforgiving and prone to revenge.

These goblins will beat captives physically to about half their life (hp) and often bind them with heavy steel chains (reducing movement to 30'/10' at best, with a lot of noise) or they will break legs and hands to prevent escape or retaliation (this treatment halves movement, and causes exhaustion after Con x rounds, and prevents the use of weapons, hand work, and casting of most spells. A Cure Light wounds spell restores breaks in 1 hand, and a Cure Serious wounds in 1 leg; both instead of Healing wounds). Captives are kept weak by being fed only once every 3 days. Any item carried by the victim will be taken; books and scrolls will be burned as fuel, clothes might be reused in any imaginable fashion, obvious magical items will be brought before a shaman or wicca, or be destroyed or taken by an individual tribe member (often made unrecognizable decorated/painted in a "Goblin pretty way").

These goblins are not yet under any Dragon's dominion, but a small unnamed Black Dragon residing locally is trying to create its own dominion (as it is under the Dominion of Argos), to dominate the Kosivikh. The tribe are afraid of hsiaou and are not afraid of water (there is a 45% chance that the encountered goblin can swim 24'/8'). The Kosivikh are in regular conflict with River-Clan goblins and local harpies. The tribe is composed of 700 goblins in 11 groups; 525 (75%) live in old tombs and huts in the Kosivikh fens, while the other 175 (25%) in the Vyalia Woods.

AC: These goblins will reuse any armor taken, even if it needs to be 'reshaped/trimmed/cut into a fitting shape. Mostly this will ruin any magical enchant-

ments (25% to remain in place). Fights are conducted to decide who owns which armor or armor piece.

Preferred weapons: short bow, short and normal sword (often barbed: +1 damage, reducing healing (even magic) which is possible only after 1 hour or after a *Cure Disease*, infection chance). Each goblin has 1d2 weapons.

Poison Use: These goblins will use poison coatings on weapons when they have such poison (5%/month to buy 20 applications of poison B, C, BB, CC, or NN from harpies or hags). Tribe members enjoy the pain and terror that a poison brings upon a hapless victim, in a similar fashion to how they would enjoy seeing acid or quicklime being used to inflict injury. They will only use acid/quicklime within their lair (*DM: Acid/quicklime game mechanics* = 1d8 damage in the first round, continues with the same damage-1 each round and -2 per quart of water/wine/mud used to flush. This is an utterly evil act, and as DM best not to be used on PCs, but on NPCs instead to instill horror and disgust by these goblins).

Possessions: as standard.

Dire wolves: The Kosivikh. ride a dark-brown and grey-bellied variety of wolf with a higher constitution giving it +1hp/HD. Captured victims are not fed to the wolves, but slain victims are sometimes fed to the animals, if not eaten by goblins.

Lek-Aremh (River Clan) Goblins

Source: *Sturm's 3.2-mile hex map of Kara-meikos*

These goblins have a distinctive blueish green skin, and feed greatly on fish (1d8Hp/HD instead of 1d6). Due to this there are no skinny goblins in the tribe,

and they are less aggressive (but still do not underestimate them; they are still very territorial and possessive). The tribe is careful in its actions (first Initiative -2, Reaction roll positive = retreat instead friendly). They are under the Dominion of Dragon Argos. They are afraid of oozes (which also live underwater) and hsiaou. The Tribe is in regular conflict with Kosivikh and Krimderah Goblins as well as local harpies.

Being able to swim, all tribe members are unafraid of water; all Lek-Aremh goblins can swim 30'/10', and know how to hide underwater by holding their breath. This they do as per normal *holding Breath rules (RC 90)*: 1r/Constitution point, after which they try to resurface, mostly loudly (as they wear clothes pegs on their noses to help holding their breath). These goblins have discovered the shrinking/hardening/'gluing' effect between wet and dry leather and make use of it where possible in binding and construction.

The tribe is composed of 350 goblins in 4 groups: 280 (80%) in the main camp and caves of the eastern Haven Cliffs, and the other 70 (20%) in the pinewoods directly north.

AC: none. These goblins often go naked, except in winter when they wear furs worn inside out.

Preferred Weapons: spear, dart (poison), traps (bear traps, caltrops, string traps, log traps, horizontal and vertical catapulting branch traps), short bow (-1 to hit due smaller size goblins). Each goblin has 1d2+1 weapons.

Poison use: The Lek-Aremh will use poison coatings on weapons when they have such poison (45%/month to buy 50 applications of poison S, OO, or PP from harpies or hags, and they know how to

make poison type A themselves from rotten corpses in water, so always have access to this poison).

Food: These goblins are richly fed and the amount of food in lair is equal to 90% of the total number of tribe members; They always carry a fresh fish in their pockets, (or some other food) in addition to the standard possession.

TT: as Standard but Trinkets x3, 1d3 clothespins

Dire Wolves: see sidebar. Dark brown with watertight thick fur variety. Their front seems higher and worg blood mixing is suspected. These dire wolves swim (30'/10') on the surface of water with their rider if lower loaded than 1000cn, else they discard their load.

Hobgoblins

Some of the tribes contain several Hobgoblins, who do most of the real battle. They have Hp/HD as 2d4/HD instead 1d8/HD, +1 Con and ST due to a better diet. If there are Hobgoblins in a tribe, they are up to 10% of the total number of goblins in the tribe at best and 01-50% are HD1, 51-75% are HD2, 76-88% are HD3, and 89-94-00% are HD4, (any stronger individuals will move away, usually to join a pure hobgoblin tribe). These hobgoblins mostly originate from hobgoblin youngsters desiring to find their own way (a tradition among these goblinoids). The hobgoblins group together, largely keeping apart from the goblins, until they have grown strong enough to survive independently, or find mates. Hobgoblin males and females are equal in most aspects except in giving birth and having young.

Dire wolves

Activity cycle: day & night, size 7' - 12', ST17, IN4, WI11, CO 10, CH13, Understands goblin commands, AC6 HD3+1, average hp 16, MV 150'/50', Load: 1000/2000cn (full speed/half speed), Jump 25' forward or 8' high if loaded less than 1000cn, else refuse jump, AT 1 bite, Run/walk 10T/10Hr, THAC0 16, Dm 2d4, SV F2, ML8, AL N, xp 125

Worgen

Activity cycle: only daytime, size 4' - 7', ST18, IN6, WI9, CO 11, CH10, Understands goblin commands, AC7 HD3+3, average hp 18, MV 180'/60', Load; 750/1500 cn (full speed/half speed), Jump 30' forward or 10' high if loaded less than 850cn, else refuse jump, Run/walk 11T/11Hr, AT 1 bite, THAC0 17, Dm 2d4, SV F2, ML7, AL NE,

Goblins riding dire wolves or worgen have a +2 on initiative when using distance weapons (primary method) or charge attacks (occasional method). Slain targets are plundered and fed to the wolves after a combat is resolved. (25% chance that no Raise Dead is possible in this situation). When dire wolves or worgen are attacking a single target, they hold arms and/or legs so the goblins can make the kill easily = +4 to THAC0, +4 Damage, and a -4 on the victim Saves on each such grabbed bite. Damage of each bite continues as long as it is held, for 1 hp each round without rolling a hit roll. Those "grabbed" may try to escape by

hitting the wolf with 3 or more damage (others may also do so), after which the wolf let's go. As can be seen, this pack mentality can become a great bonus to the goblins and wolves even against high level PC's.

Dire wolves and worgen ambush their prey by closing the distance and dropping on the prey from above or leaping. If the animal hits, the impact of the heavy animal on an upright human frame knocks the victim prone and he must save vs. paralysis or be stunned for 1d3 rounds. Slain targets are plundered and fed to the wolves after a combat is resolved (25% chance no Raise Dead possible in this situation). If no goblins are available to control the wolves there is a 25% chance the abandoned wolves start feeding on the victim(s), and a 25% chance that they leave and return to a wild state, and 50% chance to return to their lair.

During his younger years, a follower of the Great Wogar (goblin Immortal) must raise a dire wolf or other wolf. He is responsible for his wolf companion. If it dies due to his neglect, the goblin immediately becomes a pariah (outcast). If the wolf dies during combat, it is customary for the goblin follower to eat his wolf's heart to gain its strength. The ceremony of the wolf takes place at the local shrine. In effect, the goblin gains Dire wolf Empathy and Dire Wolf Training (or a +2 to these skills if already having them). Dire Wolf Empathy works on Dire Wolves, Worgen, Arctic-, Winter- and Mist- Wolves. Dire Wolf Training works on all wolves. There is a 25% chance per group of wolves that rabies is contracted. This is dangerous to both the bitten victims and the wolf. Refer to the

section Wolf on MMMC2 pages 250-225 for more information on abilities, rabies and senses.

All the goblins of the Dymrak Forest and beyond use different varieties of Direwolf. Each wolf breed has a slightly different appearance, often related to its different abilities, and originate from a single litter originally (stolen from the mother by the goblins). As such one of the above statistics may vary. All these wolves roam in the wild, and can be encountered anywhere, and as individual animals are not immediately recognised as part of a particular breed variety. The differences between breeds of dire wolves may include; higher CO=+1hp/HD, larger Fangs=+1 bite damage, increased Movement rates =+30'/10', Swimming (30'/10'), Frightening Howl/Growl =Cause fear to 4HD or less as per spell, increased endurance= run/walk for double the normal time, Increased Strength=+1 THAC0 and +100cn load, regularly does swimming, immune to a snake or spider venom (which they prey upon), infravision 30', or other differences as determined by the DM.

Water Ogres

Source; *Dungeon Magazine #59* and *AD&D2e Monstrous Manual*. Recalculated statistics and some information on these creatures not previously included in canon Mystara.

Climate/Terrain: Kelvin Moor and Volaga River (any water elsewhere), Frequency; Uncommon, Organization; Tribal, Activity cycle; any, Diet; Carnivore(mostly fish or local animals), Size HD x feet, No appear-

ing; 2d12, Tribe; 1 Chief 9+4HD, 2 Patrol Leaders 5+4HD, 2d12 4+4 HD standard Water Ogre 2d12 females, AC5, 3+3 Hit Dice, 1d12 young, AC6, 2+2 Hit Dice, 1d2/1d2/1d4 damage, 1 standard Water Ogre shaman of 3rd level ability

AC 6 to 3 depending on HD, HD average 4+4, THAC0 20-HD-ST adj, ATT; 2 claws 1 bite or 1 weapon, Damage; claw 1d6+ST adj, bite; 2d4, or by weapon +2 and +ST adj, Special Attacks; Special Defenses; Camouflage, Mv60'/20' Sw 120'/40', Abilities; ST16+1d4(19-20=ST adj +4), IN6+1d4, WI 5+1d4, DX 2d8, CO 3d6, CH 3d6 (reverse for humanoids), Treasure V, Lair A, AL; Chaotic Evil, MR; 0, Morale 10, Xp calculate as per HD+(1*) as per RC page 128

Water ogres are greenish and scaled with webbed hands and feet. Their necks are long and thick, their shoulders are sloping, and they have huge mouths and undershot jaws. Water ogres have black teeth and nails and deep green eyes with white centers, and their hair resembles slimy seaweed. About 10% grow ivory horns, especially the more powerful males. They are very fond of tattoos, and females may have their entire bodies inked with scenes of death and destruction as a sign of status. They speak a dialect of other ogres. It is said that water ogres were created on Kelvin Moor, dating the Hutaakan Era in the style of the Nithians. Local ogres, adapted to working on the wet ground, were used as a workforce to dig the canals of Key-Haminteb (see the adventure *"Trouble in Threshold"* in the *"Karamaikos: Kingdom of Adventure"* boxed set for the Tomb of Key-Kaminteb, and also [this topic](#) at the Piazza Forums). As the Nithians and Hutaakan went away, the water ogres lost their masters and

receded to an uncontrolled wild state, similar to natural ogres. Since that time many have migrated elsewhere in small groups, although a stable group of six tribes remains to the present day.

Combat: Using their green coloration, water ogres can hide, becoming effectively invisible 10 to 80% of the time, depending on terrain(DM). They prefer to attack from cover, so surprise 1-4 on 6 roll. Water ogres typically attack with a large piercing spear (inflicting 2d6 standard damage) in a swimming charge at +1 to hit, followed by melee with talons and teeth.

Habitat/Society: They can breathe air and water, can live out of water for about two hours (then they suffer 1 damage/round due dehydration), so they often forage on land. They usually control an area of about 12 miles, hunting and foraging throughout this territory. In times of scarcity, or when the lure of treasure becomes too great, they will attack the local villages. They prefer glittering prizes like gold and jewels and often overlook dull magical items. They also often attack ships passing through their territory..

Ecology: Water ogres are ignorant and superstitious and have no skills but plundering and murder. Areas of the freshwater lakes and seas where they have influence are avoided by sailors and fishermen. These monsters are carnivores, preying on all who enter their regions, often emptying the seas of life with their voracious appetites.

DRAGONS OF THE DYMRAK REGION

This section includes all published canon information relating to the local dragons, with fanon content including Chimpman's 2300 BC work, Sturm's 3050 BC work, and maps of the region by Agathokles and Sturm. Bruce Heard's articles from *Dragon Magazine* [#170](#) and [#171](#) regarding individual dragons such as Argos, and the draconic Pyramid of Power are also incorporated.

The Dragons listed in the accompanying table live in the area of the Dymrak Forest in Karameikos, on both sides of the Rugalov River, and known to them as **Argosyl**. The forest is guarded by several tribes (River Wolves, Kosivikh, Green Raiders) of wolf-riding goblins that have submitted to the rule of Argos.

Argos: (Male Huge Green Dragon 14HD)
Top Pyramid power.

From "*Who's Who Among Dragons*" by Bruce Heard (originally published in *Dragon Magazine* [#171](#), and available at the Vaults of Pandius):

Argos' lair lies 48 miles north of Rugalov Village, in a cave under a small hill on the east side of the Rugalov River that branches northeast from the Lake of Lost Dreams. The dragon must immerse himself completely in the lake in order to reach the entrance to his lair.

Argos is 148 years old (as at 1000AC). Very quiet, he always prefers stealth and trickery to violence. Argos' sphere of influence has spread steadily to the



north, seeking to rally further humanoid tribes (mostly orcs). Argos' worst enemy is Attura (in Atruaghin), with whom he once attempted to mate. He was almost bound to her as a result but narrowly escaped. Argos fears Attura and has been seeking an alliance with Marudi (a blue dragon in Ylaruam) in case of all-out aggression. Argos's flaw lies in his inability to make quick decisions. He hesitates and worries far too long for his own good. Other dragons taunt Argos by calling him Argos the Worrier.

Argos can take an elven alias but has done so only as an experiment. Worried that other dragons' Second Sight ability would reveal the nature of his shapeshifting, he has not named or further 'shaped' this elven identity. He will probably only use this identity in the event of a last-minute escape situation. There are a number of dragons in Argos' Pyramid of Draconic

Name	Race	Lair	Under the Dominion of	Has Dominion Over
Argos	♂ Huge Green	East of Lake of lost Dreams	none	Blerindith, Kavoski, Klerimenga, + Red(4Sm1Lg), 1 Gold(1Sm), Blue(2Sm), Black(1Sm,1Lg), White(8Sm, 2Lg, 1 Hg)
Arksmoos	♀ Small Green	Pinewoods north of Petrified woods	Blerendith	na
Blasteryal	♂ Small Black	Kelvin Moor	Klerimenga	na
Blerindith	♀ Large green	The Jungle	Argos	4 dragons(Arksmoos, Egsedyx, Sufura Argenta, small??)
Cupora	♀ Small Green	Syereb River	Egsedyx,	na
Egsedyx	♂ Large Green	Callarii Woods	Blerendith	2 dragons (Cupora, small??)
Giofelyll	♂ Small Green	Vyallia Pine Woods	Ketaar	1 small dragon (??).
Karmenga	♂ Small Black	Muddy Volaga Banks	Klerimenga,	na
Kavoski	♂ Large Green	Haven Cliffs	Argos	3 dragons (Ketaar, small??, small??)
Ketaar	♂ Large Black	Kosivikh swamp	Kavoski	2 small dragons (Giofelyll, small??)
Klerimenga	♀ Large Blue	Kelvin Moor	Argos	4 dragons (Blasteryal, Karmenga, small??, small??)
Sufura Argenta	♀ Small Green	Tomb Hills north of Dim	Blerendith	na

Power: several Green (in the woods), some Black (in the few moor locations) and a few Red and White Dragons (in the mountains). Most of these are named or listed in the table above.

A very old large red dragon lives in the Wufwolde hills north of the area covered by the Dymark map. This dragon is under the dominion of Argos but remains awkwardly silent. Only the local Dwarves and Humanoids seem to suffer from its attacks, and even they do not know its name or gender.

There is a large female gold dragon named Espathaal that has been wandering the Dymark region since 1009AC. She has an unknown elven alter ego and originates from the Canolbarth Forest. She was under the domain of the well-known Raspaert and became free when the local Pyramid of Power collapsed upon the change of the Canolbarth (during the War of the Immortals). It is assumed she lives with the refugee elves and currently lacks any pyramid power. Her plans are to move to Darokin, Ilnefarn or Dolos against the Cruth mountains and settle there. Due to this she will refuse to fight for freedom or dominance in pyramid power by any dragons recognizing her and will leave if such a thing happens. Argos would love to have her power under his control but is unaware of Espathaal's location. Espathaal draws limited attention to herself and even hunts in elven form. She is currently the only dragon in the region not within the Argos' Pyramid of Power.

If a DM uses the Penhaligon Trilogy by J.B.Heinrich in their campaign background:

There has been a large (or even huge) green dragon named Verdilith, which for a short time a few years ago held a vast domain that also compromised the Dymrak Forest (having temporary control over Argos), and eventually affected the whole mid and east of Karameikos. Verdilith tried to force Argos to mate, but Argos was so reluctant and slow, she angrily left him to his own worries. The haste of Verdilith over the lack of action by Argos eventually gave Argos the opportunity to (re-)take on the dominant position soon after Verdilith's demise, as described in the Penhaligon Trilogy.

Not all the dragons under Argos' dominion have their lairs identified on the regional map. Some of these are located beyond the map's borders. Many of Argos' pyramid of power are small dragons, who have not yet established a permanent lair and are wandering about trying to find a suitable location, temporarily settling in any area they deem acceptable for the time being. The small dragons are mostly young and inexperienced, and may fall to predators, adventurers and humanoids. Other young dragons will take their place in time. A DM can place the lairs of such dragons anywhere within range of the ruling dragon, which is roughly 2-mile hex per HD for large dragons and 1 mile per HD for small dragons. These unlocated dragons are also not named, and are free to be named by the DM.

ANCIENT STONE STRUCTURES IN THE DYMRAK REGION

Thus section describes some of the constructions from past centuries that adventurers may find during their travels through the Dymrak region.

Raths and Cashels (Earthen and Stone Ring Forts)

These two types of ring fort have souterrains (chambers/tunnels) beneath, used for storage. Abandoned ring forts become inexplicably circular earthen banks with their souterrains hidden below.

An unknown number of cashels dating from the old Traldar era exist on the hills in the Dymrak's northern part. About 50 raths are spread throughout the Dymrak woods and the hills to the north. Most of the raths are totally overgrown, the only rath still in use is Skrytiv. The majority are small (between 15' and 25' in size), probably used temporarily by single families, and are marked on the regional map as hamlets, or not at all.

Each rath has 1d4-1 (lower than 0=0) chambers beneath it; each chamber has a 25% chance of containing relics from the past. If contents are discovered, 90% will be old tools and ceramics, while the other 10% will be valuables (treat as unguarded treasure level 1d4-1 (0=1) as the table in the *Rules Cyclopedia* page 261). Any coins found are old and worth 50% of their face value, and are harder to exchange or use (reaction roll

-4+CH adjustment or bargaining skill to be successful). Some rath were used by fairies and sidhe and may contain 1d4-2 additional tiny chambers holding fairy tools/clothing.

If magical items are found, they will be long dispelled due to the passage of time, or as the result of Days of Dread. Any magical consumables discovered will have evaporated or, if able to be ingested, will cause instant regurgitation and 4+1d4 damage due to stomach cramps if a save vs. poison fails. Any scrolls found can be used as normal but have double casting time due to difficulties in reading from the old material.



Dun

A dun is a fort built on a hill with a wooden palisade ring. Their ruins look similar to those of cashels but with remnants of their palisades visible.

Cheveux-de-frise

These are series of around several hundred upright stones placed around a dun or a cashel. The stones' purpose is uncertain. They are obviously a form of defence against potential attackers as the number of stones will hinder progress towards the



dun or cashel. But they may also have a magical effect, as all the stones have the same magical sigils.

For Dms: these provide a magical defence in the form of a *single* spell affecting only the dun or cashel within. Only the following spells are known to be used in these defences: *Control Weather*, *Control Temperature*, *Bless*, *Protection from Normal Missiles*, or a *Scroll of Protection* (against one specific type of creature). The effort and time required to physically install and magically maintain this form of stone structure requires much investment of time and use of magic; thus it is not a defence that can be quickly implemented in the event of an attack.

The effects of any of the spells cannot be maintained indefinitely; the same spell and a special ritual need to be activated to allow the spell to function for a period of 24 hours. Each cheveu-de-frise is different; most of them are damaged due to the passage of time and do not function. However, this may allow (N)PCs to save themselves if they know how to. Traladaran clerics and druids with history skills might know how to do this on a successful skill roll if they have the spell available. This can be cast by another; the ritual however must be performed by

this character and lasts 6 times as long as the casting of the spell itself.

Cairn Grave

These are small stacks of stones above a 2' deep hole in the ground in which a single corpse is buried. These graves are still used by Traldar adventurers and people in the wild to bury their dead. Many are placed near shrines. As these are so numerous, they are not marked on the regional map.

The maximum age of any cairn grave is 1d100x10 years (older ones are reabsorbed into nature). Each grave has a 25% chance to contain something of interest (see entry for Rath above). Newer graves (less than 100 years old) hold relatively new items. However, PCs should remember that plundering recent graves is still considered a crime 3 or higher under theft, as per Karameikan Law. There is a 25% chance that any body within such a grave has become Undead and is either still there or wanders nearby.

Should any open cairn graves be discovered, a lawful or neutral cleric with the adventuring party will be inclined to rebury the dead according its faith.

Court Cairn

This cairn comprises a circular stone tomb in a central chamber with about 1d12 smaller burial chambers leading to it. For each smaller chamber see the cairn grave entry above for possible contents. Court cairns are marked on the Dymrak regional map.

The chance to hold undead must be checked for each chamber, if one chamber holds undead, then all the corpses have

become such. If they are free to roam, roll again for the other chambers they can access.

SHRINES, TEMPLES AND CLOISTERS

Shrines

Traladaran shrines found by the roadside and elsewhere have a Hutaakan / Traldar design.



Within each shrines are statues of the Immortal(s) that the temple is dedicated to. There will also be a small prayer station for honouring the other Immortals of the shrine's faith. A Holy Font will be found close by the statue of the Immortal(s), or positioned against the opposite wall.

Thyatian roadside shrines are small houses in which there are several niches, each holding a statuette of the Immortals of the Church. A font is placed centrally within the shrine. Some rare shrines of other Immortals (the Dark Triad, Nyx) exist, but these are all hidden within other structures or underground. Dwarves or Gnomes often use portable shrines to honour their Immortals.

Temples

Traladaran and Thyatian temples are openly found throughout the Dymrak region. Other temples are hidden and often underground. All these temples have one or more shrines within their structures in a section dedicated to the Immortal in question, but are of varying design. The larger space afforded by a temple often means

that larger statues are found within these shrines, and that there is a larger and more valuable font.



Example of Traladaran temple

Temple buildings often have additional rooms to those that services are held in, sometimes including accommodation for the high ranking clergy. A



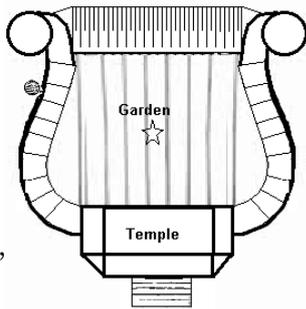
few lower ranked clerics will be found in each temple providing religious support to visitors.. Lower clerics/druids and the local population serve as household staff for the upkeep of the building. Such staff mostly live nearby, or, if the temple is part of a cloister, within the cloister apartments.

Cloisters

Each cloister has surrounding grounds in which produce is grown and animals are tended. There is a temple and bedrooms for those studying at the cloister, and guest rooms for visitors. Other structures will provide utility and storage. Building style and design will vary depending on the dominant Immortal worshipped.

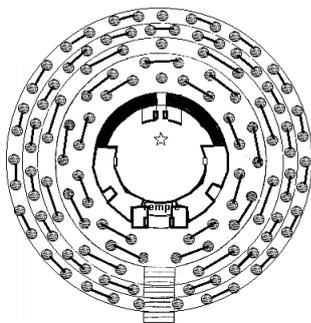
Cloisters of Zirchev are traditionally built on hills. The layout of the buildings in this faith's cloisters resembles the shape of a lyre. The only two-storey structure compris-

ing the main entrance, temple, and two large storage rooms is located at the base of the lyre shape. The buildings in the rest of the “U” shape provide accommodation, utility services and storage. These structures surround gardens and small plots of land where food is grown. As these cloisters are often located in wildlands, some defense is provided by having the outer facing walls of the various structures (except the temple) being blind, i.e. without windows, and a steep slope on the top of the lyre-shape. Additionally, low-level druids patrol along the roofs behind a 3' curtain wall. Some early warning of the approach of others may be given by the animals and plants that exist around the cloister.



Basic Zirchev Cloister

Cloisters of Petra will be found built on man-made hills. Their layout is circular in shape, with a giant shield-like roof above the cloister buildings.

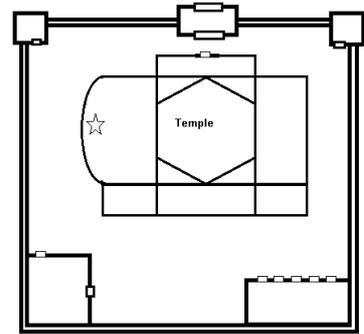


Basic Petra Cloister

The roof is supported by five rings of stone pillars. There are 4' high walls between alternate pairs of pillars in each ring. The positioning of each ring is staggered from its neighbours such that an observer on the outside cannot see what is encircling the pillars. Within the inner ring is the temple which makes up about one-

third of the cloister. There are other buildings (three-storied) which provide for utility services, storage and accommodation. These buildings surround an open training area. There are also open fields where produce is grown, and horses and some cattle are tended.

Cloisters of Halav are rectangular or square in shape with strong walls and a gate, more resembling a single-storey castle than a cloister.



Basic Halav Cloister

Within the walls, the temple is a 2-storey rectangular building, and other structures for apartments, utility and storage ring the inner perimeter. The open area in the middle of the cloister is a training ground for teaching various fighter skills including jousting. Outside the walls are fields where produce is grown, and horses are tended.

There are no cloisters or temples dedicated to **Chardastes**. All earlier temples to the Immortal have been desecrated, reduced to ruins or taken over. There are no public shrines, temples or cloisters to the **Cult of Halav**. In 1010 AC, the only cloister of the Church of Thyatis is in Specularum (see the novel *“The Dark Knight of Karameikos”*).

Refer to the *AD&D 1e Dungeon Master’s Guide* for information on **Holy Fonts** that may be found in any of these buildings.

NON PLAYER CHARACTERS

This section contains a gallery of NPCs that adventuring players may encounter as they travel around the Dymrak region.

A chronology of events in the region and details of NPCs connected with the region (particularly relating to “The Barrel” inn) can be found in [issue #23 of *Threshold Magazine*](#). Many of the NPC’s mentioned here are part of the storyline around the main characters of The Barrel.

All Pixies, Brownies, Sprites, Redcap mentioned in this section if Invisible to Mortals are able to attack while invisible, and thus have AC lowered by -6, THACO improved by +6, Autosurprise, and Invisible to Mortals until exposed to Detect Invisible (after 1 Round they can become invisible to Mortals again even while detect Invisible is active), or anti magic (as long as exposed), and are seen also by Second Sight. Dragons and Fairies (and some rare individuals have Second Sight. There do exist some rare ointments giving Second Sight. For more on Second Sight and Invisibility to Mortals see pages 1596-7 in part 6 of the author’s [Mystara Monster Manual Compilation](#).

Where NPCs may be encountered

Encounter area	FriendlyNPCs	Antagonistic NPCs	NPCs of Unknown Alliance
Rugalov region	Finnig the Witch Eproxy Simon Dershwin	Perturo Monetera Sergeant Dawnbrow	Aeasculehyem Perri Doran Ilya
Dymrak region of Thyatis and Karameikos	Druid Gendarim		
the hills north and south of the Volaga.	Eproxy		
undersea	Gullywing		
at sea throughout the small harbors of Minrothad, Thyatis, Ierendi, and Karameikos.	Simon Dershwin		
within a 20-mile radius of The Barrel Inn	Woodrock	Redstone	
along the roads of Karameikos, and in all the important inns and taverns.		Gustaf Kardowin Arthol Delonna	

Aeasculehyem

(Faerie and Elfish for The Golden Horn of Honour)

AC2, AV0, (male Unicorn)
 HD 7d8, 56Hp(HD)+14(con)=73(was 82).
 Mv 240'/90' (load 2700/5400cn, Sprint 270'/90'x 19 rounds ,
 AT 2 hooves each 1d10+2(ST),
 THAC0 14, AT 1 Horn 1d12+2ST (critical hit on 17+=double dm, further as per AV rules - a natural 20 rolled gives 12X2X2+2ST=50 damage and a 19 12x2+2=26 damage without subtracting AV). Wounds caused by the unicorn's horn will suffer a blood-loss of 1/round additionally. The Horn will not break as long as the animal is alive, and slivers taken from it are only done in mutual agreement, not accidentally or unwillingly.
 Sv MU 13, ML7 or 9(with rider), ALNG, ST 17, IN22, WI 26, DX16, CO19, CH12).
 Understands Languages: Traladaran, Elvish, Fairy, Local Orcish, Equines(Horse) Abilities; *Call Mother Nature* (Immortal Ordana), Unhindered by bushes, Charge (double damage), Trample(4xhoof damage+12 + 4 broken bones: roll 4x 2d20 and see [Broken Bones table](#)), Tossing, Jump (Double Horse jump; High 15' standing 28' running 42'), Invisible to Mortals, Second Sight, Awe, Teleport 360 yard, Sense enemy 240 yard, Move Silent 75%, Surprise 1-6 on 1d10, Immune to normal disease, poison, Charm, Hold, Enchantments, Sleep, Friendship, Snare, Trip, Illusions, Death Magic, extra vulnerable vs. Holy places and weapons and Undead (uncomfortable or +1/dice damage), 25% Anti Magic, 900LBS, 18 hands (6') high. Loyal, Honourable, Courageous, Honest, Trusting, Cautious.



Painting of Aeasculehyem

The local elves and fairies know of this wonderful and still powerful animal, a 1,725-year old experienced unicorn, and legends speak of its lawful deeds. Aeasculehyem has already sired some offspring (living in the woods) and knows that his end is only decades away. He knows all the plants with healing capabilities and where the treants and druids live. The unicorn is very careful with the local witches for he fears the possibility of them becoming hags.

Aeasculehyem has befriended Sascha Andrejev's mule, Kimmi, and feels the love the creature has for its mistress. He has promised to protect Sascha from the Dark Knight as detailed described by the mule, when it eventually passes away). Until that time the unicorn visits the loyal mule regularly in secret to see that it is treated well and still has its love for Sascha.

DM Notes:

For information on a unicorn's attack forms, abilities and such, refer to pages 1880-1895 in part 6 of the author's [Mystara Monster Manual Compilation](#).

Sergeant (Decurion) Julianus Dawnbrow

5th level fighter, (nale Thyatian Human, Official patrol leader)

AC8 (incl. DX+ Buckler Shield), Chain Mail (AV4) (if Armor Value is not used, subtract AV from AC to get correct AC), HD 9+, 16+Hp59(HD)+14(Lvl)=73(was 82). Mv 120'40',

AT Sword +1 (WM skilled), THAC0 9 (adjust by ST+magic), AT as per weapon +2(ST) +magic.

Sv F5, ML8, ALCN,

ST 13, IN8, WI 10, DX7, CO16, CH 8.

Languages: 3 (Thyatian, Vyalia Elvish, Dwarven).

Skills: 5 (Profession: Soldier, Riding, Law & Justice, WM SK Sword, Church of Karameikos Faith (prefers Ixion)). Reverent, Lazy, Fearful, Proud, Violent, Unreliable. He earns a 45gp/month and 5% of leftovers from Tax Master Perturo (the remaining 45% is for Perturo).

Dawnbrow was born on 12 Sviftmont 967AC in Bayville (Thyatis). His parents migrated to Karameikos for a chance to become rich, and this idea is still the base thought for Julianus: getting filthy rich. He enlisted himself in the army at the age of 16, and was stationed at Penhaligon, where he barely survived the abelaat attack by fleeing south to Rugalov. There he spent 6 months in detention for insubordination.

Now Dawnbrow is forced to do the most tedious and boring tasks, such as guarding something or someone (like the Tax master). Mostly, he is to be found in Rugalov or in the company of Tax master Perturo. The sergeant is very frustrated, as his last

10 Guards: Fighter Level 1, all Thyatian and forced to do this tedious work as punishment for illegal or immoral actions. None of them enjoys this job, yet various backgrounds force them to do this. They earn a meagre 22gp/month and 1% of leftovers from Tax Master Perturo. THAC0 18, Att Normal or short sword, sometimes dagger or net, AC7 (medium shield) SVF1, ST13, IN9, WI9, CO10, DX8, CH9(all these +1 or -1 variation individually), 1HD, HP 1d4+4, age and alignments as given,

Males:

Consus Dogonis (20, CN),

Aries Tharis (22, CN),

Pollux Darnassus (23, CN),

Numitor Ocentius (20, CN),

Titus Amenos (21, N),

Arderus Metesen (19, CN),

Belen Tatis (19, CN),

Giander Rukuss (20, CN),

Females:

Lavinia Tempile (20, CE),

Nona Damatius (18, N).

All have the Soldier Profession, Riding, Swimming, and Law & Justice skills, all speak Thyatian, and 50% Traladaran or 25% Elvish or another language. Traits as Decurion Dawnbrow.

weapon mastery trainer in Rugalov Keep specifically stated he is too dumb to gain any weapon mastery above skilled level. Required to obey a mediocre official (Perturo) he has turned bad and often reorts to unnecessarily violent behaviour (often incited by the Tax master). He has an iron hand of control as Decurion over his 10 guards and punishes disobedience and failure regularly by assigning the offender daunting tasks, like forcing them to participate in the Kyo's Run.

Arthol Delonna

2nd level Fighter, 6th level merchant.
(male Thyatian Human, Rich Merchant)
AC6 (incl. magic (Ring of Protection+2,
Ring of Regeneration), Dwarven Chain
Mail(AV4)+1(if Armor Value is not used,
subtract AV from AC to get correct AC),
HD 2+, 11hp.

Mv 120'40'

AT Rapier +2 (WM Skilled), THAC0 18
(adjust by ST+magic and WM in melee
as per RC page ...), AT as per weapon -
1(ST)+1Weapon Mastery+2magic.

Sv F2, ML9, ALCN,

ST 7, IN9, WI 13, DX9, CO9, CH 14
(Comeliness 17).

Languages: 3 (Traladaran, Thyatian,
Dwarven)

Skills: 4+6(Merchant)=10; Profession
Freighter, Riding, Drinking, Appraisal,
Know Market Value, Honor Immorta
l(Valerias), Knowledge History Kara
meikos, Knowledge local Merchants,
Knowledge Thieves Guilds, Wagon Rid
ing.)

Church of Thyatis Faith (prefers Vale
rias). Proud, Rash, Greedy, Lazy, Unrelia
ble, Reverent.

Arthol has 15 **helpers**: these are Thyatian
men and women: T1, F1, C1 of ages 18 to
30, AL N to CN. THAC019, AT 1 weapon
DM 1d6, average statistics.

Arthol Delonna is a young (27-year-old)
overactive, overachieving, yet arrogant and
obnoxious, merchant. He used a lot of his
money to acquire magical items, but he
bought so many that he became magically
overcharged and had to sell most of the
objects.

Having had several series of investments he
became very wealthy and overconfident,
thinking that every woman loves him.
Though not unattractive, his behaviour is
seriously lacking. He is proud of his clothing,
shoes, short moustache and beard, which
mimic those of a gallant lord. Echoing this
appearance, he is trained in the rapier, the
stylish weapon for Thyatian Lords.

Arthol owns a cottage in Verrau, which he
desires to expand into a Traladaran style
mansion but cannot find architects to work
for him yet. He does not understand that
the reason that his offers of work have
been rejected is because of his behaviour.
He thinks those he approaches discriminate
against him as he is a Thyatian, and so
often consoles together with Gustaf Kar
dowin when they meet in *The Barrel* (or
elsewhere). Due to his feelings of being dis
criminated against, Arthol is very negative
towards the Church of Traladara and
defames and desecrates shrines and
temples whenever possible (mostly with
paint, animal blood, or faeces).

Arthol works 3+1d4 weeks in a row all over
Karameikos and Thyatis, and then returns
to relax for the same period. His Thyatian
helpers follow the same pattern of
work/relaxation.

DM Note:

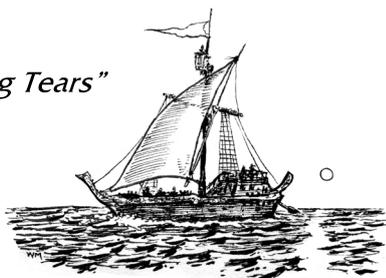
Thyatian and Karameikan Merchants follow
the Darokin merchant system, with one
major difference: they do not acquire
spells/abilities like the Darokin merchants,
but instead gain one extra (non action,
mostly intelligence, wisdom or charisma
based) skill slot for every merchant level.

SIMON DERSHWIN

6th level fighter, male Traladaran sailor
AC7 (incl. DX), never wears armor (AV0)
6HD 36hp/HD+6/CO.
Mv 120'40',
AT Club/Trident, THAC0 (adjust by
magic in melee as per RC), AT as per
weapon +magic.
Sv F6, ML9, ALN,
ST 11, IN17, WI 12, DX16, CO15, CH 7.
Languages: 5 (Traladaran, Thyatian, Cal-
larii Elvish, Merrow, Minrothadian)
Skills: 7 (Profession Fisher+1, Profession
Sailor+2, Orientation, Navigation. Trala-
daran Faith (prefers Halav and Zirchev).
Cautious, Modest, Peaceful, Courageous,
Reverent, Loyal, Suspicious.

Simon lives in Verrau and is a fishermen, merchant and smuggler born in Overton in 959 AC. He is a friend of *The Barrel* inn (see [Threshold Magazine issue #23](#)) and sells all his catches there. He is also a very good smuggler and often helps people disappear elsewhere when hunted by the Thyatians, or others. The smuggling is not done for free, as his life depends on loyalty, trust and good pay. Simon has three hidden vessels on the Smugglecoast, while his main vessel is a small cog sailing ship named *Running Tears* (see below). He could easily transport PCs elsewhere if needed, providing he was paid well, and could return with a good catch to camouflage his work.

The "Running Tears"



Running Tears

75'x20'x9' including castle & stern,
AC8, 135Hp*, 1 mast,
Sp100**, Sailing 90(60) capacity; 100,000
(secret 20,000 extra),

14 sailors/fishermen (all trustworthy AL
NG, F1, ML10)
2 Ballistae, 2 light catapults, 1 underwa-
ter ballista,
food storage 3 months for 18-man crew,
normal value 14,000gp.

There is a secret magical item embedded
in the bow of the vessel which, when
commanded by Simon, can do three
things:

- 1) triple speed for 6 Turns,
- 2) make vessel and all onboard invisible
for 6+1d6 Turns,
- 3) teleport to 3 miles Northeast from
Pyrehouse Rock

[all of these powers are recharged after
the vessel is exposed to the brightest
light of the moon (on the night of the
full moon as well as the night preceding
and following it) for a minimum of 3
hours].

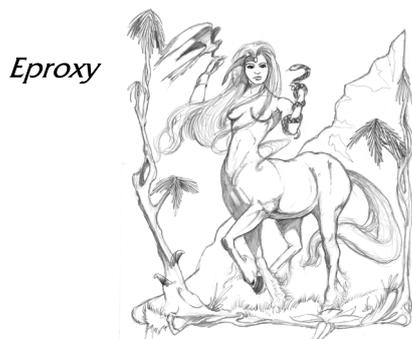
*Hp in this case are Hull Points. 5 points
of normal damage to the hull are 1
Hull point of real damage. Only sharp
or massive weapons and fire or acid
bring hull damage. If Hp are below
25% normal the vessel takes 1hp /Turn
damage due intake of water.

**Sp are Sail points. Each % damage is
the same reduction in speed. Only
sharp weapons and fire bring damage
to sails.

Doran

4th level Pixy, (male)
 AC8 (incl. DX), No armor(AV0),
 HD *4d8, 22(HD).
 MV (incl. ST effects) 0-22cn; 60'/20'23-
 52cn'30'/10', 53-102cn; 15'/5'103+cn; 0
 FL; 3 Turns then rest 1 Turn; 0-6cn;
 180/60', 7-11cn; 150'/50', 12-16cn;
 120'40', 17-21cn; 90'/30', 22-26cn; 60'/20',
 27-36cn; 30'/10',37-41cn; 15'/5', 42cn+;0,
 AT Sword +),
 THAC0 16+1(ST)=15, AT as per weapon
 +1(ST)+magic. Magic item success; 01-
 15, failure; 16-84, Backfire; 85-96, Unex-
 pected; 97-00, Abilities; Invisible to Mort-
 als, Second Sight,Weakness; Feels
 uncomfortable in Holy places or near
 Holy objects, Holy water and weapons
 bring 1d4 damage (extra to weapons).
 Sv F7, ML11, ALLN,
 ST 13, IN17, WI 12, DX13, CO9, CH 14.
 Languages: 6 (Fairy, Traladaran, Elvish,
 Gnome, Lalor, Animals)

Doran is one of the fairies regularly sighted in the woods north of *The Barrel*. He is over 325 years old and is the son of Perri (see separate entry). Being young he is still learning and making many errors and mistakes but tries to do as his father desires. And in between he frolics around with as many female fairies as possible.



Eproxo

14th level female Centaur 4th Level Shaman
 AC4 (incl DX), Leather Barding+2(AV2)
 (if Armor Value is not used, subtract AV
 from AC to get correct AC),
 HD 10d8+, Hp59(HD)+10(Lvl)=69.
 Mv 180'/60 with 0-1200cn, 150'/50'with
 1200-2400cn, 120'/40' with 2400-3600cn,
 90'/30'with 3600-4800cn, 60'/20'with
 4800-7200cn, 30'/10' with 7200-9000cn,
 15'/5'with 9000-9600cn, 0 with 9600+cn
 AT Elven Normal Sword +2 Spear of
 Returning+2 (WM Skilled),
 THAC0 9 (adjust by ST+magic and WM in
 melee as per RC page), AT as per weapon
 +2(ST)+Weapon Mastery+magic or as per
 spell (Cleric/Druid lists from RC).
 Sv F14, ML10, ALLN,
 ST 17(=+2 THAC0/Dm, +20% carry),
 IN16, WI 15, DX 11, CO 10, CH 13.
 Languages: 5 (Centaur, Traladaran,
 Dryad, Callarii Elvish, can communicate
 with horses/etc.)
 Skills: 8 (Traladaran Faith (prefers
 Halav). Peaceful, Honest, Religious,
 Rash, Proud, Fearful)

Originally of the Firemane tribe, Eproxo is now welcomed in all the centaur tribes due to her spellcasting ability (as long as she is helping centaurs in need). Eproxo has been saved twice by Peter and his friends, and regularly visits them. She might need the help of adventurers in completing some task or quest and will guide PCs when necessary. She always joins them in a fight if possible, sometimes aided by two 8+HD centaurs from a local tribe.

DM Note: Centaur as per PC1: *"Tall Tales of the Wee Folk"*, and also see ["Mystara Monster Manual Compilation part 6"](#).

FINNIG the Witch

21st level Witch (1st circle) / Mage,
(Female Taymoran Human)
AC5 (incl DX+magic),
HD 9+, Hp29(HD)+9(Co)+12(Lvl) =73
(was 82).
Mv 120'40', AT Dagger or Staff, or spell,
THAC0 9 (adjust by ST+magic) DM as
per weapon +1(ST)+magic
Spells: choose from page 458 of [“Great
Scxhool of Magic in detail”](#) (GSM) +
Familiar enhancer 1 to 3.
Sv Mu21, ML9, ALN,
ST 14, IN18, WI 9, DX11, CO13, CH9.
Languages: 6 (Traladaran, Thyatian, Cal-
larii Elvish, Ancient Taymoran, Local
Orcish, Dwarven)
Skills: 7(4+IN)+lvl (Traladaran Faith
(Favors Petra). Cautious, Modest, Open
minded, Honest, Suspicious (careful),
Reverent).
Magical items: [Witches Broom](#).
Although a 1st circle witch Finnig never
studied further in the extra abilities
beyond the abilities Red and Gold
Candle magic, 1st circle) See pages 453-7
of *GSM* for more on witches.

Ortex: Forest Owl Familiar (see [MMMC2](#)
for standard normal Owl stats; page
121), 7 years old, Familiar enhanced
abilities (as per GSM book Familiar
spells pages 36-39); lifespan normal 15
years, enhanced +66%=25 years, *Tele-
pathic link senses* with Finnig, *Detect
Evil* once a day, *Blend into surround-
ings* as a chameleon 90% successfully
twice a day for 2 rounds per current
level of Finnig), *Speak with other Birds*.
This bird can read and understand Trala-
daran.

Finnig was born on 28 Kaldmont (a *Day of Dread* - see sidebar) in the year 926 AC. Her birth took place within the ruins of Tahyt-Puh-Danis on Ogos Island¹. The birth was long and arduous for Finnig's mother who suffered pain and injury during the long period of labour and delivery without assistance. Tahytis, Finnig's mother, was a witch and raised Finnig even though disabled from the trauma of her daughter's birth. Unaware at the time, some rare spells were not affected by the nullifying effects of the Day of Dread, and this unknown

The Day of Dread

In 1000 AC* 28 Kaldmont is a day on which stellar activity may (3% chance) cause the sky to change colour or glow creating fear to the nation's inhabitants. During such a day, all magic becomes totally nullified. By 1010 AC** this date is referred to as the Day of Dread when magic fails everywhere on Mystara.

The article [“Week Without Magic vs Day of Dread”](#) by The Stalker at the Vaults of Pandius, and this author's article [“Charting and projecting continued Radiance usage”](#) (also at the Vaults) examine the concept of the recurring Day of Dead. In particular, this author proposes that the effects were happening as early as 895 AC and grew in frequency and effect in subsequent years. Events during *“Wrath of the Immortals”* saw the effect produce a temporary whole week of magic nullification.

*according to GAZ1: *“The Grand Duchy of Karameikos”* - page 33

**see *“Karameikos: Kingdom of Adventure – Explorer's Guide”* page 125

¹ See [Threshold Magazine issue #24](#) for details of this location



Finnig

magic affected Finning's birth. This magic did not become evident until after the *Week of No Magic* in 1009AC.

Tahytis always taught Finning not to listen to the tempting voices which would inevitably come, yet she herself slowly succumbed to the temptation of the Demonic voices and started to neglect her child. There were no other humans, or demi-humans for Finning to play and learn with, so she was intensely curious about the humans she noticed on the vessels passing by Ogos Island. Raised in the Traladaran tradition Finning (already a 5th level witch/mage) decided to break free from her changing mother and began her Shearing Years by swimming the dangerous 2 miles of sea to the mainland.

On the rocky shore she used her magic to warm up when a young girl Martha Per-shikin approached her. With Martha's curiosity and Finning's longing for a companion of her own age, the girls soon became intimate friends. They adventured together for about a decade, until 948 AC when Finning learned that her mother had become a

Black Hag. She returned to her island of her birth, with her friends Martha, and Piotr Andrejev (a Traldaran Fighter they had met during their adventures).

Although almost totally overwhelmed by the vile magic, Finning and her friends were able to vanquish Tahytis from its call. They abandoned the island and adventuring life permanently thereafter. Four months later Finning married Martha and Piotr Andrejev according to the Traldaran faith.

Finnig is genetically affected by the age-defying effects of her mother and has aged at half the normal rate since reaching puberty. Although she is over 80 years old in 1010 AC, she appears to be only aged between 35 and 40. Many Thyatians underestimate her age and experience due to her young appearance.

Theories about Tahytis

The few mages who have knowledge of Taymoran history believe (but have not proven) that Tahytis was the child of a Taymoran witch who became a nosferatu while pregnant. Being prosecuted as heresy and doom to the Taymoran undead the mother fled north into the mountains to the domain of the child's father Pharos Alf-Tethitis. Feeling safe here she relaxed and concentrated her witchcraft and knowledge on her child.

The pregnancy warped and twisted and took 51 years to complete, while the Taymoran empire was destroyed in a volcanic cataclysm of unknown proportions. Fifteen years later, within the surviving sections of Taymora, a healthy living child was born -

not undead, not nosferatu, but a seemingly normal human. It seemed that the witchcraft used by the pregnant nosferatu washed away most of the magical undead effects, except the longevity. Tahytis was thus eventually born in 1715 BC.

Both the father and the child did many good things for the people in the east, and it is said they took their name as a sign of respect. Other sources of the name Thyatis for the current empire also exist. In 500 BC the Nithians disappeared from Mystara without a trace, which left Pharos Alf-Tethitis imprisoned inside his pyramid. Tahytis tried for centuries to reach her parents but failed.

Finnig's father was an unknown sailor stranded on Ogos island in the spring of 926 AC. A relationship developed between Tahytis and the sailor, under whose guidance Tahytis conformed to the Traldar faith. After the birth Tahytis magically sent the sailor away out of shame and guilt and returned trying to reach her true love, Pharos Alf-Tethitis while training her child for witchcraft.

Tahytis' desire to find Pharos Alf-Tethitis that became the weakness for the Demonic voices to nabipulate, and eventually turned her into a Black Hag in the early summer of 948 AC after sacrificing almost a hundred sailors in a magical conjured storm. It was only a week or so later that Finnig, Martha and Pjotr defeated the Black Hag. Finnig never revealed that the Hag was her own mother, and her mourning and sorrow remain

Gendarim the Druid

21st Level Druid, , 22nd level, (Male Traladaran human)
 AC5 (incl DX+magic), Leather armor (AV2) +2(if Armor Value is not used, subtract AV from AC to get correct AC), HD 9+, Hp39(HD)+9(CO)+12(Lvl)=60. Mv 120'40',
 AT Druidic spells or Druid Staff+4 (11 druid spells stored, 4 usable/day at will), 1d8+4 damage;
 Sv FD21, ML8, ALN,
 ST 10, IN14, WI 18, DX13, CO14, CH 11.
 Languages: 7 (Traladaran, Thyatian, Callarii Elvish, Treant, Vyalia Elvish Local Goblinoid, Faerie.)
 Skills: 8 (Honor Immortal, Knowledge Plant, Hunting, Tracking, Honor Nature, Horticulture, Woodsman profession, Traladaran Faith (prefers Zirchev)).
 Cautious, Peaceful, Reverent, Suspicious, Vengeful, Energetic.
 Can Shapechange into; Badger, Wolf, Dire Wolf, Brown Bear, Skunk, Pigeon, Raven, Forest Owl, and Mouse.
 Rarely without at least two untamed yet reasonably calm and friendly animals (unless touched unexpectedly, then they might single strike a claw, peck or bite).

There are 17 druids active in the Dymrak region. Gendarim (born 22 Fyrmont 966AC in the Human/Elven settlement of Ryania) is the highest in level and thus the erstwhile leader. In fact, as druids



work independently, Gendarin's role is more of a teacher than a leader.

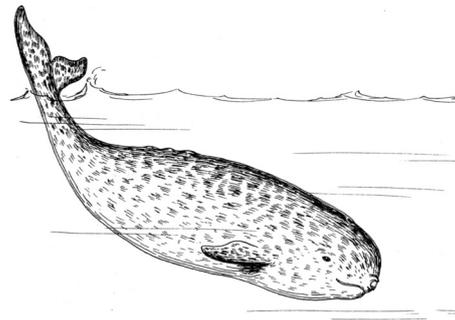
Gendarim was mesmerized when he first discovered the oak treant, Gruuknimaar, in the Dymrak Forest at the age of 15 during his Shearing years and befriended the weird creature. In the following decades both travelled through the whole of the Dymrak (across both the Thyatian and Karameikan/Traladaran areas). They met various elven tribes, citizens of Haven, goblinoids of the woods, orcs and dwarves of the mountains, witches and lycanthropes of the hills and centaurs and chevalls of the fields. Some they befriended and some they fought, but all the time they gained knowledge of the creatures and wider world around them.

The treant, Gruuknimaar, took root in the Druid's Grove before the Great War, for it sensed that a great imbalance was coming to the world. At that time Gruuknimaar was a 16th level treant of aged 110 years. Although rooted, the treant is still sentient and can be contacted using the right spells and behaviour. Such contact has a slim chance to reawaken Gruuknimaar).

DM Note: Treant statistics can be found in accessory supplement PC1: *"Tall Tales of the Wee Folk"*

GULLYWING

(female Narwhal-Cleric) 15th level Cleric of Manwara (Prophet of the Sea)
AC 6, move 21,
12+15 Hit Dice, Hp 81+1/lvl, (2d12 points of damage/attack).
AL NG,
ST 18, IN 5, WI 11, DX5, CO18, CH9



Gullywing is a 230-year old. 15' tuskless Narwhal. She was originally an aquatic elf who accidentally caused several major transgressions to her people and their faith. Due to that, her piety² dropped far below 0, and she was cursed by Manwara to become a Narwhal Cleric and help all those in need. Gullywing is not the smartest and is known for clumsiness. Her strong body protects her from most harm but can also inadvertently causes harm to others. Her piety is currently at 29 and as such she has earned back the power of unhindered clerical spell-casting and nothing more. When her piety climbs to 100 she will be able to transform back to her former self.

DM Note: see page 549-550 of ["Mystara Monster Manual Compilation"](#) for further information Narwhals.

² For details of using piety se [this article](#) at the author's blog

Ilicum

6th level Sprite (female)
 AC7 (incl DX), AV0 (no armor), HD 6d4, 13Hp.
 MV 0-23cn; 60'/20'24-73cn'30'/10', 74-148cn; 15'/5'149+cn; 0 FL; 3 Turns then rest 1; 0-2cn; 180/60', 3-4cn; 150'/50', 5-9cn; 120'40', 10-14cn; 90'/30', 15-19cn; 60'/20', 20-24cn; 30'/10',25-29cn; 15'/5', 30cn+;0, AT Spells 2x 1st,2x 2nd, 2x 3rd, THAC0 14-1(ST)=15, Curse, Confusion(wearers of clothing inside out, or using Wicker Symbol are immune) negates) Abilities; Invisible to Mortals, Second Sight, Weakness; Feels uncomfortable in Holy places or near Holy objects, Holy water and holy weapons bring 1d4 damage (extra to weapons). Sv F16, ML11, ALLN, ST 7, IN18, WI 17, DX14, CO11, CH 14. Languages: 6 (Fairy, Traladaran, Elvish, Gnome, Lalor, Animals)

Ilicum is the mother of Doran, she is a mere 711 years old. As a grape and wine lover she has her home north of Scalania in the fork of the Scalania and Calyanya creeks. Here she lives with several less experienced sisters.



DM Note: as per PC1: *Tall Tales of the Wee Folk* page 31 or see the [“Mystara Monster Manual Compilation”](#) at the Vaults.

Ilya

16th level, (male)
 AC5 (incl DX+magic), Chain Mail(AV4) +3(if Armor Value is not used, subtract AV from AC to get correct AC), HD*10d8+, 60(HD)+7(Lvl)=73(was 82). MV(incl. ST effects) 0-24cn; 60'/20', 24-54cn'30'/10', 55-104cn; 15'/5'105+cn; 0 FL; 3 Turns then rest 1; 0-7cn; 180/60', 8-12cn; 150'/50', 13-17cn; 120'40', 18-22cn; 90'/30', 23-27cn; 60'/20', 28-37cn; 30'/10',38-42cn; 15'/5', 43cn+;0, AT tiny Sword 1d4+2 (WM Master), Club (WM Skilled), THAC0 10-2(ST)=8, Magic item success; 01-35, failure; 36-84, Backfire; 85-90, Unexpected; 91-00, Abilities; Invisible to Mortals, Second Sight, Weakness; Feels uncomfortable in Holy places or near Holy objects, Holy water and holy weapons bring 1d4 damage (extra to weapons). Sv F16, ML11, ALLN, ST 17, IN12, WI 14, DX9 (was 10), CO12 (was14), CH 10(was 12). Languages: 6 (Fairy, Traladaran, Elvish, Gnome, Lalor, Animals.)

Ilya is a 336 years old pixy adventurer who regularly visits Haven. He was born and raised on the Isle in the Lake of Lost Dreams. Ilya became an adventurer when he first saw the monstrous dragon Argos. Since then he has battled undead, harpies and humanoids. He was recently severely wounded by a black hag and needed to recuperate and heal. As a fiend of Rowan Selasar, he took residence there.

He is now fully healed, ready to accompany human or demi-human adventurers fighting for a good cause or just exploration, often without them even being aware

of his presence. He has invisibly entered *The Barrel* and listened to all he can to determine what to do. This NPC can easily reappear in PC groups

Gustaf Kardowin

2nd level thief of Iron Ring Guild 11th level merchant, (male Thyatian human) AC5 (incl. DX+magic), Never wears armor, HD 2, 7Hp.
 Mv 60'/20',
 AT Dagger +1 of Magic missiles (if commanded as spell 3 missiles for 3x 1d6+1 damage/day, Blackjack, *Ring of Sleep* spell once a day up to 8 mentally targeted humans, elves, dwarves, gnomes, up to 4HD individually (Those over 4HD and hin are immune, elves may save to negate (this ring has a severe curse which made him how he is today—he doesn't bother). THAC0 18 (adjust by ST+magic), AT as per weapon -1(ST)+magic.
 Sv T2, ML6, ALCN,
 ST 9, IN14, WI 11, DX13, CO9, CH 3.
 Languages: 3 (Traladaran, Thyatian, Basic Elvish).
 Skills: 5+11 (merchant)=16; Profession Freighter, Intimidate, Wrestling+1, Appraisal, Calligraphy, Cooking, Epicure, Ancient Hieroglyphics, Fire Building, Know Market Value, Lip-reading, Politics, Local Rumor & Gossip, Bargaining+1, Church of Thyatis Faith (prefers Nyx). Proud, Cautious, Generous, Vengeful, Deceitful, Unreliable.
 Has always 3d100 gp 4d100sp and 2d20 cp and 3 random gems (see RC) underneath his sweaty clothing.

Gustaf has 15 **helpers**; these are Thyatian men and women;; T1, F1, C1 of ages 18 to 30, AL N to CN. THAC019, AT 1 weapon DM 1d6, stats average.

At 55 years old, standing 6'6", and weighing 3400cn (380 lbs), Gustav is severely overweight, with acne and acne scars on his face and body interspersed between sparsely spaced strands of long body hair, beard stipples, and has a severe hygiene and dental problem. He always complains he is cursed, but never reveals the details of his curse (a side effect of using an orc ring he tricked some adventurers out of). If subjected to a *Remove Curse* spell his fattening/gross appearance effect will stop and slowly return (by 1% per day) to normal, until the ring is used again.

He has been a merchant since 978 AC and became filthy rich by cheating beginning adventurers into selling their found treasures to him. He has an estimated wealth of 500,000gp and owns a Thyatian style villa in the Hill District of Specularum. Due to his mischievous acts on new adventurers he can be found every Nytdain in *The Barrel* inn, and although the crew of the establishment dislike and distrust him, they still send prospective sellers to him.

Perturo Monetera

12th Thief of Shadow Hand Guild (Thyatis), male Thyatian human Taxmaster AC9, pink painted (by robbers) Thyatian Cuir Boilly leather armor (AV3) hidden underneath clothing (if Armor Value is not used, subtract AV from AC to get correct AC),

HD 9+, 24Hp+3(Lvl)=27.

Mv 120'/40',

AT Dagger or whip, THAC0 9 (adjust by ST+magic and WM in melee as per RC, AT as per weapon -1(ST) and RC.

Sv T12, ML6, ALCE,

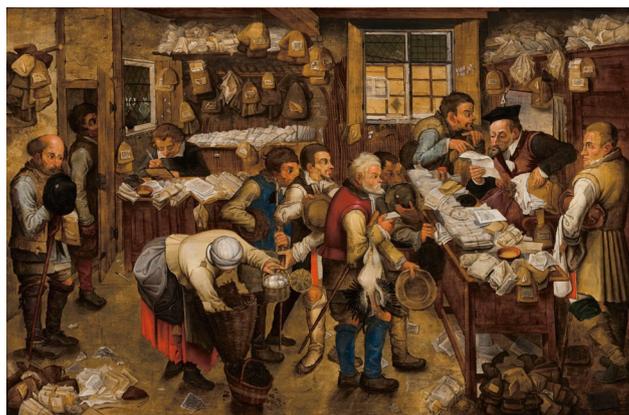
ST 7, IN10, WI 4, DX11, CO7, CH 6.

Languages: 2 (Traladaran, Thyatian)

Skills: 6 (Profession Tax official(incl. 5 subskills), Grovel, Codes of Karameikan Law and Justice, Local Rumor and Gossip, Toadying, Dirty Fighting)

Church of Thyatian Faith (prefers Vanya, and Ixion). Violent, Greedy, Lazy, Unreliable, Reverent, Dogmatic, Forgetful.

Perturo was born in Ratae (Thyatis) on 13 Kaldmont 963 AC to the local undertaker and his wife, who were Hattians. This skinny, scrawny, ugly, arrogant figure of a human is a narcissistic, egotistical sociopath, who enjoys bringing mischief to other nationalities. He sees Traladarans as mere heretics and barbarians, elves as sissy weaklings, hin and gnomes as foolish weirdos, dwarves as snobby bearded tricksters, mages of all sorts as heretics, and a danger to the world, liars, etc., women as arrogant bitches (who never react positively to him) and all other non-Thyatians as strangers not to be trusted. The Hattian religion in which he was raised taught him to hate and he fears the world as he was indoctrinated by



Collecting taxes

conspiracy theories so wild, that most others disregard them as slander.

How he has wormed his way up to this title is unknown, yet he derives personal pleasure in enforcing the Karameikan tax laws in the most negative ways. If the money available is just a bit too low, he captures important cattle, merchant wares, or craftsman's tools make up the difference. Items are always less valuable in his arrogant view, and when opposed he tries to enforce his will by employing the soldiers of Sergeant Dawnbrow. He greatly dislikes the position of the elves (who collect their own taxes which are sent directly to Specularum), and desires dominion over them to enforce his laws and).

Perturo is regularly attacked, and loses a large amount of the collected taxes, mostly due to local thieves who cleverly exchange the items he has confiscated with similar items of lesser value (the original items are returned to their former owners). These attacks rarely cause the death of any guards, who are mostly incapacitated by guile, trickery, being outnumbered or by magic. More than once have Perturo and his guards been found butt-naked, in mud, blood, dirt

or even tar and feathers bound to a tree-log, stumbling awkwardly through the woods in an attempt to be freed. Other degrading and insulting methods that have been used are naked impalement in the town square, tied upside down to the wheels of the water mill, or even bound to the back of a wandering Overton Zombie. Perturo has reacted furiously to these events by trying to place as many wanted posters of the culprits (mostly without any result). The few miscreants that are captured are brought before him and Lord Rugalov and sentenced to the maximum limits of the law in punishment. Often this includes a degrading journey through the region to show his might and accomplishments. Any magic items that Perturo finds are confiscated as witchcraft or heretic items and sold in Ratae. Originally Perturo's black hair is combed backwards and oiled, but in 1009 AC he was shaved bald and until his hair regrows, he interchanges between hats, helmets, wigs, and paint (yes he sometimes paints his head as if he has hair!).

Perturo comes to collect the taxes each quarter and returns daily until paid in full. Anything earned above the required sum (that will be deposited in the Lord's vaults) is shared between Perturo, Dawnbrow and his 10 soldiers (1% to each soldier, 5% to Dawnbrow, and 45% to Perturo) which keeps the Sergeant and his troops in line and obedient to the taxmaster's command.

Perri

11th level Pixy
 AC7 (incl. DX), no armor (AV0),
 HD 10*d8+ Hp51(HD)+2(Lvl)=53.
 MV(incl. ST effects) 0-20cn; 60'/20'21-50cn'30'/10', 51-100cn; 15'/5'101+cn; 0 FL; 3 Turns then rest 1 Turn; 0-5cn; 180/60', 6-10cn; 150'/50', 11-15cn; 120'40', 16-20cn; 90'/30', 21-25cn; 60'/20', 26-35cn; 30'/10',35-40cn; 15'/5', 41cn+;
 AT Pixy-sized Sword +2,
 THAC0 10, AT as per weapon
 1d4+2(ST)+2magic. Magic item success; 01-35, failure; 36-84, Backfire; 85-90, Unexpected; 91-00, Abilities; Invisible to Mortals, Second Sight, Weakness; Feels uncomfortable in Holy places or near Holy objects, Holy water and weapons bring 1d4 damage (extra to weapons).
 Sv E10, ML11, ALLN,
 ST 9, IN16, WI 11, DX17, CO12, CH 17.
 Languages: 6 (Fairy, Traladaran, Elvish, Gnome, Lalor, Animals)
 Skills: 8 (Dancing, Hiding, Hunting, Tracking, Forest Survival, Herbalogy, Singing)
 Loyal, Proud, Honourable, Honest, Religious.

Perri is over 850 years and is one of the fairies that are regularly sighted in the woods north of *The Barrel*. He is usually accompanied by his son Doran. Perri lives with all his pixy offspring normally in the fork of the Hihoot creek and calls that area home, here he pesters those walking on the Haven Trail. The hsiaou living close by are very friendly to all fairies, elves and friendly humans.

He cares deeply about nature and the environment of the Forest and is involved in its

protection similar to the druids. Often, he meddles in the affairs of mortals, taking it upon himself to protect and assist various individuals and communities, and punishing wicked people. He is particularly concerned with preventing basically good people falling into evil ways and thwarting the plans of the malevolent. To achieve this, he uses trickery and guile to lure adventurers into doing what he desires.

DM Note: for more details on the Pixy, see PC1: "*Tall Tales of the Wee Folk*" page 31 or the author's "[Mystara Monster Manual Compilarion](#)"

Redstone

Redcap 4th level, (male)
 AC7 (incl DX+magic), no armor(AV0),
 HD*4d8, 22Hp.
 Mv 0-200cn; 120'/40', 211-400cn; 90'/30',
 401-600cn; 60'/20', 601-800cn; 30'/10',
 801-1200cn; 15'/5'1201+; 0,
 AT Pikestaff(1d6) or Knife(1d4), or
 claws and bite (1d2 each, bite 1)
 THAC0 9 .
 Invisible to Mortals at will, Second Sight
 at will, Once a day Protection from
 Good, Confusion, Dimension Door, Ven-
 triloquism, Dancing Lights, Mirror Image,
 Magic item success; 01-15, failure; 16-89,
 Backfire; 90-95, Unexpected; 97-00,
 Immune to normal Disease, DL(Drinking
 Level)+5, AM 30%.
 Sv DR/P5, SvMW6, SvTS7, SvDB9, SvSP8,
 Weakness; Holy water and weapons
 bring 2d4 damage (extra to weapons).
 Sv Halfling 4, ML7, ALCE,
 ST 12, IN13, WI 9, DX9, CO9, CH5.
 Languages: 4 (Fairy, Traladaran, Lalor,
 Animals)
 Skills: 7 (Hiding, Local History).

Redstone is a 2' 3" brownie who came to the area in 942 AC and is Woodrock's nemesis. Although the former owners of *The Barrel* took a liking to the brownie, he repaid them with a malicious and negligent attitude. Around 945 AC the inn was regularly attacked by goblins that Redstone had lured there. The owners abandoned the inn after they felt unable to cope with the mishaps and small fires caused by Redstone. Subsequently the old inn was cleaned and reopened under new management who, from their first day, experienced repeated goblin attacks. (The goblins were motivated by rumours spread by Redstone that the building hid some wealth of magic).

On the 12th Amyrmonth 955 AC Jagdash goblins burnt *The Barrel* to the ground for the last time. Several guests were slain, and none of the staff survives. Those who died became ghosts or wraiths, and as a result Redstone became a redcap (an evil brownie). The location was abandoned, and its remains collapsed over the course of the following years, becoming a haven for the ghosts and wraiths of those who perished there.

Redstone then became sour and angry, and believed he was cheated of his Immortal status and left in a world of imperfection. Still today he vents his ire upon any hapless mortal who crosses his path. He hates all mortals, and even most animals. He had been befriended by the wraiths and ghosts living in the Old Barrel, but hates the current owner, Peter, and friends for destroying them in the winter of 992 AC.

Redstone's primary goal is to destroy the new *Barrel* inn and cause anyone inside, to

perish. The problem with achieving his desire lies with the Cleric (Tom Townes) living there and the many holy items and the expertise and magic of the owners. Besides that, Woodrock the brownie tries to prevent this to happen. Redstone always tries to attack the helpless (preferably sleeping) victims and is a coward at heart, others will be harassed but usually not attacked.

As he rarely enters *The Barrel* (he cannot pass through the secret door in the tunnels, and rarely succeeds in passing through the doors not protected by holy symbols). His mischief is done mostly by the wagons and animals of the merchants and guests. Redstone's pranks include tricking many guards by tying their laces or hitting them with tossed pebbles; disturbing tired animals; attacking those sleeping in the wagons; wakening guard dogs to rouse the whole area; setting minor fires, and so on.

The owners and patrons of *The Barrel* are unsure what is responsible for this evil mischief but suspect that an evil fairy is the cause. The inn's staff advise their patrons to use *Blessing* to ward off such mischief around them or their wagon to minimise the damage for as long as the spell works.

Redstone prefers to flee when attacked. If he was ever killed, he would burst into flame leaving a single large tooth behind (a component sought for by local Hags and sometimes even witches). The redcap has a *Ring of Diminution* which can function three times a day for 1d6+4 Turns (or sooner if willed normal or subjected to *Antimagick/Dispel Magic*). He lives in the north of the underground corridors in a niche close to an exit to the surface. Details of the Escape Tunnel and underground pas-

sages beneath *The Barrel* can be found in [Threshold Magazine #23](#).

DM Note: for more information on the Redcap, see PC1: "*Tall Tales of the Wee Folk*" page 27-28 or the author's "[Mystara Monster Manual Compilarion](#)"

WOODROCK

5th level male Brownie,
27inch, weight 63cn,
AC7 (5 incl. DX+magic), Never wears armor,
HD 6d8*, 42hp.
Mv 0-200cn; 120'/40', 211-400cn; 90'/30',
401-600cn; 60'/20', 601-800cn; 30'/10',
801-1200cn; 15'/5'1201+; 0,
AT Sword +2 (WM Master), Club (WM
Skilled), THAC0 10 (adjust by magic), AT
I fist/kick or by weapon DM by weapon
+2(ST)+magic. Invisible to Mortals at
will, Second Sight at will, Once a day
Protection from Evil, Confusion, Dimen-
sion Door, Ventriloquism, Dancing
Lights, Mirror Image, Magic item suc-
cess; 01-15, failure; 16-89, Backfire; 90-
95, Unexpected; 97-00, Immune to
normal Disease, DL(Drinking Level)+5,
AM 30%, vulnerable to Holy Water(1d4
dm), unwell vs. holy places and objects.
Sv DR/P5, SvMW6, SvTS7, SvDB9, SvSP8,
ML8, ALN,
ST 8, IN7 WI 14, DX16, CO12, CH 13.
Languages: 5 (Faerie, Lalor/Hin, Trala-
daran, Animals).
Skills: 7 (Cooking, Labour Cleaning,
Genealogy Barrel Owners, Riding Colt-
pixy, Hiding, Local History. Open-
minded, Suspicious, Peaceful, Godless,
Modest, Cautious).



Woodrock is a 220-year-old brownie who has lived secretly in *The Barrel* inn since 984 AC, helping the permanent residents (and rarely the beautiful female guests) with urgent yet simple problems. It is known that there is a brownie present in the inn, yet none speak about it, nor has

anyone but the local wee folk spoken directly to Woodrock. The staff leave him milk brownies, nut-cake and cookies, and once a week a real meal (otherwise he scrounges the remnants of other folks' meals.). This may be the reason why Woodrock is a bit on the heavy size compared to other brownies.

Woodrock lives in a small den underneath the woodstock in the inn's courtyard, and has small tunnels all over the main hall, kitchen, basement, private building, stable and outside area. He is afraid of the inn's cook, Kwaan Snout, due to his orcish scent. The brownie knows to disregard clothing placed at its bowl by any except the permanent residents, for if he were to accept the clean folded clothing, they gave him, he would be forced to leave.

Woodrock is aware of the presence and deeds of the redcap, Redstone, and tries to do his best to prevent bad things from happening. It is not uncommon for both to be prowling the area; Redstone to do bad things, Woodrock to restore or prevent this.

DM Note: for more information on the Brownie See pages 1740-1745 of the author's ["Mystara Monster Manual Compilation"](#).

A list of Sources for this article can be found on [page 108](#)

The Tale of the Dark Knight

by Robin

Editorial assistance by AllanP

This article provides the backstory to a prominent character that has connections to the author's "The Barrel" location and characters as seen in issue #23 of *Threshold Magazine*. This could be an NPC encountered in the Dymrak region as described in issue #24 and this current issue of *Threshold Magazine*.

The Gryphon family were sent into a state of disarray at the thought of the shame and degradation this act would cause. Such an affair could ruin all their good deeds as heroes and disgrace them all. For the first thirteen years of his life the young Thrakius the child was handed from one family member to another. In each situation Thrakius was taken care of by the staff of the house, without any familiar love. It was not actually the existence of Thrakius which was the problem at that time. The main problem was the social etiquette and expectations that the Church of Thyatis effectively imposed causing embarrassments and disappointment.

Thrakius reacted very aggressively to the manner of his early upbringing and as a result grew up as an egotistical misogynist, sociopath, and narcissist. When he reached puberty, Thrakius did not know how to behave, often getting drunk and even arrested many times for violent or indecent acts, bringing further shame on to his adoptive family. The cumulative shame, guilt and loss of recognition saw the boy handed on to another related family. Thrakius' behaviour, and the reactions of those around him pushed many of the family almost to the edge of bankruptcy. Some married family members even divorced in attempts to save their valuables and lands. Eventually, in 969 AC, the family's disintegrated situation led the Thyatian state to impound their lands and most assets for

Thrakius Furion Gryphon was born on 22 Kaldmont 951AC in Foreston. He is the bastard child of Donna von Hendriks (sister of Amelia von Hendriks¹ and Lucius Gryphon, the second in line of order in the Gryphon family). His mother named him Thrakius after a family with whom she was friends, and rumors suggested that one of them might be the father. Due to his illegitimacy Thrakius has no rights whatever to titles, heritages or similar from either of the parental families. Not wanting to take on the responsibility of raising an illegitimate child, a few days after its birth Donna left the child on the doorstep of the Gryphon mansion, with a note saying he was a child of the family without naming the father (Donna did not know Lucius' first name).

¹ Author's expansion on the family tree on page 53 of "Karamaikos: Kingdom of Adventure"; Amelia was not even listed in this family tree out of shame.



unpaid taxes. Thrakius was furious as even his items of wealth were attempted to be seized. He was arrested several times for assaulting the tax officials. He ended up living together with several family members who had lost everything, in a small keep that had not yet been confiscated.

It seemed there was nothing the Gryphon family could do to prevent their further decline. However, the next year, 970 AC, Stefan Karameikos, a friend of the family, acquired the lands of Traladara and sought help to establish his new nation. As a result, new titles, wages and above all importance were able to be gained. Stefan's new duchy was ideal for the sons and daughters of Thyatian aristocracy who would not inherit the opportunity to rule due to the presence of elder (and healthy) siblings. Most of the remaining Gryphon family grabbed what they still owned and moved westwards into Karameikos. Of the

Thyatian settlers who came to the country, many were ruthless men who literally stole lands, goods and women from the Traladarans. The worst amongst them was Baron Ludwig von Hendricks and his followers. These Thyatians were taller and tanned and easily felt superior to the shorter pale native Traladarans who were seen as superstitious and ignorant. Even though some Traladarans could speak Thyatian (albeit with an accent), they were looked upon as having a lack of mental ability amongst other prejudices. The extremists Thyatians saw the Traladarans as "*ignorant foul smelling Traladari swine*" and belittled them whenever possible, robbed them of wealth, land and other possessions. On the other hand the Traladarans felt that too much Thyatian sophistication was decadence, and by surviving the worst thrown at them, they gained a racial pride, and quietly and patiently worked to make their nation into a prosperous and thriving one. The native Traladarans bore a quiet stubborn assurance that no one else, especially not those tall Thyatians, was better than them. Despite these racial resentments many interracial romances developed resulting in a generation of mixed Thyatian/Traladarans who became accepted (more grudgingly by pure Thyatians) as members of the duchy.

Under the doctrine of a derogative of the Church of Thyatis, the new Church of Karameikos enabled the Gryphon family to create a knightly order within the faith; *The Order of the Griffon*², dedicated to both the family name and the heroic deeds they

² As per pages 24-25 of GAZ1: "*The Grand Duchy of Karameikos*" and as pages 68-69 of "*Karameikos Kingdom of Adventure*" and also see this Wikipedia article on the "[Order of the Griffon](#)" video game

had accomplished earlier and elsewhere. The new order' knights of honour were to continue in its deeds and glory in the new wild lands of Stefan's duchy. Thrakius became a member of the new order. Being a young fighter with almost no adventuring experience, initially he could only become a squire under Sir Lucius Gryphon (unaware to both this was Thrakius' father). Thrakius had great resentment that he could not become a knight instantly. The Griffon Knights were important in overcoming the Marilenev Rebellion of 970 AC shortly after their order was created, and they slew many Traladaran clansmen in achieving their victory. Taking part in the slaughter was an opportunity for the young squire, Thrakius, to unleash his angered feelings, as it was for others of his ilk. Duke Stefan never knew that several of his trusted knights behaved in so vile a fashion.

Not being a handsome man, Thrakius never received gratitude for his deeds. The glory, heroism and comradeship all went to his father, who drew all to him, as he was the honourable Knight. Gradually, neglected of even the bare minimum of love, the young squire's mind was filled with evil thoughts. Lucius, Thrakius' Knight and father, heralded his own deeds in the castle of Duke Stefan on 22 Kaldmont 974 AC (Thrakius' 23rd birthday) while totally ignoring his squire. Bored and frustrated Thrakius looked out of the castle's window onto the streets of Specularum. There, in the light of the street-lantern, he saw a young and beautiful girl sneaking up to a guard and pickpocketing his purse. Unnoticed by the partygoers the squire left the Duke's castle in search of the thieving girl, with a worrying storm of thoughts in his head. On one side his inclination to enforce justice on the

pickpocket, while on the other side was his neglect of love and growing male lust. Strange thoughts as if he was bewitched took root, and tension built up. It was a cold night, a very cold night, and the winter was only beginning; yet many people were still on the streets of the city. Thrakius strolled down Westron Way through the Bricktop quarter passing by lighted shops, until he noticed a beggar wandering off down an alley into a shed in the Old Quarter area of the city. It was the female thief he had seen.

He ran into the alley, rammed open the shed door hoping to catch the girl in the act of handling stolen goods. Shocked, she stumbled and her oil-cloak fell open revealing her poorly dressed young body. Dropping several pieces of wrapped candy, she arose and started to curse heavily. He reacted with a punch, knocking her out. She was no threat to him, the more he thought about it, she was nothing at all, a mere thief of despicable Traladaran descent... with only one purpose to serve...to serve him! While unconscious he tore her clothing away revealing her shapely curves that he so longed for. Egotistically he lowered his trousers and did the gravest deed a man can do. The girl awoke while performing his deed, and while he tried to say 'friendly' things to calm her down, he held her to the ground, gagging her with his hand to prevent screams.

Afterwards, as he dressed, the girl jumped up and scuttled away. "*No, you are mine!*" shouted Thrakius as she turned a corner and slid into an open sewer flow. "*No, Noo,... I will get you, ...THIEF!!*" was all the squire could shout while passers-by reacted to the ruckus. The local constabulary was

called to attend and Thrakius revealed only that he had almost caught a vile thief. As he bore the squire tabard of a Knight of the Order of the Griffon, his account was believed, and no further action was taken. Over the next few days he heard that the girl had made complaints about his actions to the various constabularies, but his status as a squire in the Order of the Griffon was sufficient for the complaints to be ignored. Over the following ten years Thrakius' mindset transformed further, from a base guilt to be the only right and good thing, and his desire to tame the little thieving wench and make her his personal toy became greater. He desired riches and fame, which should be handed to him on a platter, as he believed was his right. The adventures he undertook in the name of the church often ended in brutal killings. Then Thrakius discovered who his actual parents had been, and what had happened in his childhood. This sent him over the edge of sanity, as he lost himself in sociopathic egocentric behaviour. This attitude was noticed as something to be controlled by the patriarch Oliver Jowett during Thrakius' knight- ing ceremony³ and festival in the summer 984 AC. Ignorant of these concerns, Thrakius relished in the attention he received, feeling brave and important. He visited several ladies in the weeks following his knight- ing, but thoughts of the young girl thief haunted him. As a result, he could not satisfy his female companions, and angrily sent them away in his shame.

When Thrakius' behaviour came to the attention of Lucius, his former Knight and teacher, the elder man realised it had to be stopped as it did not represent the knightly

³ As per page 22 of GAZ1: "The Grand Duchy of Karameikos".

code of the Quadrivial (the four knightly virtues; *Honour, Courage, Faith, Glory*⁴), Thrakius was confronted, and after lengthy arguments Lucius learned that Thrakius was actually his own estranged illegitimate son. A fierce brawl ensued between the two men. Thrakius blamed Lucius for everything that had gone wrong in his life, for his lack of riches, for the lack of parental love, for the lack of a true family, honour and a title. On top of this the younger man now had to follow the orders of a so-called honourable knight, who could not even raise the child he had sired out of wedlock. Thrakius had to earn everything for himself, and that could have been eased if Lucius had accepted him in the beginning. The family fortunes now eaten up by Thyatian debtors and taxes should have all been the son's; he should never have been here in this land of wretched Traladarans. The fight was stopped by other knights, and the raging Thrakius was escorted out of the Order's Hall.

Temporarily exiled from the Hall, although still required to undertake some enforced knightly tasks, Thrakius now had the chance to search for the girl thief, ignoring anyone who might oppose him in this. Wandering all over the city, he slowly came closer and closer to finding the female. He learned that she had been seen in Specularum with a child, who he decided was his child, and thus he should own it, and if it was not his offspring, he would slay it.

⁴ Most knights in Karameikos now belong to the Order of the Griffon or are now removed from their Traladaran knightly title and rights. All these knights try/tried to follow the rules to gain the four virtuous pillars of Quadrivial (as per the *Penhaligon Trilogy*), as good as they can. The quadrivial is a general theme for knights over Mystara, and all knightly orders have these (or a variation thereof) in their doctrine.

Thrakius had become unaware of how far he had strayed from the Quadrivial how bad his desires had become.

Some years later, in Flaurmont 989 AC, Thrakius accidentally stumbled upon Sascha Mischnikov, the female thief that he had sought for many years. He grabbed her with his metal gauntlet and bore her screaming and yelling over the streets to the nearest constabulary building. The duty constables were on patrol elsewhere at the time, and Thrakius forced himself on Sascha again and demanded his self-proclaimed right of ownership of her. All she could do was accept and bite her tongue. He poured Thyatian rum down her throat, almost drowning her, and drank the rest. Thrakius became drunk, and when he lost consciousness for a moment Sascha was able to flee. Just outside the constabulary was a neglected young mule. Hiding behind this friendly creature she redressed, when suddenly she was grabbed from behind by Thrakius. Totally in panic she screamed, causing the mule to react and kick backwards with both hindlegs into the face and stomach of the drunk knight. Sascha then jumped on the mule and rode swiftly out of Specularum. Awakened later, by the returning constables, Thrakius was enraged, once again his target had escaped his grasp.

Enraged, Thrakius vowed to continue searching for the woman by whom he had sired a child. Rumoured sightings led him towards the ruins and settlements along the Eastron Road. For over a year, to the summer of 990 AC and beyond Thrakius sought for a woman fitting the description of the thief. Unknown to him, simultaneously Sascha was searching for her daughter

Alaya⁵ (the child of the unwanted union between her and Thrakius) who had departed on her Shearing Years in 988 AC. Over time Thrakius learned that the woman he was searching for had joined with a party of unidentified renegade Traladaran adventurers⁶ who were defeating many Thyatians including lords and ladies. (In fact, these Thyatian 'victims' were all vampires and nosferati, or members of the Slaver's Organisation soon to become the Iron Ring.) Meanwhile, Anya regularly heard stories of a knight looking for a woman with her mother's description and she used agents that she had recruited to investigate these rumours in order that she might reunite with her mother, which she achieved in 993 AC.

After his temporary exile, Thrakius had begun to worm his way up the ranks of the Order of the Griffon and the Church of Karameikos as well as gaining some respect from his peers. His despise of Traladarans was known, and others shared his view. Many Thyatians felt themselves so much better than the Traladarans and Thrakius became one of the conspirators who spoke to patriarch Oliver Jowett calling for the Knightly Orders of the Traladarans to be disbanded. It took several years of political debate between the Order and the Church but eventually the Duke and his ruling entourage were convinced, and on 15 Kaldmont 995 AC the Order of the Griffon became the only recognised knightly order in the Grand Duchy of Karameikos. But even this power status was not enough for Thrakius, he wanted to also own the people

⁵ For more information on Alaya see "The Barrel" article in *Threshold Magazine* issue #23

⁶ For more information on these adventurers see "The Barrel" article in *Threshold Magazine* issue #23

The Dark Knight: Thrakius Furion Gryphon

(male Thyatian/Hattian Human)

Height 5' 6", 213Lbs, muscular build, Pure blond hair and piercing blue eyes always shaven, prominent large nose. Always dressed in traditional garb and or armor of the Order of the Griffon, camouflages himself regularly by wearing a long almost black oilcloak.

15th level fighter Knight

AC5 (incl. DX + magic), dark chain mail (AV4) +2 (if Armor Value is not used, subtract AV from AC to get correct AC), HD 9+, 16 + Hp 59 (HD) +14(Lvl)=73 (was 82).

Mv 120'40',

AT Sword +2 (WM Mastery), Mace (WM Skilled), Dagger (WM skilled), THAC0 9 (adjust by ST + magic and WM in melee as per RC pages 75-80), DM as per weapon +2 (ST) +Weapon Mastery + magic. Dagger has secret (and forbidden) glass capsule with Poison X (after 3 rounds 10hp poison damage each round, save vs poison at -1 for each missed save to stop).

Sv F16, ML11, AL; CE,

ST 17, IN11, WI 8, DX12, CO13(was 14), CH 6.

Dagger of Poison X, Gryphon family sword and mace.

Languages: 4 (Traladaran, Thyatian, Local Orcish, Local Goblinoid)

Skills: 10 (Swimming, Wrestling, Dancing, Knowledge of Church of Karameikos, Knightly Codes, Law & Justice, Riding, Know Terrain (*Central & North-east Karameikos*), Hunting, Military Tactics, WM MS Sword, WM SK Mace, WM SK Dagger)

Dark Triad Faith (prefers Leptar). Loyal, Proud, Honourable, Honest, Reverent, Suspicious.

and their souls. He longed to introduce the Thyatian/Hattian serf system and searched for like-minded people to work with him towards this goal. He found these in agents of the Dark Triad⁷, the evil cult of Orcus, Demogorgon and Leptar. Faking his continued alliance with the Church of Karameikos, from that point he fully embraced the dark and despicable ways of this ancient evil.

On 15th Kaldmont 1009AC Alya learned by adding the various rumours together, what had happened to her mother Sascha at the hands of the evil Thyatian Knight. She became enraged and desired revenge. Not telling her mother of her discovery, Alya began seeking out the foul knight.

DM suggestions: What will happen to the Dark Knight in the future?

Slowly he will lose allies within the Order of the Griffon and the Church of Karameikos, due to his behavior influenced by the Dark Triad. His hate and sociopathic distrust make him a loner, more easily manipulated by the evil cult.

He will suffer several attacks, both physical and political. These might be initiated by Alya (a.k.a. Flameflicker) and her secret agents. Perhaps some of the Pcs have been engaged in this role by Alya?

He becomes more evil over the following years, more entwined in the plans of the Dark Ones, and evolves into a very dark character: a true Dark Knight. His tarnished mind now set on evil and the corrupting thoughts of Leptar will drive him even

⁷ Refer to the article "[Religions of Karameikos](#)" by Giampaolo Agosta for details of *The Dark Triad*

deeper. Whatever happens, he will manage to survive several attacks; by magic, Raise Dead spells of clerics of the Dark Triad, and similar.

Further options for campaign:

The DM could change details like identity and garb and become the Dark Knight from the novel *“Dark Knight of Karameikos*. by Timothy Brown⁸ set in 1018 AC. The PC’s will then be agents of the main hero, helped by the Kingdom of Thieves, and will perhaps become some of Grygory’s companions as they appear in the book. Together they eventually come to the Thunder Mountains where Grygory is sepa-

⁸ David Keyser’s [excellent summary of this novel](#) is available at the Vaults of Pandius.

rated from the others up in an Elven tree home when the Dark Knight cuts a rope bridge. Here the two knights come to blows and Grygory cannot score a wound. In a desperate struggle he manages to pull off the Dark Knight’s helmet, and in one final fast exchange he beheads the man. When Grygory’s companions reach the spot, all they find is the body of a naked old man, all that remains of Thrakius.

Or the DM can evolve Thrakius along a similar path making him their own design of evil knight. Either way, his demise (direct or by guided PCs) will come at the hands of the Kingdom of Thieves ruled by Flameflicker, unknown to most to be Alya, his own daughter filled with the desire for revenge for his vile deeds.

ENCOUNTERS in the Dymrak Region (Continued from [page 101](#))

SOURCES

Canon material:

- B1-9; *“In search of Adventure”*
- B10: *“Night’s Dark Terror”*
- DDA4: *“The Dymrak Dread”*
- X1: *“Isle of Dread”*
- TM1: *“The Western Countries Trailmap”*
- TM2: *“The Eastern Countries Trailmap”*,
- GAZ1: *“The Grand Duchy of Karameikos”*
- GAZ6: *“The Dwarves of Rockhome”*
- GAZ7: *“The Northern Reaches”*
- GAZ9: *“The Minrothad Guilds”*
- “Dawn of the Emperors”*
- “Karameikos: Kingdom of Adventure”*
- PC1: *“Tall Tales of the Weefolk”*
- PC2: *“Top Ballista”*
- PC3: *“The Sea People”*
- PC4: *“Night Howlers!”*

The *Penhaligon Trilogy* novels (*“The Tainted Sword”*, *“The Dragon’s Tomb”*, and *“The Fall of Magic”*) by D.J.Heinrich.

Fanon material:

- [“3.2 miles/hex map of Karameikos”](#)
- [“Map of North-eastern Karameikos”](#)
by Agathokles (Giampaolo Acosta),
- [“Kingdom of Karameikos
- Traladara 1020 AC, 3.2 miles per hex”](#)
by Sturm (Francesco Deferari),
- [“B10 Eastern Karameikos
- 3 miles per hex Replica Map”](#)
by Thorf (Thorfinn Tait),
- [“South East Karameikos map”](#) by Robin,
- [“B10 maps in Campaign Cartographer
and GIF formats”](#)



WARRIORS of the ETERNAL SUN part 3

A Tabletop Conversion of the Dungeons & Dragons game for the Sega Genesis

by Kyle Knight
(Gravesguardian),
with contributions
and expansions
by Chris Seabrook
and Giampaolo Agosta

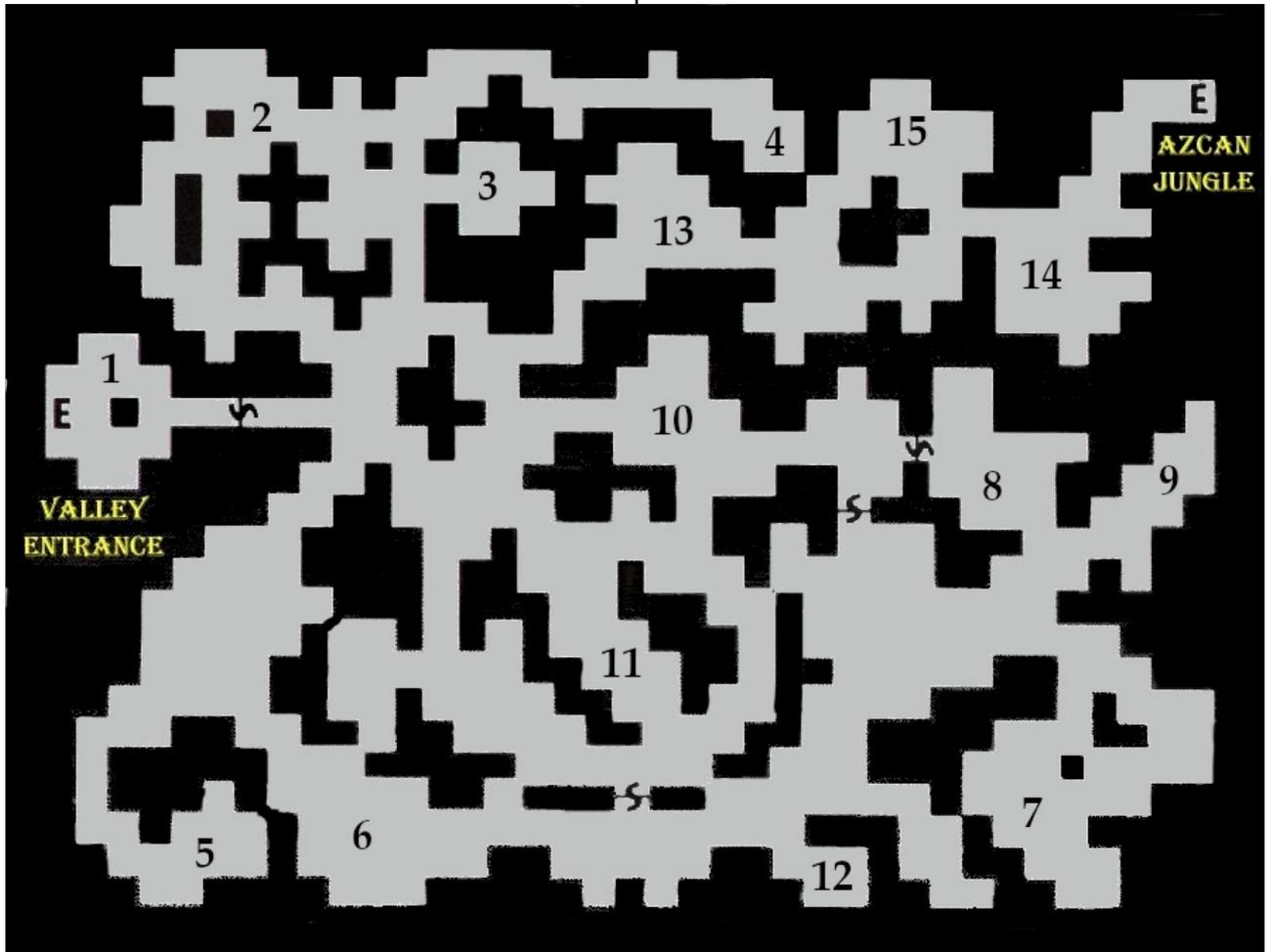
“Dungeons & Dragons: Warriors of the Eternal Sun” is a video game developed in 1992 by Westwood Studios under license from TSR for the Sega Genesis console. It presents a single-player computer-based RPG adventure set in the Hollow World environment, using the classic Dungeons & Dragons rules from BECM1 and the Rules Cyclopaedia. This article attempts to provide a conversion of the CRPG to a tabletop adventure module. This is the third part of the conversion, continuing from [Threshold Magazine issue #23](#) and [Threshold Magazine issue #24](#).

Now continue with Part 3...

Credits

- Special thanks to Sega, TSR & Westwood Studios for making such a great game.
- Special thanks to Mr. Douglas Lanford for his permission to use that vast majority of the maps & for all his hard work as part of the team that made & tested this wonderful game.
- Special thanks to Chris Seabrook for his permission to use his castle map & opening Prologue from his walkthrough.

PASSAGE TO AZCAN LANDS



The passage is located on the north east corner of the valley map in hex 2700. This entire complex is carved out of the surrounding earth with wooden beams every 5' and running the entire length where the walls and ceiling meet. It overall looks like an abandoned mine. This complex was carved out, and reinforced, by the Azcans to avoid the frequent cave-ins they used to encounter. These passages are used by the Azcans to mount frequent raids on the valley, especially on their hated foes: the Schattalfen Elves.

Room 1: Rock Statue: 1. After killing the Rock Statue, the party will find a wall with many small holes, that requires a combination to pivot.

Code was found at the end of the beast-man caves. Without the code, the party cannot pass.

Room 2: Minotaurs 2

Room 3: Minotaur Lieutenant: (Treasure: 512 GP, Leather Armor +1, Potion of Healing(1), Scroll Web, Scroll Dispel Magic, Scroll Magic Missile)

Room 4: Minotaur Chief (Treasure: Scroll Cure Serious Wounds(1), Scroll Cure Light Wounds(2), Scroll Bless(1) & 1,536 GP)

Room 5: Cave Bears 4

Room 6: Stone Giant (Treasure: Potion of Healing (4) & 400 GP)

Room 7: Giant Ants 6 (Bottom right corner area of the map.)

Room 8: Trolls 2

Room 9: Troll Chief (Treasure: Scroll Protection from Evil 10' radius, Scroll Fireball, Ring of Regeneration & 1,024 GP)

Room 10: Tiger Beetles 6

Room 11: Caecilia

Room 12: Owlbears 2

Room 13: Giant Scorpions 4

Room 14: Sabertooth Tigers 3. From here there is the exit to the Azcan jungle.

Room 15: Gelatinous Cube

AZCAN JUNGLE

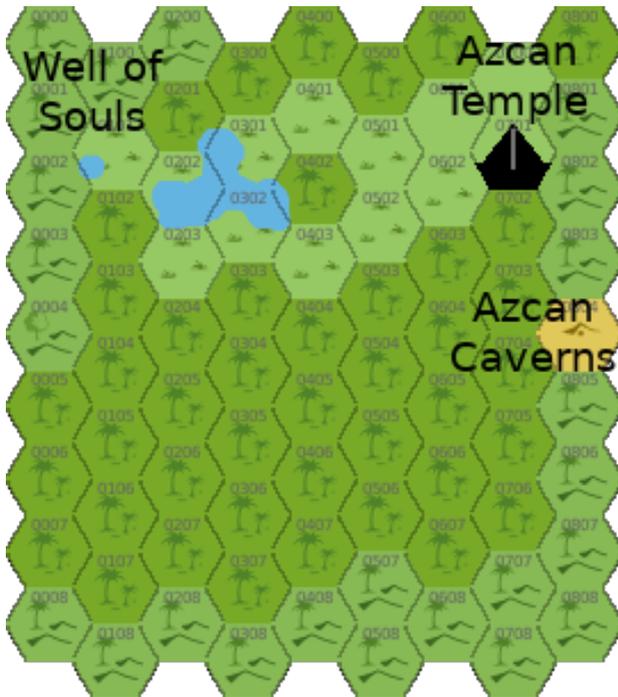


Table: Azcan Jungle wandering monster list

d10	Monster	# Appearing
1	Azcan + Shaman	1d6 +1 Shaman
2	Azcan, Warrior	1d8
3	Azcan + Magic-User	1d4 +1 MU
4-5	Cobra, Spitting	1d4
6-7	Gecko	1d3
8	Panther	1d2
9-10	Viper, Flying	1d6

Well of Souls

The waters of this deep pool are generally murky. At specific points in time, the waters become empowered with unusual restorative powers, so that an individual immersed in the pool would be cured as

per the Cureall spell, or as per the Raise Dead Fully if the individual was dead (I would limit to 1x per month.) Due to the properties of this Pool, there is a 5 in 6 (1-5 on d6) chance of Azcans or creatures being present. Remember Raise Dead spells do not work in Hollow World, so Pools are the only way to restore dead PCs.

Azcan Temple



This Temple is made up of hundreds of tons of gold colored mud-brick and made up of 5 levels, or steps. It is 200' tall and 400' long along each edge of the base. Unlike other temples to Atzanteotl, this temple's altar to him is within the 5th and lowest level surrounded by a ring of flames. The altar in the fifth level holds a secret compartment containing numerous Rings of Fire Resistance (1 per PC). A long external stair on the south face of the temple leads up to the first, and higher floor, then from there the PCs can descend down to the fifth floor, the lowest and the biggest.

Floor 1

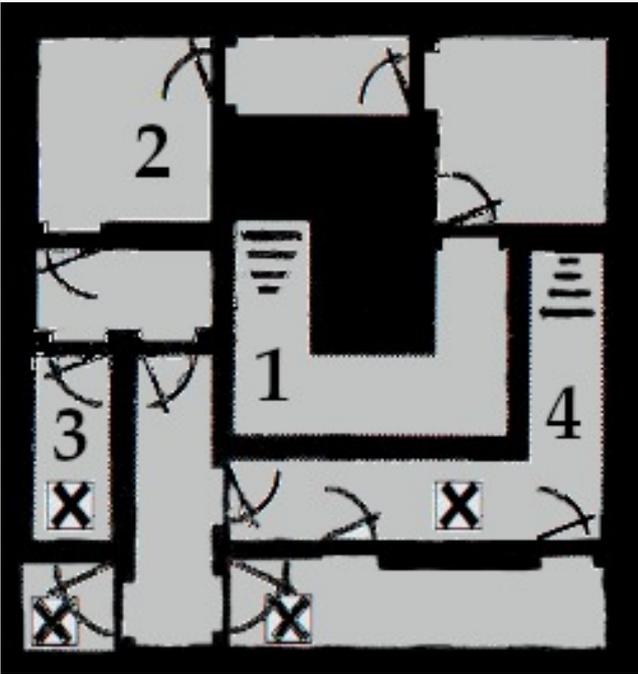
Azcan traps

Note about traps: DMs should select traps based on the examples below. Also, not all traps are actually marked with the X on the maps so feel free to toss in a few surprises.

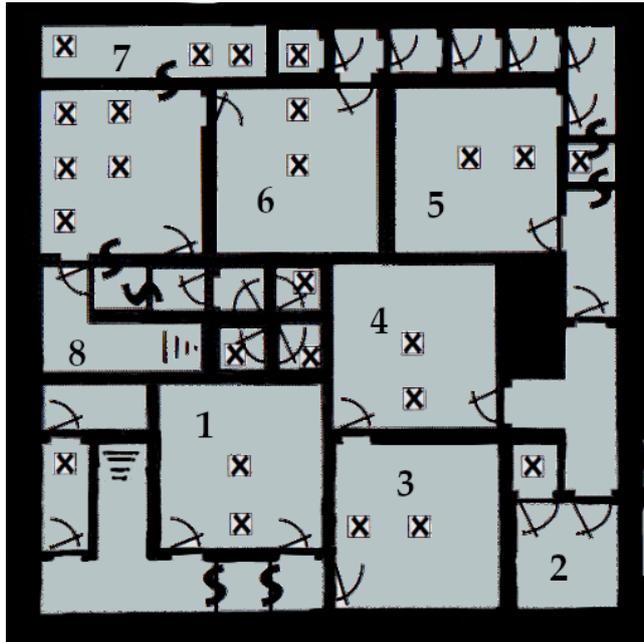
Examples of various Azcan traps:

- #1: A pit w/ sharpened stakes in the bottom! (Dmg: 1d6(fall) + 1 per spike(MAX 4 spikes per PC) (Save vs Breath Weapon to avoid the pit. Dex check to avoid spikes if the Save was failed.)
- #2: Spears jab you from holes in the walls! (2 Spears per PC, Attack Roll needed to hit @ an 18 THAC0.)
- #3: This room is filled w/ dust that makes you choke! (Save vs Breath Weapon or take 1d6 damage.)
- #4: The floor pivots & smashes you against the wall! (Save vs Death Ray to avoid damage or take 1d8 dmg.)
- #5: Leather straps w/ barbed hooks tear at your flesh! (3 leather straps per PC, Save vs Paralysis to avoid or take 3d2 dmg.)
- #6: Small spikes lie hidden among the stones! (Dex check to avoid or take 1d4 dmg per spike(Max 3 spikes per PC.)
- #7: A large stone swings through the area! (Save vs Death Ray or take 1d10 dmg.)

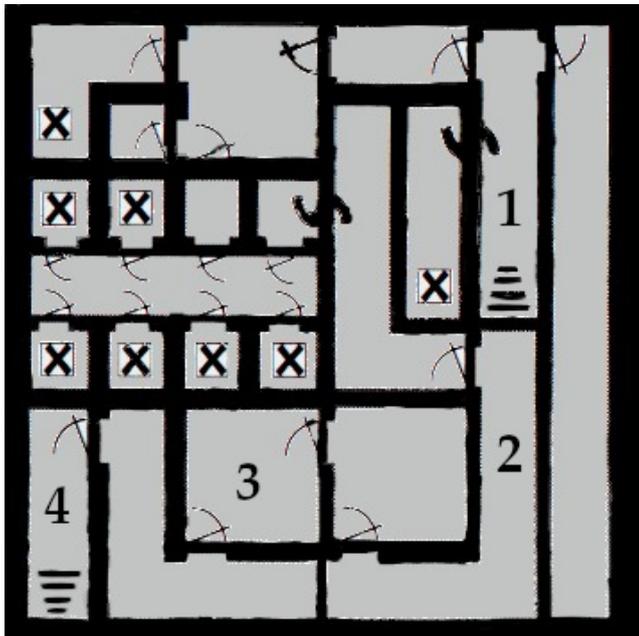
Room 1: At the entrance to the temple descending from the external platform above, the party is ambushed by 8 Azcan warriors. Azcan Warrior: 8, Treasure: random



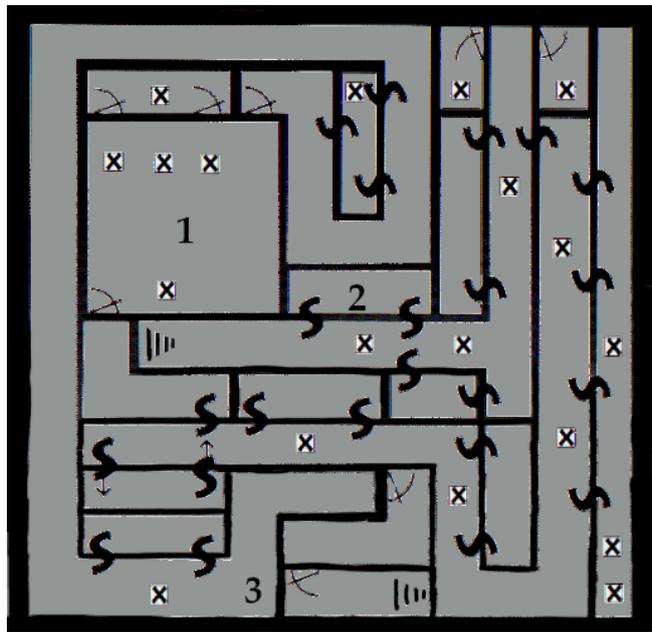
Map of the Azcan Temple floor 1



Map of the Azcan Temple floor 3



Map of the Azcan Temple floor 2



Map of the Azcan Temple floor 4

Room 2: Azcan Warrior Level 2: 2. Treasure: Scroll of Continual Light.

Room 3 and 4: Azcan Magic-Users, 1 in each room. Room 4 has the stairs down to the 2nd floor.

Floor 2

**see floor 1 note about traps*

Room 1: Stairs down from 1st floor, Azcan Magic-User: 1 (South of the top right door in the first big room.). Secret passage on the left wall.

Room 2: Azcan Warriors 2

Room 3: Azcan Shaman: 1 and Azcan Warrior

Room 4: Stairs down to 3rd floor.

Floor 3

**see floor 1 note*

Room 1 and 2: Azcan Shaman: 1 in each room.

Room 3, 4, 5 and 6: 2 Azcan Warriors each.

Room 7: Azcan Warrior

Room 8 Azcan Magic-Users: 2 guarding the stairs down to 4th floor

Floor 4

**see floor 1 note*

10 Azcan Warrior of various level are wandering the floor

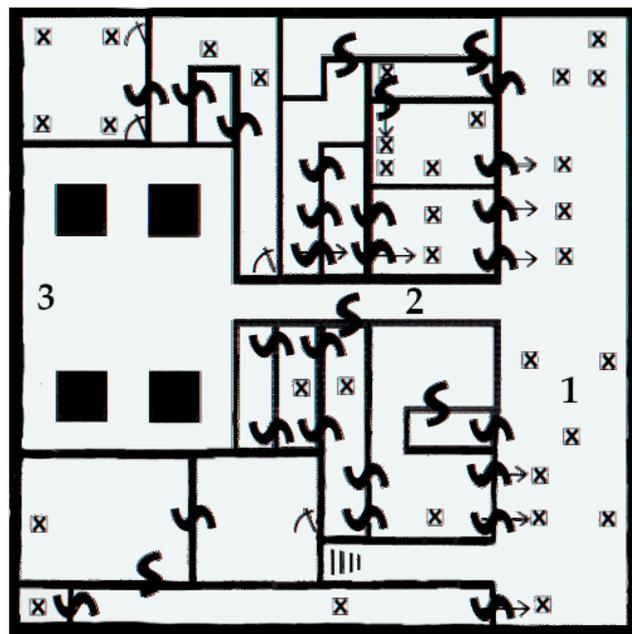
Room 1: 4 Azcan Warriors and 2 Azcan Magic Users.

Room 2: Flying Vipers: 2 Treasure: Scroll of Continual Dark.

Room 3: Azcan Shamans: 2. Treasure: Potion of Cure Poison, guarding the rooms to the stairs leading down to 5th floor

Floor 5

**see floor 1 note*



Map of the Azcan Temple floor 5

10 Azcan Warrior of various level are wandering the floor

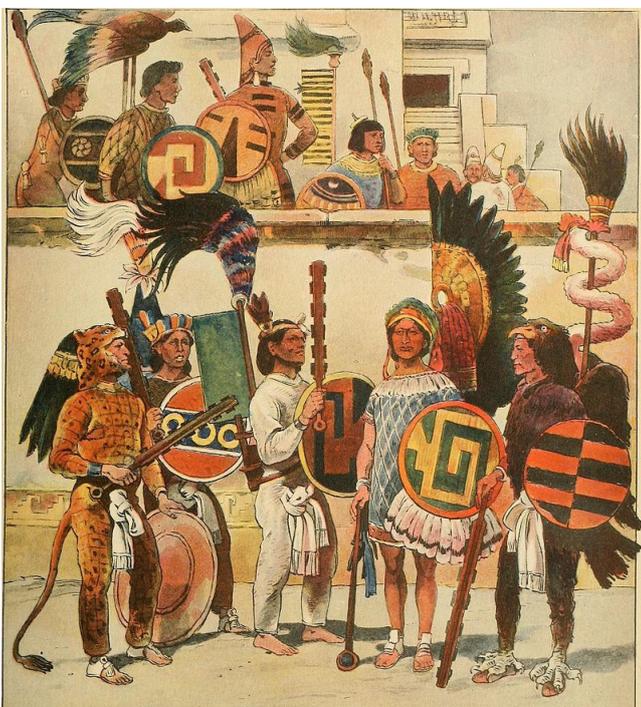
Room 1: Flying Vipers 3 (Flying around in the room).

Room 2: Azcan Magic-Users: 2, 1 at either end of the passage leading to the treasure room. Azcan Shamans 2: 1 at either end of

the passage leading to the treasure room, aiding the Magic-Users.

Room 3: Azcan Warrior various levels: 4 and Azcan Shamans: 2 and the High Priest, suggested 14th level. The High Priest is directly across from the hallway leading into the large chamber with the Rings of Fire Protection. Upon finding the central chamber, the party will see the Azcan High Priest standing in a ring of flames gesturing at their group. High Priests Treasure: Ring of Fire Protection(1 per PC), Azcan Jungle map. The High Priest is also wearing Robes of Protection: AC: 2, Bracers of Protection from Normal Missiles and uses a Mace +3 that has the added benefit of casting Cure Serious Wounds x3 per day. He is also wearing one of the Rings of Fire Protection.

Having obtained the Rings of Fire Protection, the PCs now are able to explore The Fire Lands if they return back to the Valley.



Azcan warriors

BACK TO BARRICK'S CASTLE

Returning to the castle at this point is not the best idea, as the Duke has now gone totally mad and Marmillian is not far behind him. If PCs talk to the Duke he will throw them out of the city and post guards to keep them from returning, indicating the madness in the castle is getting worse.

THE FIRE LANDS

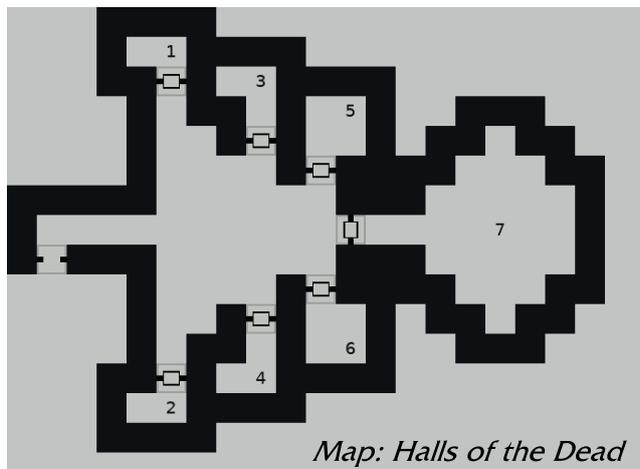


The Fire Lands are in the north west of the Valley and are besieged by lava fields, so impossible to cross without fire protection.

Table: Fire Lands wandering monster list

d8	Monster	# Appearing
1	Dragon, Red	1
2-3	Elemental, Fire	1d2
4	Giant, Fire	1
5-6	Hellhound	1d4
7-8	Salamander, Flame	1d6

Halls of the Dead



The entrance of the ominous, silent Halls of the Dead is found in the Fire Lands (at hex 0405). Therefore, it can only be reached by PCs that have recovered the Rings of Fire Resistance from the Azcan Temple, or found alternatives to protect themselves from the scorching heat of the Fire Lands.

The Halls are an obviously man-made structure with symbols scattered throughout on the walls, floors and doors, for a total of 25 glyphs. These symbols are made of spherical black onyx with white gold crescents: the Holy Symbol of the Immortal Nyx. It is obvious, even to a casual observer, that this place is an ancient tomb. All undead in this tomb are treated as 2 categories higher for Turning purposes. Each of the 25 symbols is worth 3,700 gp. However, they are heavily cursed. Anyone trying to steal them is struck by a tri-fold Immortal level curse:

The PC cannot be healed by spells and potions are only half effective.

All Undead are at a +2 to hit the afflicted PC.

The PC is struck with Blindness.

All three conditions last until the curse is lifted by a Cleric of Nyx. In the Hollow World, this means most likely reaching Milenia and finding one of the elusive priests of the Cult of Zargos.

Despite the presence of the undead, this tomb shows no sign of actually having been used: all the undead appear to have been intended as guardians for whomever was meant to be interred here.

Room 1, 2.

Each of these small rooms has a complement of 4 Skeletons standing at attention, armed with spears and shields.



Room 3, 4.

4 Ghouls hunger in each of these rooms. They are ravenous, and attack immediately.

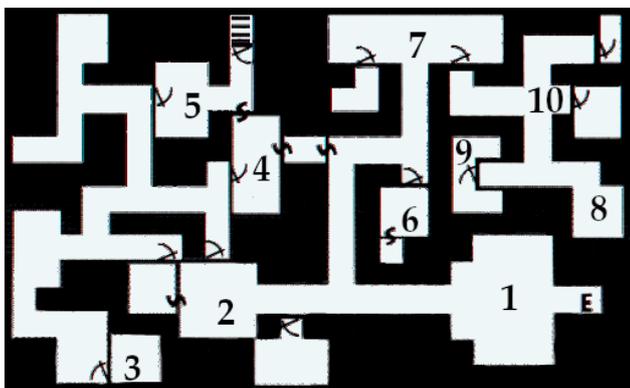
Room 5, 6. A single Wight stands in the middle of each of these small chambers. The undead animates as soon as the door is opened, and attacks until the intruders leave the Halls.

Room 7: Burial Chamber. A Shadow stands eternal guard in this large chamber. The walls are covered in murals depicting ancient Taymoran culture, often at times in conflict with fire-wielding Nithian invaders.

Oltec Tradeway

This location is on the north west corner in hex 0103 of the main Valley map. This entire dungeon was once a tri-level structure of Nithian design dedicated to Thanatos that he moved to the Hollow World (to hide from the other Immortals) and divided into 3 sections, connecting them by portals. All of the creatures found within were once the builders; but, Thanatos changed them into monsters as an experiment. All undead in the 3rd section are treated as 2 categories higher for Turning purposes.

Floor 1



Map of the Oltec Tradeway floor 1

Creatures are spread throughout the various rooms.

Room 1: Red Dragon: 1. Treasure: Scroll of Anti-Magic Shell.

Room 2: Giant Ants: 28, spread in this and nearby rooms and corridors.

Room 3: Troll, treasure: Displacer Cloak, Scroll of Cure Serious Wounds(2).

Room 4: Fire Beetles: 12.

Room 5: Rock Statues: 2 guarding the nearby stairs down.

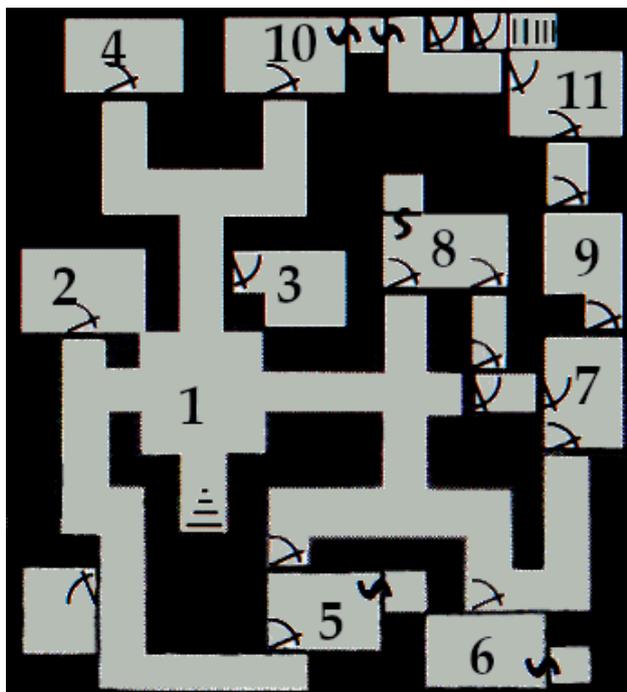
Room 6: Fire Giant, Treasure: Sword +1, Scroll Lightning Bolt, Scroll Ice Storm, Scroll Cloudkill.

Room 7: Hellhounds: 12.

Room 8 and 9: 4 Gargoyles in each. Treasure: Potion of Cure Poison(2) in room 9.

Room 10: Zombies: 8 wandering this corridor and nearby rooms.

Floor 2



Map of the Oltec Tradeway floor 2

Room 1: Stairs coming down from the 1st floor.

Room 2 and 3: Giant Rat: 8 (4 in each room on either side of the north passage after entering this floor.)

Room 4: Black Widow: 4.

Room 5 and 6: Ogres: 4 in each room.
 Treasure: Potion of Healing(4), 512 GP east of room 5 in the room hidden behind a secret door. Treasure: 400 GP, Scroll Death Spell, Potion of Healing(2) east of room 6 behind the secret door.

Room 7, 8 and 9:
 Trolls: 10, of which 4 are in room 8 guarding the secret door hiding a treasure: Sword +2, Scroll Cure Light Wounds(3), Scroll Bless(2). Room 7 has 4 trolls and room 9 has 2 trolls.



Room 10: Giant Scorpions: 10. Treasure: Potion of Cure Poison(4).

Room 11: Skeletons: 8 (room south of the stairs leading down.)

Floor 3

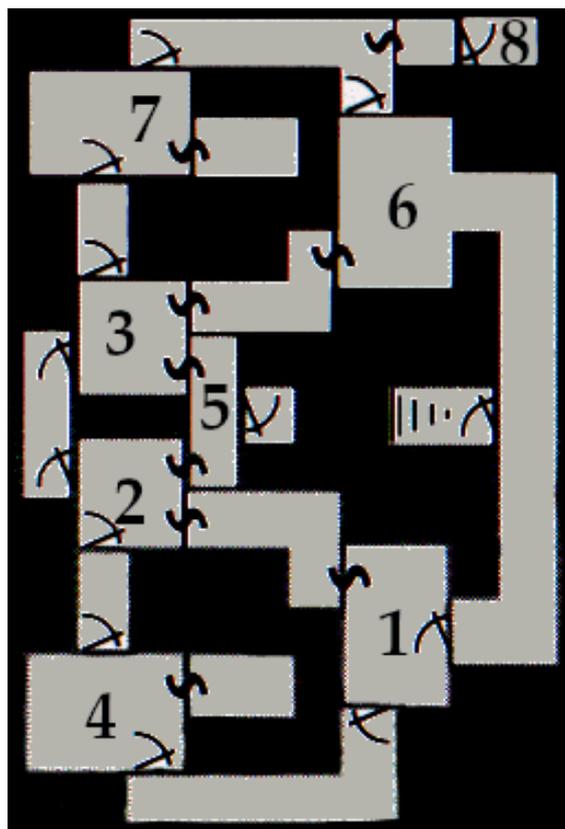
Room 1, 2 and 3: Wights: 4 in room 1 and 5 each in rooms 2 and 3.

Room 4: Spectre. Treasure: 1,500 GP, Plate Mail +1, Scroll Dispel Magic, Shield +1, Scroll Confusion behind the secret door.

Room 5: Shadow.

Room 6: Ghouls: 4.

Room 7: Wraiths: 2. Treasure: 1,000 GP, Shield +2, Mace +2, Potion of Healing(2) behind the secret door



Map of the Oltec Tradeway floor3

Room 8: Upon finding the secret passage you meet an Oltec merchant who offers to help your people in exchange for your opening of this new trade route. She hands you a note for your Duke. You have completed the Duke's quest! You are also given an Oltec Medallion.

BACK TO BARRICK'S CASTLE (AGAIN)

The castle is now abandoned and all house and shops are closed. It looks all torn apart. Only Marmillian remains, in his usual place, and he explains that you are all in a giant zoo and that an evil creature called a burrower is driving everyone mad. He gives you a scroll that you absolutely need to destroy the creature and tells you to go around the valley to the southern swamp, pointing to a specific point (hex 2224 of the Valley map). There is actually a better way to reach the destination, but the DM should judge how to place some hints to led the PCs to it. There is in fact a secret passage in the cemetery that leads directly to the southern swamp. It's hidden in an unmarked grave that is revealed after the townspeople wreck the town and flee. The unmarked grave is actually a collapsed section of ground that was being dug for a new grave. The gravedigger's body can be found as a current meal for the Tiger Beetles.

THE SCHATTENALFEN DUNGEON

This man-made dungeon is clearly of Schattentalfen design and was created as a quick means to cross the swamp/river for quicker access to attacking their hated enemies, the Azcans. All secret doors can be detected by elves with a +1 bonus and by all others at a -1 penalty. Creatures found within this dungeon are either paid mercenaries or highly trained "pets" and as such will not attack any Schattentalfen Elf...or Shadow Elf, if the party is blessed to have one.



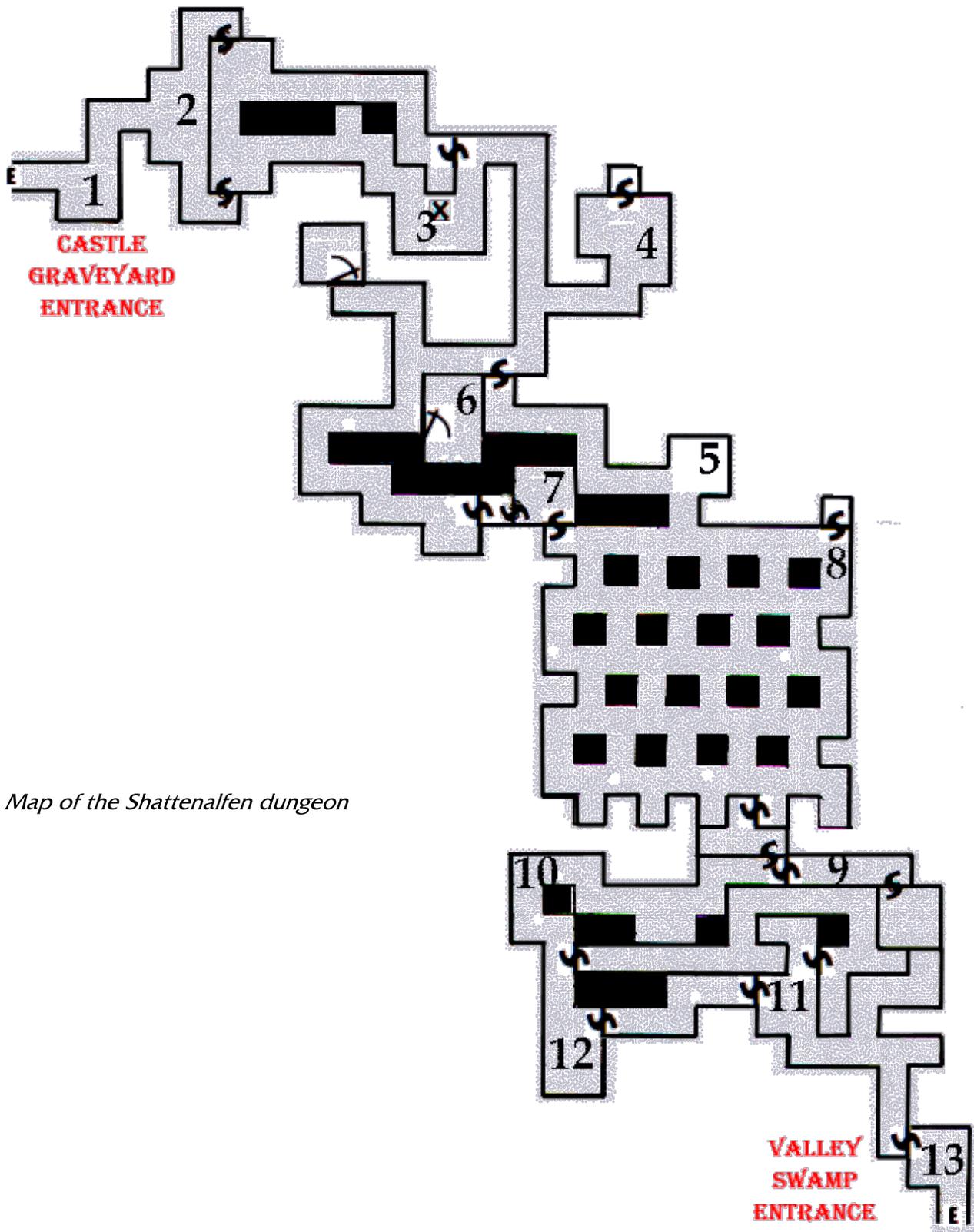
Schattentalfen warrior

Room 1: Cave Bears: 2 (at the entrance from the city).

Room 2: Zombies: 4.

Room 3: Tiger Beetles: 8.

Room 4: Ogres: 6. (Treasure: 432 GP behind secret door to the north)



Map of the Shattenalfen dungeon



Room 5 and 6: Stone Giants, 1 in each room: 2 | (1 is in the room w/ a secret to the right of it & a secret door south of it. 1 is in the room to the left of treasure #2)

Room 7: Basilisks: 2.

Room 8: A Treasure of 2,000 GP is hidden behind a secret door in the north eastern corner of this great hall with massive pillars.

Room 9: Schattentalfen Elf Warriors: 4.

Room 10: Crab Spiders: 4.

Room 11: Giant Toads: 6.

Room 12: Flapsails: 2

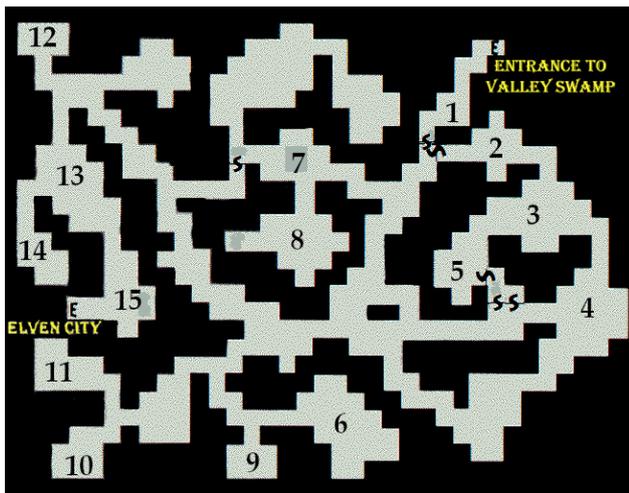
Room 13: Pyro Hydra (in the room leading to the valley swamp exit)

Exits from the passage into the Southernmost swamp behind a tree.

The exit leads the PCs to hex 1724 on the southern shore of the lake in the Valley. From there they can reach the entrance to the Elven Caves in hex 2224 of the Valley map.

ELVEN CAVERNS

If the party tries entering without the Oltec Medallion: A voice booms out: "These passages have been sealed by the Ancients!"



Map of the Elven caverns

This natural cave system has a slight purplish haze throughout it which acts as a Faerie Fire spell giving some light but negating infravision. The Schattentalfen Elves found within an advanced outpost leading to the Schattentalfen City of Ranthryl. *Subject to change due to location of the city compared to the volcano (ie. Fire Lands)* All creatures found w/in this dungeon were brought/encouraged to live here by the Schattentalfen Elves.

With the Medallion, however: A voice booms out: "These passages have been opened by the Ancients!" The medallion has granted you passage; but, beware, you now enter the Realm of the Dark Elves!

Room 1: The words on the top of the scroll given by Marmillan help you decipher the markings. You chant a phrase & pass through the southern secret door.

Room 2: Giant Bats: 8.

Room 3 and 4: Cave Bears, 4 in each room.

Room 5: Stone Giant (Treasure: 912 GP, Scroll Cure Serious Wounds(4) behind secret door to the east).

Room 6: Rock Pythons 3.

Room 7 and 8: Flapsails, 3 in room 7 and 5 in room 8 (Treasure: Scroll Cure-All(2) in the niche to the west of room 8).

Room 9: Gelatinous Cube.

Room 10: Tiger Beetles: 9.

Room 11: Basilisks: 5.

Room 12: Black Widows: 3

Room 13 and 14: Schattentalfen Elf Warriors: 5 in room 13, 5 in room to 14.

Room 15: Schattentalfen Elf Captains: 3 and 4 Schattentalfen Elf Warrior (Treasure: Scroll of Disintegrate). From here the party can reach the elven city.

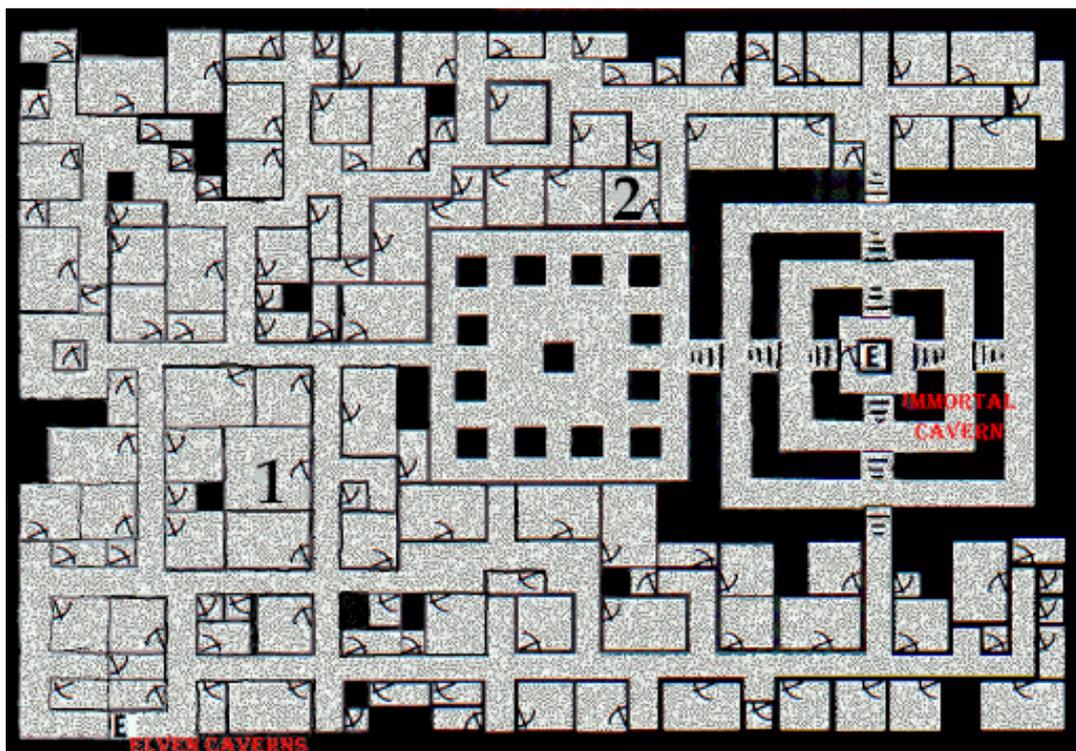
SCHATTENTALFEN CITY OF RANTHRYL

In the original computer game as usual the Schattentalfen of the city do not have a group behaviour and just wander around or stay in their location waiting for the PCs to come and kill them. Obviously this is not very realistic in a tabletop game unless the DM decides the place is lightly populated, and most of the streets and houses are empty. In the original computer game there was no scale for the city either so the DM should decide if the place is just a town or a bigger community¹.

If the city is populated and well guarded it would be better for the PCs to try to reach the pyramid on the eastern side during a sleep cycle, or disguised as Schattentalfen, or invisible. Walking the city without precautions is bound to draw unwanted attention almost immediately, as the Schattentalfen are xenophobics and do not accept foreigners in their communities. If the PCs do not take any precautions, they will be attacked in 1d6 rounds by 2 patrols from the wandering monsters list which will be joined in 1d8 rounds by 4 Schattentalfen Captains (E9+, spellcasters), 7 Schattentalfen Lieutenants (E7-8), 10 Schattentalfen 2nd Lieutenants (E4-6) and 20 Schattentalfen Warriors (E1-3) which will fight fanatically (Morale 10). If they fail the morale check, they will retreat to the temple pyramid to the east.

¹ Ranthryl is actually a major Schattentalfen city in the Hollow World boxed set map, so the DM may decide to change the name if he/she wishes to use a smaller outpost.

Map of the Elven City



The temple is defended by 2 Schattenhalfen Lieutenants, 5 Shattenhalfen 2nd Lieutenants and 10 Schattenhalfen Warriors who are on the upper level of the pyramid guarding the entrance to the Immortal Cavern.

A total of 1 Schattenhalfen General (see description below), 13 Schattenhalfen Captains, 22 Schattenhalfen Lieutenants, 27 Shattenhalfen 2nd Lieutenants and 45 Schattenhalfen Warriors are present in the city. Parts of them should be inside locations 1 and 2, some are guarding the pyramid and the others could be sleeping or wandering the city depending on the time of the day. However they may all join the others at the pyramid if the PCs draw too much attention to themselves.

Table: Schattenhalfen Elf City wandering monster list

d6	Monster	# Appearing
1	Mix (ie. Captain + Warriors)	1 + 1d6
2	Elf, Captain(L9-10)	1d2
3	Elf, Lieutenant(L7-8)	1d3
4	Elf, 2nd Lieutenant (L 4-6)	1d4
5	Elf, Warrior (level 1-3)	1d6
6	Mix (ie. Captain + Warriors)	1 + 1d6

The DM may decide if the city is also populated by commoners, including children, or if it is only, at least temporarily, a military outpost. The presence of commoners may increase for the PCs the chance of being discovered if they are not disguised, as commoners will report them to the nearest patrol immediately. If commoners are present 1d12 of them could also help the soldiers against the PCs, even if commoners will have Morale 8 instead of 10.

Location 1 is the main military fort of the city and it is normally occupied by the Schattenhalfen

General (see statistics below) and 2 Captains, 4 Lieutenants, 8 2nd Lieutenants and 14 Warriors..

Location 2 is another military outpost normally occupied by a Captain, 2 Lieutenants, 4 2nd Lieutenants and 6 Warriors. There is also a Flesh to Stone scroll in the building.

During a sleep cycle, the Hollow World equivalent of nights, only the random wandering patrols will be around and all the other officers and soldiers will be in Location 1 and 2. Commoners will not wander the streets. The guard of the pyramid however will always be present in the same number.

Schattenalfen Elf, General:

1 (Spellcaster) (found in Location 1)

Shattenalfen General: 13th level Shattenalfen elf; AC: -2; hp: 71; MV: 90'(30'); # of Att: 1 two-handed sword or by spell; Save: E10; ML: 11; AL: C. S: 18 I: 18 W: 15 D: 16 C: 16 Ch: 15. Languages: Elvish (Shattenalfen dialect), Neathar, Azcan, Traldar, Mapheggi lizard man, Kogolar dwarvish. General Skills(10): Intimidate(S), Armorer(I), Navigation(I), Signalling (Shattenalfen Flapsail-riders hand-signals, I), Caving (W), Alertness(D), Riding (Flapsail, D), Combat tactics (Shattenalfen, I), Combat tactics (Azcan, I), Danger Sense(W). Spells: 7/6/4/4/3/2.

General is an in-your-face, lead from the front kind of warrior. He prefers spells for personal protection, spells to keep his enemies from fleeing and spells to help him find the best loot after a battle. He is known to reward acts of extreme

valor in battle; but, will kill any of his men who show cowardice in battle. He also will never flee from an active battle regardless of the odds against him. While a proficient flapsail rider, he prefers standing on his own two feet during combat and will only use a flapsail for long trips. His armor was a gift from the Shattenalfen King for his role in putting down an attempt on the King's life 50 years ago.

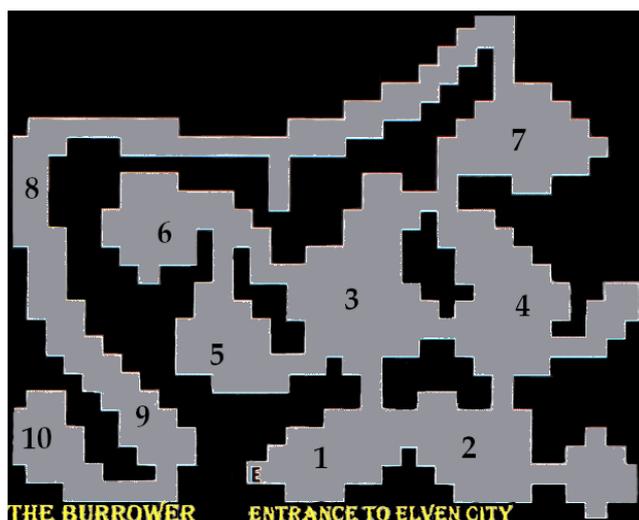
Spells generally memorized: 1st-Detect Magic x1, Protection from Evil x5, Read Magic x1. 2nd-Levitate x1, Phantasmal Force x1, Web x4. 3rd-Haste x2, Protection from Normal Missiles x2. 4th-Wall of Fire x4. 5th-Dissolve x1, Passwall x1, Wall of Stone x1. 6th-Move Earth x1, Flesh to Stone x1.

Spells in spellbook: 1st-Detect Magic, Hold Portal, Light*, Protection from Evil*, Read Magic. 2nd-Continual Light*, Detect Evil*, Knock, Levitate, Locate Object, Phantasmal Force, Web, Wizard Lock; 3rd-Dispel Magic, Fly, Haste*, Infravision, Protection from Evil* 10' radius, Protection from Normal Missiles; 4th-Remove Curse*, Wall of Fire, Wizard Eye; 5th-Dissolve, Passwall, Wall of Stone; 6th-Anti-magic Shell, Move Earth, Stone to Flesh*.

Magical Items: Two-handed sword +3/+5 vs. Humans; Draconic Elven Chain Mail +5 (Immunity to all types of Dragon Breath); 5 potions of Super-healing, Scroll of Stone to Flesh.

THE IMMORTAL CAVERN

A long stairs from the top of the pyramid in the elven city leads down to a complex of natural caverns. This series of natural caves is tinted grass green and radiates a strong sense of evil. All monsters encountered w/in are at a +2 to both attack and damage due to the heavy evil emanations and the fact that they've all been driven insane by the Burrowers presence. The lone Mummy and Vampire in here are treated as 3 categories higher for Turning purposes. None of these creatures hold any kind of treasure. Also, due to the strong evil in the caves, Protection from Evil spells and Bless spells, of less than Immortal level, don't work here.



Map of the Immortal Cavern

Room 1 and 2: Efreets, 1 in each room.

Room 3: Medusa: 2.

Room 4: Stone Giants: 5.

Room 5: Mummy.

Room 6: Fire Giants: 3.

Room 7: Vampire

Room 8: Chimera: 2.

Room 9: Pyro Hydra.

Room 10: BURROWER. The creature cannot be beaten, the PCs have to use Amelya's scroll received from Marmillian to summon the Immortal Ka the Preserver.



Appearance of Ka, original drawing by Justin Pfeil, aka warriorneedsfood on The Piazza, check his [Keep on the Borderland comic](#)

Ka appears and battles the Burrower. The Burrower appears to be a Giant Squid-like being, while Ka appears to be similar to a T-Rex. After a violent battle, Ka kills the Burrower and addresses the party:

“You have done well, my children. I now know that these abominations still exist. It was this creature which poisoned the minds of your people. I have healed all who live. Return as heroes of your people for I have told them of your achievements.”

AFTERMATH

The party can now return to Castle Barrik. They still have to pass through the Shattenalfen city, but the DM may decide Ka will teleport them directly to the castle.

Upon returning to town, the party finds it restored and are given a heroes' welcome.

The party meets w/ Duke Hector Barrik:

“My heroes...I was not myself and treated you unfairly. Allow me to attempt amends. Each of you will be the leaders of your guilds. We will rule this land together and try to make peace with our neighbors. Words cannot express my gratitude.”

If the PCs were native of the Valley they still could have many adventures to help their people prosper in the Hollow World. They have already established an alliance with the Oltecs to the west, but other surrounding people, mainly the Schattenalfen and the Azcan, are likely to remain a menace for the newcomers.

CREDITS AND CONCLUSION

Special thanks to Sega, TSR & Westwood Studios for making such a great game.

Special thanks to Mr. Douglas Lanford for his permission to use that vast majority of the maps & for all his hard work as part of the team that made & tested this wonderful game.

Special thanks to Chris Seabrook for his permission to use his castle map & opening Prologue from his walkthrough.

After thoughts

The console version limited class levels to:

- 14th for Humans,
- 12th for Dwarves,
- 10th for Elves and
- 8th for Halfling(Hin).

While that's good for a video game, a table-top version might want to modify that cap. Rather than level limits, I suggest an XP limit. The Magic-User requires the most XP to hit 14th level (1,050,000 XP). Now the console version also did not take into account XP bonuses for high stats, which would've adjusted the MU's final XP total to 1,155,000 *IF* they had a 16-18 Intelligence.

In order to purchase all the most expensive gear in the game for a fighter-type, it costs roughly 103,275 GP. That does not, however, account for Elves needing to also buy spells. If you figure a rough MAX of 250,000 GP per PC over the course of the entire game, then it drops the amount of XP needed to be gained to 800,000 XP per PC. That total would cover: Monster kills,

Story awards and miscellaneous awards (such as good role-playing).

This will then adjust MAX final levels for several classes. When a MU hits 14th level (1,050,000 XP) a Cleric with the same amount of XP would hit 17th level (1,000,000 XP). So the final level range would be: (not counting PR bonus) (notes are based on the 1,050,000 XP amount)

Cleric or Druid: 17th level (1,000,000 XP) note the Cleric/Druid is 50,000 XP short of 18th level

Fighter: 15th level (960,000 XP) note the Fighter is 30,000 XP short of 16th level

Magic-User: 14th level (1,050,000 XP)

Thief: 16th level (1,000,000 XP)

Dwarf: 14th level (1,000,000 XP)

Elf, Elf-Cleric or Elf Druid: 11th level (850,000 XP) note the Elf is 50,000 XP short of 12th level

Halfling(Hin): 11th level (900,000 XP)

If you allow Mystics in a *Warriors of the Eternal Sun* (WotES) campaign, then they would end the game at:

Mystic: 15th level (960,000 XP) note the Mystic is 30,000 XP short of 16th level

If you allow Dwarf-Clerics they would level as per Elves:

Dwarf-Cleric: 12th level (1,000,000) (This would cap their spellcasting)

If you allow Gnomes in a WotES campaign, then they would end the game at:

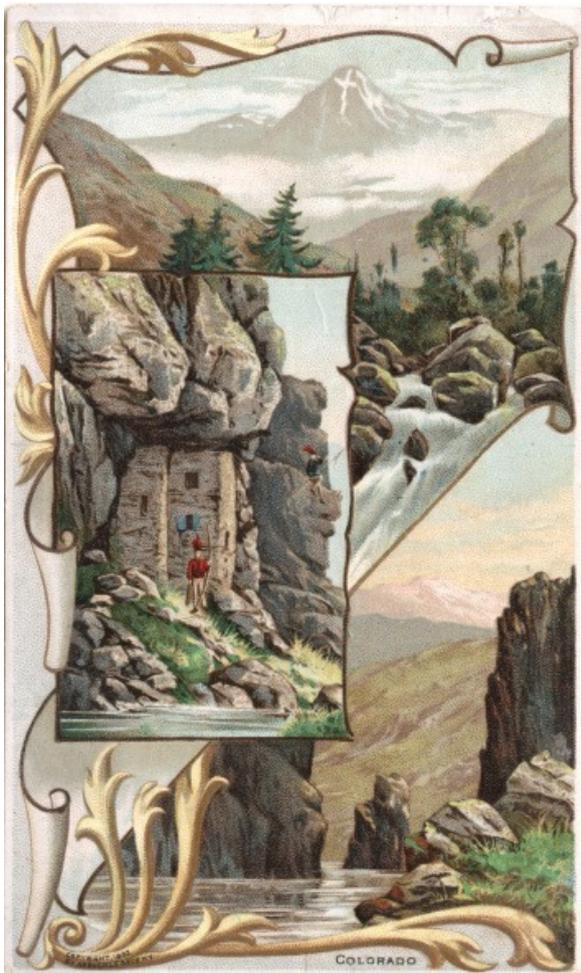
Gnome: 10th level (810,000 XP)

If you allow Gnome Spellcasters in a WotES campaign, then they would end the game at:

Gnome Shaman or Gnome Wicca: 10th/8th level (810,000/240,000 XP) note that either version is 20,000 XP short of being a 9th level spellcaster.

If you allow Shadow Elf Shamans, they would end at:

Shadow Elf Shaman: 11th/10th (850,000/300,000)



Sub-settings of MYSTARA

Part 3

It's not just one RPG setting, but many, many more!

by Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)

This article follows the first part which appeared in *Threshold* Magazine issue #23¹, which described the Geographical sub-settings in Brun and the Alphantian sea and a second part which appeared in *Threshold* Magazine issue #24² with the sub-settings of Davania and Skothar. This issue of *Threshold* completes the series with the sub-settings of the Hollow World and Mystarospace, Historical and Racial sub-settings; see previous issues for more details.

¹ Download [issue #23](#) for free from the Vaults of Psndius.

² Download [issue #24](#) for free from the Vaults of Pandius.

DOWN, INSIDE, UP AND BEYOND MYSTARA

These sub-settings are still, strictly speaking, geographical places, but quite far away from the usual ones, or relatively unknown to the general populace of the Outer World. Yet it could be quite easy for the players to reach them if the DM wishes so. For some locations there is quite enough canon and fan-made material to sustain a whole campaign, while others may require a bit more work to develop them.

The Shadowdeep



The name is a neologism created by the Mystara community for the Underdark of Mystara, to avoid using the latter term which is now very much associated with the *Forgotten Realms* setting. The underground regions of Mystara were de facto introduced in the canon Gazetteer product GAZ13: “*The Shadow Elves*”, which was also released as a free download in the last days of TSR³. It was later expanded greatly by fans, mainly in *Threshold* Magazine

³ Freely available in the [Vaults of Pandius](#), in html and pdf formats.

issue #14⁴, which was dedicated to it. Many events both in the canon Almanacs and in the later fan Almanacs are set in the Shadowdeep from 1,010 to 1,019 AC, with a war between Shadow elves, dwarves and humanoids for the conquest of Oenkmar and internal struggles among the Shadow elves between followers of Rafiel and Atzanteotl.

Basic Campaign: Explore the dangerous lands of darkness, find food and safety for you and your friends.

Expert Campaign: Help your people against external and internal threats.

Companion Campaign: Create a dominion in the Shadowdeep and defend it from the many threats of the sunless lands.

Master Campaign: Become the rulers of a great land, or lead your people to the conquest of the surface of the Outer or the Hollow World.

Immortal Campaign: Create a new religion, spreading the faith in the Shadowdeep and beyond.

Main sources

GAZ13: “*The Shadow Elves*”

GAZ10: “*The Orcs of Thar*”

GAZ6: “*The Dwarves of Rockhome*”

The Hollow World boxed set

The Poor Wizards Almanac I, II and III

The Atlas sections in the *Vaults of Pandius*: [Shadow elves territories](#), [Shadowdeep](#), and [the Broken Lands](#).

Threshold Magazine issue #14 and other articles dedicated to the Shadowdeep in *Threshold* Magazine (see the [Index of Threshold Magazine articles](#) at the Piazza Forums).

⁴ Available in the [Vaults of Pandius](#) as a free download.

The Hollow World

The hollow interior of Mystara had a dedicated boxed set, which created this setting as a lost world, lit by a red sun, with floating continents, preserved by the Immortals as a refuge for civilizations and people that disappeared from the surface. Magic works differently in the Hollow World, with several spells unknown to the locals and others not working, such as teleport spells. This makes the setting much more savage and primitive, complete with dinosaurs. The Hollow World was the theme of *Threshold* Magazine issue #9⁵ and even a dedicated videogame, “*Warriors of the Eternal Sun*”, whose monumental conversion to a tabletop adventure you can find in this issue and the previous two issue of *Threshold* Magazine.

The Hollow World is the homeland of several major cultures that once flourished in the Outer World and have now found a new life under the red sun, so to call it a single sub-setting is an understatement, as it can contain many more than just one.

A major theme of the Hollow World is also the *Spell of Preservation*, which keeps its cultures more or less intact, but is something the Immortals of Entropy would very much like to destroy and have tried to in the past with the Burrowers, gigantic and destructive monsters, as it was depicted in “*Warriors of the Eternal Sun*”.

Basic Campaign: Explore the vast lands of your region of the Hollow World, finding lost secrets and running from dinosaurs and ancient beasts.

Expert Campaign: Help your people against pesky neighbours with a different, strange culture, or travel to their lands to spy on them.

Companion Campaign: Create a dominion in your land and defend it from enemies and unwanted changes.

Master Campaign: Deal with the *Spell of Preservation*, unwilling or not, either to protect your land from unwanted change or to try to change your people.

Immortal Campaign: Discover the secrets of the Hollow World, choose if you want to protect it or change it at any cost.

Main sources

The Hollow World boxed set
The Poor Wizards Almanac I, II and III
 GAZ13: “*The Shadow Elves*”
 HWA1: “*Nightwail Adventure*”
 HWA2: “*Nightrage Adventure*”
 HWA3: “*Nightstorm Adventure*”
 HWQ1: “*The Milenian Sceptre Adventure*”
 HWR1: “*Sons of Azca Campaign Source*”
 HWR2: “*Kingdom of Nithia Campaign Source*”
 HWR3: “*Milenian Empire Campaign Source*”
 The [Atlas sections](#) in the Vaults of Pandius .
[Fan Almanacs](#) from 1,014 to 1,019 AC
Threshold Magazine issue #9 and other articles dedicated to the Hollow World in *Threshold* Magazine (see the [Index of Threshold Magazine articles](#) at the Piazza Forums).

⁵ Available in the [Vaults of Pandius](#) as a free download.

The Skies



The Skies of Mystara may well have the status of a full subsetting because several creatures are known to inhabit them on solid islands of clouds. Intelligent creatures known to have settlements in the skies of Mystara are Cloud giants, faenare, faerie and, obviously, the sky gnomes introduced in PC2: *“Top Ballista”*, the supplement dedicated to the flying gnomish city of Serraine with its strange technologies and its inhabitants: sky gnomes, faenare, gremlins, harpies, nagpa, pegataurs, sphinxes and tabi. Other creatures that certainly inhabit Mystara skies are dragons, griffons, hippogriffs, pegasi, roc, manticores, pixies and sprites. More intelligent flying creatures which can well have settlements on the skies are introduced in the *Savage Coast* material, like the Crimson dragon and the Red Hawk dragon, the winged elves (ee’ar), the winged minotaurs (enduks) and the winged reptilians (krolli). More flying monsters are present in the *Savage Coast Monstrous Compendium*, as frelôn, ghriest, lupasus, naâruk, greater shedu, skinwing, tyminid and vulturehound.

Any other creatures with flying capabilities can also inhabit the skies, such as the cryon, bat-like inhabitants of the cold north, or the owl-like faerie folks the hsiao, were-

bats, and obviously several types of air elementals and undead. The canonically extinct werehawks may have survived up in the skies of Mystara.

The Hollow World has its own skies complete with a flying island of sky gnomes, Oostdok, and several floating continents inhabited also by winged serpents and, probably, flying dinosaurs too.

Basic Campaign: Explore your cloud in the sky, defend it from rivals and enemies.

Expert Campaign: Help your people against external threats or natural disasters.

Companion Campaign: Create a dominion in your home cloud and defend it from enemies, conquer the skies or explore the surface.

Master Campaign: Create an Empire of the Skies, or conquer the surface!

Immortal Campaign: Create a new religion for Mystara skies.

Main sources

Rules Cyclopedia

The Hollow World boxed set

The Poor Wizards Almanac I, II and III

Creature Catalogue

PC1: *“Tall Tales of the Wee Folk”*

PC2: *“Top Ballista”*

Savage Coast Monstrous Compendium

Articles in the Vaults of Pandius such as:

[“Skyrealms of Mystara”](#) by Håvard

[“99,999985% Mystara history”](#) by Francesco Defferrari

[“Clouds: Those which pass, pass with rain”](#)

by Giulio Caroletti

[“Faerie”](#) by Sheldon Morris

[“Faenare Race and Racial Progression”](#) by

Jamie Baty

Matera



The white and visible moon of Mystara, modelled after our real world moon, has likewise a rocky and airless surface, but is canonically the place where lies Pandius, the hidden city of the Immortals on the dark side of the moon. Besides that, fans developed Matera a lot, both on the surface and inside, with the development of the *Hollow Moon* by Sharon Dornhoff, John Calvin and others. The Hollow Moon is the home of more people and creatures now extinct on Mystara's surface and this, combined with the mysterious external surface, is more than enough to make Matera a very big sub-setting.

Basic Campaign: Explore your corner of the Hollow Moon and meet its inhabitants.

Expert Campaign: Travel the Hollow Moon and discover its secrets.

Companion Campaign: Create a dominion in your home country or travel as far as Matera's rocky surface.

Master Campaign: Create an Empire in the Hollow Moon and beyond and deal with the Spell of Remembrance, the Immortal way to preserve the local cultures!

Immortal Campaign: Create a new religion for Matera or join the Immortals in their own city.

Main sources

Rules Cyclopedia

The Hollow World boxed set

The Wrath of the Immortals boxed set

[The Hollow Moon section](#) in the Vaults of Pandius

["Information on the Mystaran Moons, Matera and Patera"](#) by Daniel Boese,

["The Vaults of Pandius"](#) by Shawn Stanley ,

["Revamping Matera"](#) by LoZompatore .

Threshold Magazine issue #15 and other articles dedicated to the Hollow Moon in *Threshold Magazine* (see the [Index of Threshold Magazine articles](#) at the Piazza forums).

Patera

The invisible, dark moon of Mystara was introduced by Bruce Heard in "*Voyage of the Princess Ark*" series as the home of the rakasta culture of Myoshima, modeled after ancient Japan. Through the series, Myoshima enters into conflictual contact both with the Heldannic Knights and the Alphatians of Prince Haldemar and its flying ship, the Princess of Ark. Patera has later been further developed and mapped by fans, making it quite a viable and detailed subsetting. Beside rakasta, the other main inhabitants of Patera would be Pachydermions, but other creatures could be present too, even if probably none of the classic human, demi-human and humanoid races. Fan supposed other intelligent creatures such as nagas, monkey folks, pooka and faeries, merfolks, shark-kins, aranea, sasquatches, tengu and snappers should be present on Patera.

Basic Campaign: Explore your corner of Patera and discover its ruins.

Expert Campaign: Travel to other countries and lands of Patera, fight invaders from Mystara such as the Heldannic Knights, or the Alphatians.

Companion Campaign: Create a dominion in your country or travel beyond Patera and explore Mystara's surface or its solar system.

Master Campaign: Create an Empire in Patera or guide its people to the conquest of Mystara

Immortal Campaign: Create a new religion to unify Patera.

Main sources

Voyage of the Princess Ark series of articles in *Dragon Magazine*

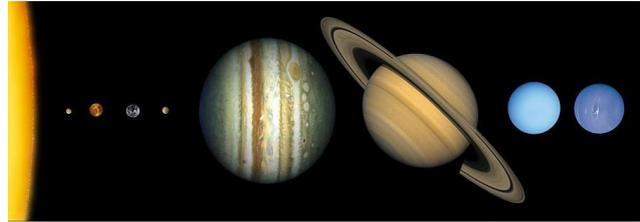
Champions of Mystara boxed set

The Wrath of the Immortals boxed set

The [Patera section](#) in the Vaults of Pandius .

["History And Evolution Of Rakastas"](#) by Simone Neri following the rakasta article in *Dragon Magazine* by Bruce Heard and other resources in the Vaults about rakasta and their history.

Threshold Magazine issue #15 and other articles dedicated to Patera in *Threshold Magazine* (see the [Index of Threshold Magazine articles](#) at the Piazza forums).



Mystaraspacespace

Mystara's solar system is modelled on Earth's local configuration.

The Mystara solar system had practically no canon development, except for a brief description in the original *Immortal Set* by Frank Mentzer which described planets similar to the ones of our solar system. Fans elaborated a lot about that, creating a live setting which can potentially host many sub-settings and be linked to the *Spelljammer* campaign setting. More recently, *Threshold Magazine* issue #15 summarized the currently available material for Mystaraspacespace, adding some more. The vastity of the setting makes it potentially inhabited by any race ever created for Mystara, and more.

Basic Campaign: Explore your small corner of your planet, to slowly discover how big it is.

Expert Campaign: Travel to other nations of your planet, and discover there is an infinite space beyond it, face its marvels and dangers.

Companion Campaign: Create a dominion in your planet or somewhere else in your solar system.

Master Campaign: Lead your planet to the conquest of Mystaraspacespace, or unite people and whole planets against a common enemy.

Immortal Campaign: Create a new reli-

gion on your planet and spread it to Mystaraspace.

Main sources

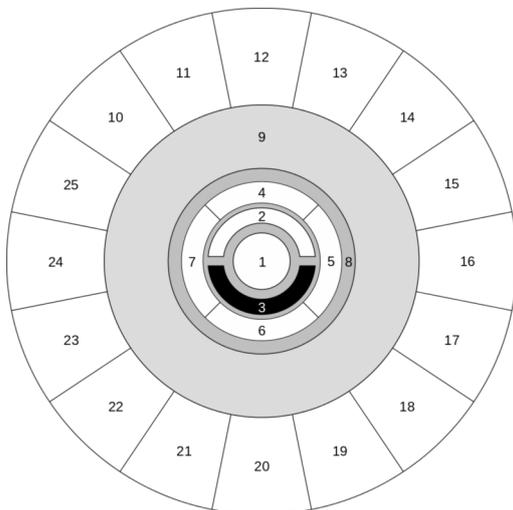
Immortal rules boxed set

“*Voyages of the Princess Ark*” article series in *Dragon Magazine*

The Wrath of the Immortals boxed set

The [Mystaraspace and Planes section](#) in the Vaults of Pandius.

Threshold Magazine issue #15 and other articles dedicated to Mystaraspace in *Threshold Magazine* (see [Index to Threshold Magazine articles](#) at the Piazza forums),



PLANES AND DIMENSIONS

Originally described in the Companion set as the Multiverse, which introduced Interplanar adventures, the planes also appeared in several classic adventure modules from CM6 to IM3. Exploration of the planes is the natural path for PCs starting their Quest for Immortality as described in the Master set, but travels to the planes are possible even at much lower levels.

Planes and Dimensions, from the Ethereal Plane to the Elemental Planes and the Outer Planes, are a theoretically infinite array of settings that go well beyond Mystara and can connect it to other D&D classic settings, starting with Planescape. Mystara fans have expanded on this information, creating maps and stories for the Planes.

Basic Campaign: Start as PCs natives of a Plane, meeting its dangers and its opportunities.

Expert Campaign: Travel to other corners of your Plane or Dimension, and maybe meet strange creatures from beyond your homeworld.

Companion Campaign: Create a dominion in your corner of the Multiverse, or start exploring the infinite and diverse Planes.

Master Campaign: Lead your people to the conquest of the Planes, or become Planes travellers famous in many worlds and universes.

Immortal Campaign: Create a new religion and spread it to the Planes.

Main sources

Companion, Master and Immortal rules boxed sets

Adventure modules of the CM, M and IM series

Rules Cyclopedia

“*Voyage of the Princess Ark*” series of articles in *Dragon Magazine*

The Wrath of the Immortals boxed set

The [Mystaraspace and Planes section](#) in the Vaults of Pandius.

Threshold Magazine issue #15 and other articles dedicated to the Planes in *Threshold Magazine* (see [Index to Threshold Magazine articles](#) at the Piazza forums),

HISTORICAL SUB-SETTINGS

The History of Mystara was developed starting from the Gazetteers and then with a much more complete picture in the Hollow World boxed set, which also explicitly connected Dave Arneson's Blackmoor and the DA series of modules to the continent of Skothar. With the Hollow World described as a museum of past cultures, it provided a lot of details on the history of Mystara. Fans have done the rest, even creating whole new sub-settings, as like Lhomarr by Geoff Gander or 2300 BC by John Calvin. Enough to have several interesting and viable sub-settings in the past of Mystara.

Ancient times



Before 5,000 BC (Before the Coronation of the first emperor of Thyatis - as history is typically measured in Known World nations), Mystara's history is not described in canon sources, but fans have written enough material to create sub-settings for the ancient times of the planet. Previous eras have been dominated by non-human races, such as fairies, dragons, giants, brutesmen, lizardmen and other reptilian races. Hints and bits about the ancient times of

Mystara are present in some canon products, such as the adventure module M3: *"Twilight Calling"*, which introduced the Carnifex as an ancient reptilian race imprisoned by the Immortals for the use of evil and destructive magic. Other aspects have been developed by fans, like Lhomarr and Y'hog by Geoff Gander, a great struggle set in Davania around 7,000 BC between the first great human civilization and the heirs of the Carnifex. More details on the ancient times of Mystara have been developed also by Sharon Dornhoff and John Calvin in their work on the Hollow Moon setting.

Basic Campaign: Start as PCs in the ancient past of Mystara or as low-level PCs stranded in a remote and unknown past.

Expert Campaign: Travel through the past and become leaders of your time.

Companion Campaign: Create a dominion in the past or visit past ages in search of lost treasures.

Master Campaign: Lead your people to survival and prosperity, leaving a mark in the future.

Immortal Campaign: Create a new religion and make it last through the ages.

Main sources

Hollow World boxed set

M3: *"Twilight Calling"*

Poor Wizard's Almanacs I, II, and III

The [History section](#) in the *Vaults of Pandius*, and this author's ["99,999985% Mystara history"](#) article .

Threshold Magazine issue #12: "Ages Past" and other articles dedicated to the History of Mystara in *Threshold Magazine* (see [Index of Threshold Magazine articles](#) at the Piazza forums).

The Times of Blackmoor

The times which saw the rise of Blackmoor, in 4,000 BC, are the focus of the DA series of adventures, and more material has been provided by the Blackmoor Campaign setting published for D&D 3ed and D&D 4ed. Even if not officially linked to Mystara, it is widely compatible with Blackmoor as placed in Skothar in the Hollow World boxed set. More material on Blackmoor and Thonia up to the Great Rain of Fire of 3,000 BC was produced by the active fan community of Mystara. In the space of a thousand years Blackmoor rose to dominate the whole world, establishing colonies everywhere, as in the modern Known World, but was eventually destroyed by its own technomagic weapons in the event later known as the Great Rain of Fire.

Basic Campaign: Start as PCs in Thonia or Blackmoor or travel there as in the DA1 module.

Expert Campaign: Defend Blackmoor from his enemies and help it rise to greatness.

Companion Campaign: Create a dominion either in Blackmoor or one of its new colonies.

Master Campaign: Lead Blackmoor to greatness, or resist its rise among its enemies.

Immortal Campaign: As a new Immortal, ensure the survival of Blackmoor, avoid the Great Rain of Fire, or destroy the dangerous remnants of Blackmoor technology.

Main sources

DA1, DA2, DA3 and DA4 adventure modules
Hollow World boxed set

Blackmoor campaign setting, for D&D 3rd and 4th ed

The [Blackmoor section](#) and the [History section](#) in the Vaults of Pandius and espe-

cially James Mishler's "[The Age of Blackmoor](#)". *Threshold* Magazine issue #20: "Skothar" and other articles dedicated to Blackmoor and Thonia in *Threshold* Magazine (see [Index to Threshold Magazine articles](#) at thew Piazza forums), in particular, "[New Blackmoor, 3050 BC](#)" by this author, "[Hail Thonia!](#)" by JTR, "[Using Blackmoor in Your Mystara Campaign](#)" by Havard, "[Starport a Campaign in the Duchy of the Peaks](#)" by the Real Nowhere Man, and "[Returned Blackmoor](#)" by Brian Rubinfeld.

2,300 to 1,700 BC

This era, in which the world of Mystara was recovering from the devastating effects of the Great Rain of Fire, was made into a viable sub-setting by the work of John Calvin aka Chimpman and others. The material now available, including some items recently published in *Threshold* Magazine, is more than enough to sustain a campaign in these times. This period has an interesting post-apocalyptic and bronze age feel and should end approximately with the minor cataclysm of 1700 BC, when during the great humanoid invasion the explosion of a lost Blackmoorian device created the Broken Lands and a series of earthquakes in the southern Known World destroyed the Taymora civilization and created the islands of future Ierendi and Minrothad in the Sunlit Sea.

Basic Campaign: Survive in difficult times and face the challenges of the past.

Expert Campaign: Rise in the ranks of your homeland or fight despotic rulers and overwhelming enemies.

Companion Campaign: Create a dominion in your land or discover new ones.

Master Campaign: Lead your homeland to conquest and greatness, or become celebrated heroes.

Immortal Campaign: As a new Immortal, save your homeland from oblivion or prevent the minor cataclysm from happening.

Main sources

Hollow World boxed set

PC3: “*The Sea People*”

The *Gazetteers* series from GAZ1 to GAZ14 and the *Dawn of the Emperors* boxed set

The [Historical Areas section](#) and the [History section](#) in the *Vaults of Pandius*, and the [2300 BC forum](#) at The Piazza

Threshold Magazine issue #12 “Ages Past”

and other articles dedicated to 2300 BC in *Threshold* Magazine (see [Index to Threshold Magazine articles](#) at the Piazza forums), in particular, “*Taymora Land of the Dead*” by Giampaolo Agosta, “*Vampire Queens of Taymora*” by John Calvin and the “*Engdyr’s Game*” series of adventures by John Calvin in *Threshold* Magazine issues #16 to #18.

1,600 to 0 BC

This age on many of the continents of Mystara is marked by extensive humanoid invasions, as hordes of the many breeds of humanoids reached from the north of Brun to the south of the continent and as far as Davania and Sko-



thar. This age also saw the rise of important human civilizations, such as Nithia and Milenia, and the arrival of the Alphatians on Mystara. It should be the equivalent of a new iron age in Mystara, with rising civilizations and barbarian cultures side by side with the humans slowly rising to prominence in many areas of the world. The Known World also saw the rise of the dwarvish and gnomish nation of Rockhome, the elven nation of Alfheim and the halfling emigration from Davania with the creation of the Five Shires.

Basic Campaign: Survive in difficult times and face the challenges of the past.

Expert Campaign: Rise in the ranks of your homeland or fight despotic rulers and overwhelming enemies.

Companion Campaign: Create a dominion in our land or discover new ones.

Master Campaign: Lead your homeland to conquest and greatness, or become celebrated heroes and founders of new nations.

Immortal Campaign: As a new Immortal, ensure the survival of your people in the future.

Main sources

Hollow World boxed set

The *Gazetteers* series from GAZ1 to GAZ14 and the *Dawn of the Emperors* boxed set

The [Historical Areas section](#) and the [History section](#) in the *Vaults of Pandius* .

Threshold Magazine issue #12 “Ages Past”

and other articles dedicated to the History of Mystara in *Threshold* Magazine (see [Index to Threshold Magazine articles](#) at the Piazza forums), in particular, “*Hesperia, Land of the Setting Sun*” by Giulio Caroletti .

1 AC to 1,000 AC

This is the time of the creation of the Empire of Thyatis in the Known World and the age up to the present day, in which Mystara takes the shape it has in canon products, which are mostly set in 1,000 AC. This time sees the birth and development of all the modern Known World nations, each with its own epic story of hardships and successes. A similar story should be common in other areas of the world, each one with its unique peculiarities.



Basic Campaign: Explore your land and defend your community.

Expert Campaign: Become famous adventurers among your people and help them create a new nation.

Companion Campaign: Create a dominion in your land or discover new ones.

Master Campaign: Lead your country to conquest and greatness, or become celebrated heroes and founders of new nations.

Immortal Campaign: As a new Immortal, lead the path of your people toward the future.

Main sources

Hollow World boxed set

The *Gazetteers* series from GAZ1 to GAZ14 and the *Dawn of the Emperors* boxed set

The [Historical Areas section](#) and the [History section](#) in the Vaults of Pandius.

Threshold Magazine issue #12 “Ages Past” and other articles dedicated to the History of Mystara in *Threshold* Magazine (see [Index to Threshold Magazine articles](#) at the Piazza forums).

RACIAL SUB-SETTINGS

Each intelligent race of Mystara might be a sub-setting of its own. This has a basis in canon with the PC series of supplements, which were dedicated to fairies, sky gnomes, under-sea creatures and werecreatures. An



older Mystara supplement, AC10: *“Bestiary of Dragons and Giants”*, could be used for the same purpose even if it is mostly a collection of adventures with human PCs meeting dragons and giants. Several Gazetteer, notably GAZ10: *“The Orcs of Thar”* (but also GAZ5: *“The Elves of Alfheim”*, GAZ6: *“The Dwarves of Rockhome”*, GAZ8: *“The Five Shires”* and GAZ13: *“The Shadowelves”*) can be used to create parties entirely composed of humanoid and demihuman PCs living in humanoid and demihuman nations. The *“Voyage of the Princess Ark”* articles in *Dragon Magazine* and later articles by Bruce Heard dedicated to lupins, rakasta and turtles also could be the basis to create sub-settings based on members of these races, in the Savage Coast and Myoshima as explained above. The Savage Coast material also contains other minor non-human playable races. While most Mystaran canon material deals with human NPCs and countries, where other intelligent races are adversaries or supporting cast, there is still a lot of material to create fully non-human campaigns.

Threshold Magazine issue #13, “A Crucible of Creatures”, includes many resources to play non-human characters, including undead PCs. *Threshold* Magazine issue #14 also includes information and rules to play non-human characters native to the underground lands of Mystara. Other non-human PC options appear in other issues of *Threshold* Magazine, such as the pachydermion in issue #15, creatures of Western Brun in issue #17, people of the Savage Coast in issue #18 and the zhochal created by Geoff Gander in issue #20.

Basic Campaign: Defend your community from humans or other threats.

Expert Campaign: Become famous adventurers among your people and help them create a new nation. As non-human communities of the same race may be hundreds of miles apart, PCs could be sent to find other members of the race, having to travel hostile human or humanoid lands.

Companion Campaign: Create a dominion in your land or discover new ones, or lead a great migration of your people to a promised land.

Master Campaign: Lead your people to conquest and greatness, or become celebrated heroes and founders of new nations.

Immortal Campaign: As a new Immortal, lead the path of your people toward the future and ensure the survival of your race through the centuries.

Main sources

AC10: “*Bestiary of Dragons and Giants*”

PC1: “*Tall Tales of the Wee Folk*”

PC2: “*Top Ballista*”

PC3: “*The Sea People*”

PC4: “*Night Howlers*”

GAZ5: “*The Elves of Alfheim*”

GAZ6: “*The Dwarves of Rockhome*”

GAZ8: “*The Five Shires*”

GAZ10: “*The Orcs of Thar*”

GAZ13: “*The Shadowelves*”

Hollow World boxed set

The “*Voyage of the Princess Ark*” article series in *Dragon Magazine*

Champions of Mystara boxed set

[The Savage Coast Monstrous Compendium](#)

(available at the Vaults of Pandius)

Dragon Magazine # 237: “*Lupins of Mystara*”

Dragon Magazine # 247: “*Rakasta of Mystara*”

The [Creatures and Conversion](#) section and the [Mystaran races section in](#) the Vaults of Pandius.

Threshold Magazine issue #13, #14, #16,

#17 and #18, , in particular, the articles dedicated to the intelligent races of Mystara in

Threshold Magazine (see [Index of Threshold Magazine articles](#) at the Piazza forums).

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- Page 120: **[Map: Shattenalfen dungeon]**
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- Page 121: **[Map: Elven caves]**
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- Page 123: **[Map: Elven city]**
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- Page 125: **[Image: Appearance of Ka]**
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Page 144: **[Image: Preliminary Cover design for issue #26]**

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Back **[Image: Back Cover of issue #25]**

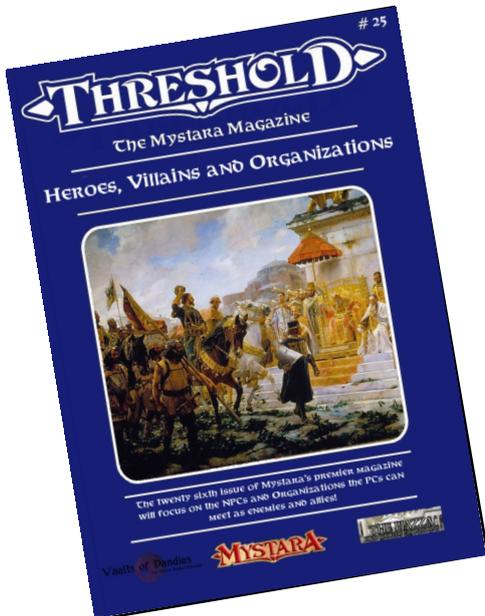
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cover:

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NEXT ISSUE

Our next issue will focus on NPCs and Organizations that PCs can meet as either enemies or allies in their exploits across Mystara.



Cover not yet finalised

HEROES, VILLAINS & ORGANIZATIONS

Anticipated contents include:

- *Ra-boteb the lich*
- *Adventurers and Mercenaries*
- *Alphatian bastions of the untamed east*

...and much much more!

Your Opinions?

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

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

Or by email to the Editorial address: Threshold.Mystara@gmail.com

Submission Guidelines

Proposals

All proposal submissions can be sent by mail to the editors at the following address Threshold.Mystara@gmail.com, and must be received by the proposal deadline†. The Threshold editorial team will contact you within 7 days of the proposal deadline regarding the status of your proposal.

Submission proposals should be sent inline in the mail, using the following subject format: [ISSUE#][Proposal]<title of your article>

The mail content should include the following:

- Proposed article title
- The type of article being proposed (short story, adventure, geographical location, organization, etc...)
- A one paragraph description of what the article is about.
- An estimated word count of the article (articles should range anywhere from 1000 to 7000 words, depending on the type of article submitted).

Manuscripts

Manuscripts should only be submitted after you proposal has been accepted by the Threshold editorial staff, and must be received by the manuscript deadline†. When submitting a manuscript file, please use the following naming convention:

threshold_#_your_title.<extension>

(extension: see below for recommended file formats)

and the following subject format:

[ISSUE#][Manuscript]<title of your article>

The mail content should include the following:

- The article title.
- An attached document containing the article contents.
- The final word count of the article.

Other types of contributions: the editorial team will consider on a case by case basis other types of contributions. Please contact us to inquire if and how we can accommodate unusual contribution formats.

The following guidelines apply to different types of submissions:

Illustrations: please submit art and maps in lossless format (e.g., PNG).

Articles: manuscript submissions can be sent by mail as plain text, doc(x) or odt, or shared as Google Doc. The issue editor will create a shared document (for each article) to allow the author and editorial team to work on it. Articles can be as short as a single page, or as long as 6 pages, depending on the specific content. The editorial team will do its best to accommodate the contributions, but especially long works may be split over several issues.

Tables: Tables should be numbered (Table X: Name of Table), and any references in the article should refer to that table number (and not to "the table below," for example).

Author Bios: Please include a short blurb (one or two sentences) biography/blurb about yourself for our "contributing authors" section. It can be serious or silly, but don't get too carried away with it, please.

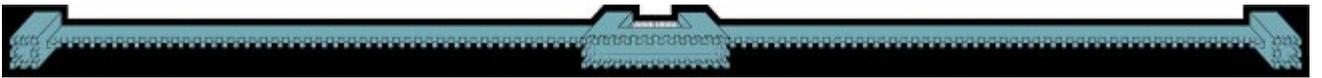
Other types of contributions: the editorial team will consider on a case by case basis other types of contributions. Please contact us to inquire if and how we can accommodate unusual contribution formats.

†Refer to "Call for Contributions" (page 6) for next issue deadline dates.

#Insert relevant issue number in place of '#'

Notes





THRESHOLD

The Mystara Magazine



A REFUGE OR A TRAP?

Strongholds can be safe refuges for the party or nightmarish trap to escape from. In this issue of Threshold, you will find some examples which can be either, depending on you role in the story, are you the owner or the intruder?

After exploring the Imperial Palaces of Thyatis and Alphatia, the city state of Saffir, the hideout of Port Blight and discovering the last remaining secrets of the Dymrak region, we will end our wandering under the Red Sun with the completion of the conversion to tabletop rpg of the classic videogame Warriors of the Eternal Sun. We will then finish exploring the many subsettings of our favourite campaign world, this time well beyond the surface of Mystara in space and time!

Storm the walls, or prepare yourself to defend them!

