

# THRESHOLD

The Mystara Magazine

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Future & Alternate Mystaras

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The thirty-fourth issue of Mystara's premier magazine focuses on possible future and alternate versions of Mystara!

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MYSTARA

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**THRESHOLD**  
THE MYSTARA MAGAZINE

OUR AIMS:

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

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## Future and Alternate Mystaras

There isn't only one Mystara, but many. There is the one outlined in the official products, but even there it could be said there are many, one for every author who wrote about the setting with their own point of view and their own preferences. There are certainly many differences in how the main Mystaran authors, such as Aaron Aalston, Bruce Heard and Paul Dupuis and many others, described and brought Mystara to life.

And obviously there is a different Mystara for every DM who uses it to set their own adventures. We can say that every adventure and campaign indeed produced a whole new Mystara, with big and small differences compared to the 'official one' or the one in which other DMs played.

In this issue of *THRESHOLD Magazine* we will show some examples of different Mystaras, different for changes in the past, in the future, in geography, or something else. We'll start with *Mystaran Sliders* by John Calvin, an article born from a historical thread on The Piazza that describes a very different Hollow World and also provides a true Generator of Alternate Mystaras. Then Ville Lähde reports from Finland for the *Dungeons & Dragons 50-year Celebration* with a Mystara display. Allan Palmer describes one of the best Alternate Mystaras you can find in the Vault of Pandius, the *World in Flames* written by historical Mystara author Bruce Heard. On to the *Future of Mystara* by me, where starting from Wrath of the Immortals and the official Almanacs I outline the many possible futures of the Known World

Then we have a very interesting block of four articles by Cab Davidson and Doc Necrotic who together tackle the big topic of sci-fi ele-

ments in fantasy, something that obviously fits perfectly in Mystara due to the history of Blackmoor, an empire that reached high levels of technomagic development before being obliterated in The Great Rain of Fire. So here you'll find *The Denizens of Returned Blackmoor* by Doc, *Radio and Robots and Guns for Classic D&D* by Cab, and *Magitech of Returned Blackmoor* by Doc.

Jim RGF for the first time in *THRESHOLD Magazine* starts his story, *The Mystery of Oisar*; which starting from the Karameikan School of Magecraft in Krakatos promises to lead us in 'A Journey through Mystara's Past and Future.' Not A Decepticon instead returns for the third episode of his series of adventures *Against the Wizards*, set in a Sind occupied by Alphatians, with Part 3: *Temperamental Tollbooth of Theradenal Thaumaturge*. Lance Duncan too returns to describe another piece of his alternate Mystara, the *Known World of Dracopolis*, after a previous article in issue #30, with *Faith in Ylaruam*.

Finally one more article by Cab about the *Races of the Galactic Federation*, which is both a possible expansion of the DA series of modules and a crossover with the classic TSR Star Frontier sci-fi rpg game. Last but not least Rescuing Edera, A Solo Adventure by Mark Dowson who also drew his own illustrations.

This issue like many others previously has also many beautiful illustrations by Jeffrey Kosh, who already has provided so many great illustrations that we had to hold back several for the next issue. Special thanks also to Senarch and many of the authors who helped us greatly by providing some nice AI

images or searching for suitable Commons images!

Soon we'll begin working on issue #35, dedicated to *Glantri and Magic*, a theme for which the Vaults really has lots of material on the most magical (and probably also the most full of intrigue) nation of the Known World. Certainly Micky, Aoz, Robin and others already created a lot of material about it on The Piazza Mystara forum<sup>1</sup>, so go on contributors!

To join the next issues as authors or illustrators please send your proposal to the *THRESHOLD* email address (check Submission guidelines and mail on the last page of this issue) or write in the Call for Contributors thread for issue #35 which will soon appear in The Piazza forum.

Even though we usually have no shortage of articles, we always need help for proofreading and editing the submissions. So anyone willing to help the *THRESHOLD* Editorial Team please come forward and let us know through the mail or in the Call for Contributors for issue #35 thread at The Piazza. Helping *THRESHOLD Magazine* certainly needs some time commitment, but is creative and rewarding work.

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

Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)  
Editor, *THRESHOLD* Issue #34

<sup>1</sup> Check the "[Glantri and Beyond](#)" thread on The Piazza Forums

## THIS ISSUE'S CONTRIBUTORS

**Cab Davidson** has been mixing sci-fi with fantasy in his games since he started keeping his *Star Frontiers* books in the same box as his *D&D* books in 1983. He lives and works in Cambridge, United Kingdom, dreaming up novel technologies for a living.

**Doctor Necrotic (Brian Rubinfeld)** is a freelance and hobbyist writer. He has been a fan of *Dungeons & Dragons* since early youth. The earthiness of Mystara and its pulpy lore have long since been a draw for him as well. Within *Threshold*, his major projects have been *Returned Blackmoor* as well as a look into *Ravenloft* through Mystaran eyes.

**Hervé Musseau**, a former editor of the *Mystaran Almanac*, is now helping shape *THRESHOLD Magazine*.

**Jeffrey Kosh** is the pen name of a writer and graphic artist specialized in book covers and movie posters. He collaborates with various publishing companies and authors. His covers range from dark horror to space opera, from thrillers to fantasy. Inspired by great fantasy artists, such as Clyde Caldwell, Larry Elmore, Keith Parkinson, and more, Kosh likes vibrant colors and heavy use of light and a dark contrast. His graphic tends to be moody and evocative. He also likes to work on 'era-specific' movie posters and book covers, trying to

recreate the style used in those years, from the 1920s to the 1990s. As a writer he has been published various times.

(<https://jeffreykosh.wixsite.com/jeffreykosh-graphics/home>)

**Jim RGF** has been playing and dungeon mastering *D&D* games on Mystara since 1982. He fell in love with the setting at a young age and particularly loves Alphatia, Shadow Elves and Nithian magic users. He is beginning to write stories set in this wonderful world and loves to teach others about it. He has created a YouTube channel called Raise Game Fully where he showcases parts of *D&D* that aren't as well known. His ongoing video series on Mystara is aimed at helping newer players realize how amazing the setting truly is. He lives in New England with his wife and sons.

**John Calvin** is fascinated by the depth of Mystaran history, and has always wanted to share that more fully with players. To that end he has been developing sub-settings like The Hollow Moon and Mystara 2300 BC.

**Lance Duncan (aka Wangalade)** started playing *D&D* with his father using the BECMI boxed sets. With his sisters and brother, he explored the caverns of Quasqeton and the Caves of Chaos and the Isle of the Hideous One, eventually discovering the lost valley and journeying to the faraway land of Hule to defeat the Master. Though he has explored many different games (*Alternity* being a favorite), he has always come back to Mystara and *D&D*. His current *D&D* campaign is set some 30-odd

years after the events of that original campaign; the known world of Dracopolis reflects how Mystara was presented by his father with the limited resources of the box sets and a few adventure modules.

**Mark Dowson** is these days mostly an ex-roleplay gamer, turned short solo roleplay game adventure writer. Through this medium he is able to combine his older passion for writing with enjoyment of being both a player in the types of roleplaying games he likes to play in and being a Games Master. He has been getting his work published in small magazines and fanzines since 2012. He lives in York in England.

**Not a Decepticon** has been in love with RPGs since seeing an advert for *D&D* in a comic book at the age of six. But an opportunity to DM and play regularly only revealed itself recently, with the exception of a brief attempt in college. Now he combines a love for classic campaign settings and the latest edition of the game.

**Sebastien Martineau (Senarch)** started playing *D&D* again in early 2022, and dusted off his prized GAZ1, promptly falling in love with Mystara again. He combines Daz, Ai and digital painting in his artworks, and has started drawing again. Some of his work can be found here: <https://www.deviantart.com/senarch/gallery> and he can be contacted here: [senarchpublishing@gmail.com](mailto:senarchpublishing@gmail.com)



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.

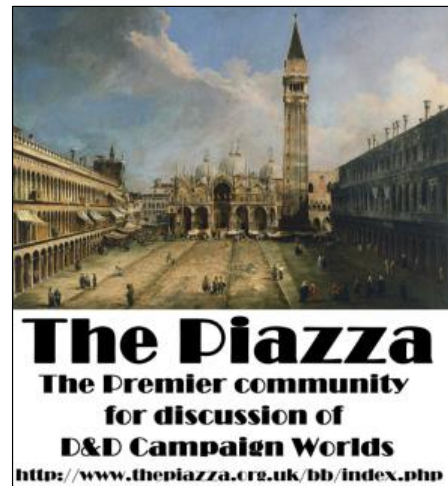
**Ville Lähde** is an author and a journalist specializing in environmental issues, philosophy and politics - and lately also food and gardening. He has been DMing in Mystara since 1988, and his first campaign is still going strong after a quarter of a century. In the 80's and 90's he published a host of modules and articles in Finnish RPG zines.

**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 *Traveler* 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*.

FROM THE  
MYSTARA  
FORUMS at

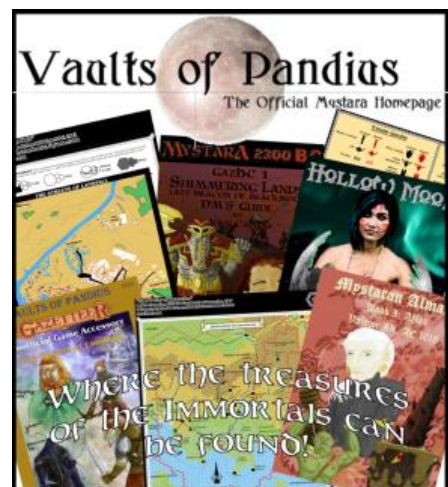


Some features in issues of *THRESHOLD* carry a "From the Mystara Forum at The Piazza" tagline. These Discussion Boards are an active and dynamic home of creativity for the Mystara community and many other game worlds. We hope you will enjoy the articles from The Piazza website: <https://www.thepiazza.org.uk/bb/index.php>



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 the Vaults of Pandius website: <http://pandius.com>





# 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 Frank Mezter, 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 Master'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 Mystara'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** - Mystaran 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, AC1011 & AC1012)
- PSK** - "Player's Survival Kit" campaign source
- 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



## NEXT ISSUE



*Cover not final illustration*

The second issue of 2024 will focus on the most magical nation of the Known World.

### Glantri and Magic

Anticipated contents include:

- The School of Magic in Glantri City
- Heroes and Villains of Glantri
- The Forgotten History of Glantri

...and much much more!

### Your Opinions?

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

Or by email to the Editorial address: [Threshold.Mystara@gmail.com](mailto:Threshold.Mystara@gmail.com)

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



# CALL FOR CONTRIBUTORS

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 #35—Glantri and Magic**

The second issue of 2024 will focus on the most magical nation of the Known World.

**Proposal Deadline:** August 15th, 2024  
**Manuscript Deadline:** October 25th, 2024  
**Issue Published:** December 2024

*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 #36—Adventures and Modules**

The first issue of 2025 will gather interesting experiences to throw at your party!

**Proposal Deadline:** February 15th, 2025  
**Manuscript Deadline:** May 1st, 2025  
**Issue Published:** June 2025

**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 elsewhere in 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 BECM/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.

# THRESHOLD

## The Mystara Magazine

PDF editions and print-ready files are available for free download from the Vaults of Pandius website:  
<http://www.pandius.com/>



*THRESHOLD: The Mystara Magazine* is a non-commercial, fan-produced magazine. There is no intent to infringe upon anyone's rights, in particular those of Wizards of the Coast, which holds all rights to the original material on which contributors base their work. As the magazine is a free fanzine of original articles inspired by the world of Mystara (trademark of Wizards of the Coast), the Editorial Team cannot sell printed copies of the magazine. We have published issues of the fanzine as PDF documents that are freely downloadable from the Vaults of Pandius website. A list of the issues published follows.

Over time, the *THRESHOLD Magazine* Editorial Team received enquiries about obtaining print versions of its issues. Following continued interest, in 2022 an initial trial using issue #28 created print-ready files of cover and interior page that could be submitted to a print-on-demand service (such as [www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com)) by individuals to produce a professionally printed version for their personal use. The trial garnered a positive response and work continued through 2022 to generate print-ready files for all previous issues (as well as incorporating the process in the production of new issues).

The print-ready files are an option provided in addition to the "normal" PDF document version of each issue. Individuals may freely download the two print-ready files (cover and interior) and submit them to a print service for professional printing at their own risk. Any associated financial transaction is between the individual and their chosen print service. Neither the *THRESHOLD Magazine* Editorial Team nor the Vaults of Pandius receive monies in respect of the provision of these print-ready files or from the printing of them.

The print-ready interior and cover files have been formatted to produce an A4-page sized paperback book; no other page size/format is available; the print service will offer users choices of colour quality, paper stock, cover finish, etc. The print-ready files have been successfully used at [www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com) to produce a printed book; the Editorial Team cannot guarantee the use of these files with other print services.

The print-ready version of *THRESHOLD Magazine* is provided for personal use only. *THRESHOLD Magazine* in either its PDF or print version cannot be sold in any online or physical store.

## FREE DOWNLOADS OF PREVIOUS ISSUES



Previous issues of **THRESHOLD** - the Mystara Magazine, both in digital and print-ready format are available for download from the Vaults of Pandius website ([www.pandius.com](http://www.pandius.com))

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 (Oct 2013) "Karamikos"                | #21 (Oct 2018) "Specularum"                       |
| #2 (Jan 2014) "Vaults of Pandius"        | #22 (Mar 2019) "Adventures & Campaigns"           |
| #3 (Mar 2014) "The sea of Dread"         | #23 (Aug 2019) "Adventures & Campaigns 2"         |
| #4 (Jun 2014) "Return to Dread"          | #24 (Nov 2019) "Adventures & Campaigns 3"         |
| #5 (Oct 2014) "Exploring Davania"        | #25 (May 2020) "Strongholds"                      |
| #6 (Dec 2014) "The Northlands"           | #26 (Dec 2020) "Heroes, Villains & Organizations" |
| #7 (Apr 2015) "Exploring Norwold"        | #27 (Jul 2021) "25th Anniversary of the Vaults"   |
| #8 (Jul 2015) "Warlords of Norwold"      | #28 (Jan 2022) "Trade Routes and Darokin"         |
| #9 (Sep 2015) "Hollow World"             | #29 (Jul 2022) "Vampires and the Undead"          |
| #10 (Jan 2016) "Elven Realms"            | #30 (Dec 2022) "The Alphatian Sea"                |
| #11 (Apr 2016) "Thyatis & Alphatia"      | #31 (Jun 2023) "Undersea"                         |
| #12 (Jul 2016) "Ages Past"               | #32 (Sep 2023) "Return to Undersea"               |
| #13 (Oct 2016) "A Crucible of Creatures" | #33 (Dec 2023) "Dungeons"                         |
| #14 (Jan 2017) "The Shadowdeep"          |   |
| #15 (Apr 2017) "Mystarospace"            |   |
| #16 (Jul 2017) "Dwarves, Gnomes & Hin"   |   |
| #17 (Oct 2017) "Western Brun"            |   |
| #18 (Jan 2018) "Savage Coast"            |   |
| #19 (May 2018) "Planes and Immortals"    |   |
| #20 (Jul 2018) "Skothar"                 |   |



# MYSTARAN SLIDERS

by John Calvin

## INTRODUCTION

Back in 2012 I started a thread<sup>1</sup> about Mystaran Sliders<sup>2</sup>, as a way to discuss alternate versions of our favorite game world. I think we had a lot of fun coming up with variations of Mystara, although we never really codified a way of making sliders into a campaign setting. This is my attempt to do so, however please don't assume this is the only way that players can experience alternate Mystaras. The multiverse is an infinite place, and there are more ways to slide across versions of Mystara than can be listed in this article.

---

<sup>1</sup> The thread "[Mystaran Sliders](#)" is located in the Piazza Forums

<sup>2</sup> I also want to thank everyone who contributed ideas to that thread including Culture20, RobJN, Seer of Yhog, LoZompatore, DJShade, Ashtagon, ripvanwormer, and Gawain\_VIII

FROM THE MYSTARA FORUMS at



## What are Mystaran Sliders?

Every DM's Mystara is always at least a little bit unique. Even if PCs started out in a world that was entirely based on Mystaran canon, the very fact of playing in the world alters it based on the actions of the players and DM alike. Many times, even Mystaran canon does not agree with itself, so two entirely "canon" worlds could end up being completely different from each other. This is, of course, fine. Every campaign setting is created to tell a specific story anyway, so differences are not only expected, but guaranteed. When exploring "your version of Mystara" in a single campaign, the fact that other campaigns differ, wouldn't even matter.

However... there is an allure to exploring alternate versions of Mystara, especially when setting up a new campaign world to play in. New versions of Mystara, by their very nature, bring along new and exciting ideas for DMs and players alike. Once the campaign begins and the players get to know the world, there is little room to change it. Player agency and DM plots can alter a setting, but usually only in a linear fashion, moving the campaign into the future. Such actions rarely alter the underlying fabric of the campaign setting... but what if they could?

Is there a way to allow play groups to explore interesting variations of the campaign setting... even on a transitory basis?



### Infinite Realities of Mystara

Many different mediums have explored alternate realities; comic books, DC *Crisis*, movies and TV shows, Marvel's *What If...?*, *The Spiderverse* movies, *No Way Home*, *Star Trek* reboots, etc. Of note, the TV show *Sliders* explored alternate versions of our own world and was the inspiration of the original thread on The Piazza.

Within the confines of Mystara the terms dimension, plane, universe, and multi-verse all have specific (and different) meanings. To distinguish the parallel Mystaran campaign worlds in this article we will use the term "alternate reality" when referencing one of those worlds, and the term "infinite realities" when referencing the totality of all possible alternate worlds.

## Sliding Methods

There are various methods and processes that can be used to facilitate travel between parallel realities.

### Magical Portals

Magical portals exist throughout the world, either created through ancient mystical practices or as natural occurrences of a magical world. Some of these portals may allow travel between parallel realities. In the Known World, locations such as the Ethengarian Hakomen sites, the good and bad magic sites in Alfheim, and others, can be used to send PCs to different worlds.

### Nithian Pyramids



Ancient pyramids found throughout the lands often contain magical powers that few alive in modern times could explain, or even fathom. These locations can be found in Ylaruam, in lands as far away as the Savage Baronies to the west, and in Thothian territories on the Isle of Dawn to the east. Manipulating the raw arcane powers of these ancient temples may open portals to other worlds and realities,

however consistently controlling the destinations is difficult at best.

### Comeback Inn

Although the Comeback Inn is well known in the world of Mystara as a mystical conveyance that can send travelers across time and space, it can on occasion send travelers even further. The Comeback Inn is sometimes described as having a will of its own, and those who use it as a conveyance rarely have any say in where they end up. The Comeback Inn simply sends travelers where they “need” to go, and rarely where they “want” to go.

### Time Travel Variant

Rather than treating each of the worlds of the infinite reality as a parallel world, some DMs might prefer to use them as alternate worlds that are created when the main Mystaran Timeline is disrupted. This may occur when PCs use the Comeback Inn (for example) to travel back in time and alter the course of history.



## YTSARMAN

Ytsarman is an enigmatic figure even among the oldest group of Immortals. Some claim he was once an Immortal who has since passed through the Great Barrier. Others say that Ytsarman was a power akin to the Immortals, but separate from them, or that he is an Immortal from some as yet unknown Sphere of Power.

Very little is known of Ytsarman, as he has not been seen in Immortal circles since before the time of most modern Immortals (those that can still remember their history). Attributed to Ytsarman is the rarest of artifacts, allowing travel between parallel realities, Ytsarman's Mystical Multiversal Variator.

### Ytsarman's Mystical Multiversal Variator

Many versions of this artifact exist across the multiverse. Most of them look like a puzzle box, but unique variations in any shape or form may be found. Each of them has some form of twisting bands, sliding beads, tied knots, or some other means of creating unique physical combinations represented on the device. By configuring the YMMV differently it can be used to open portals to new worlds, but activating the variator always requires these things:

**Puzzle Variance:** Each world reachable by the variator can be represented by some pictographic image or physical puzzle combination created by the variator. Known worlds can be input into the device with a successful Knowledge check. A new check can be made each day.

Finding the correct combination for a desired, but unknown world, requires a successful History check, Arcana check, or successful divination attempt. The variator user

may input a random combination, but the destination world in that case must be determined by the DM.

**Sacrifice:** Once the variator is configured correctly, the artifact requires a specific sacrifice in order to activate and open a portal. The sacrifice is usually something minor (costing 5 gp or less), but may hold significant importance to the user or may be something specific to the world they currently inhabit. Finding the correct sacrifice requires a successful History check, Arcana check, or successful divination attempt. Sacrificial objects are specific to the starting world - destination world combination, however once they are known they do not change. Sacrificial objects are usually consumed once the portal is created.

Portals created by the variator remain open for 1 + 1d4 rounds before closing, and any creatures passing through the portal during that period will find themselves deposited in a new world within a 15-foot radius of one another.

## OMEGA WORLD

A Mystaran Sliders based campaign can be based in Omega World, a version of Mystara where the Immortals and their servants live sealed inside a version of the Hollow World. Adventurers may originate from this bizarre world, or they may find themselves transported here from across the infinite realities of existence.

**Historical Fulcrum:** BC 3,000 The Great Rain of Fire

After the *FSS Beagle* crashed on this world Blackmoor rose to power at an astonishing rate. By reverse-engineering the technology of the crashed ship, they were able to colonize Mystara's solar system, several nearby star systems, and even neighboring planes. When the Great Rain of Fire happened however, the devastation was catastrophic. The Immortals turned against Blackmoor, deciding it was better to wipe that nation out than suffer such a disaster again, but Blackmoor was too strong. The war between Blackmoor and the Immortals doomed all sentient life in the system, mortal and Immortal.



*Mystara destroyed by the Great Rain of Fire*

## Outer World

The outer shell of Mystara is little more than a scorched husk. No life survives here for long. Any visiting this reality will find entire landscapes that have been twisted and devastated by magical energies. Planar rifts are known to open and scour the planet, especially from the planes of fire and radiance. Those who do travel to the surface soon contract a deadly wasting disease that kills them slowly even after leaving the cursed landscape.

## INNER WORLD

This reality's Hollow World is quite different from the standard variant. The polar openings have been completely sealed by the Omega Council in order to prevent the outer world's poisonous devastation from seeping in.

Some of the important locations in Omega World are listed below, however in an area as large as the Hollow World there are numerous locales left to the DM to create and explore.

### Central Sun

The "central sun" of Omega World is actually a large cylindrical device that looks like a bronze puzzle box with dozens of movable rings along its central axis. Each of the rings is covered in ever-changing glyphs. The entire device is rumored to be powered by a pinprick portal to the Sphere of Energy. Light shed from the sun is dimmer than that of the outer world and bathes the interior in shifting colors, from deep purple to vibrant oranges and pinks. The resulting effect keeps the inner world covered in a perpetual shifting dusk.

### **Floating Garden**

The largest free-floating island in Omega World is the home of Idris, and is overgrown with a lush and blooming wild garden. In the center of the island stands a tall tree, the last sapling of the One Tree which Idris fled her home reality with. Within the jungle garden Idris trains her troops before sending them to fortresses across Omega World, or on expeditions to neighboring realities. As the garden island floats across the inner sphere of Omega World, tributes from the various cultures living there flock to the banner of Idris.

### **Floating Ring Islands**

Several concentric rings of smaller floating islands orbit around the central sun. The islands are held together by strands of spiderweb and rotate around the sun at a steady rate. It is from these locations, and only these locations, that portals to other realities are formed (either outgoing or incoming). Loki's Spell of Defence ensures that portals can not be opened anywhere else.

Benekander resides here, studying the YMMV and advising adventurers on their journeys. The Immortal is also instrumental in planning any expeditions to realities that may benefit Omega World and its Immortal Council.

### **Last City**

The Last City, otherwise known as Omega City, or the World City, is a vast discontinuous structure that stretches across the inner surface of Omega World. Connected by web lines that stretch across Iciria and over the inner seas, the major population centers are in the middle of the World Spine Mountains,

the Antalian Peaks, Anathay Archipelago, and on the polar islands.

Most structures are constructed of silk and living trees transplanted from Arachne Prime's home reality on Thorn, and she has taken on the responsibility of nurturing and maintaining their growth. Outside the major population centers, the architecture becomes less monolithic and more eclectic, representing cultures that have been transported from innumerable realities.

### **Lighthouse**

Near the center of the World Spine Mountains, pointing directly up at the inner sun, is the Lighthouse. The massive tower stretches upwards for nearly two miles. At the top, dozens of ethereal spiderweb-like cables stretch out and connect to floating islands that hang motionless in the sky nearby.

The floating islands are attached to the lighthouse from all directions and extend from the top of the lighthouse up to the central sun. An intricate pattern of gigantic spiderwebs connect the floating islands with the lighthouse as well as to one another.

All of the lore collected about the infinite realities is stored somewhere within the main lighthouse or one of its connected floating islands (also known as vaults). Ka and his agents maintain vigilant security on all of their records, but information is shared with adventurers and other affiliated groups that are willing to traverse the infinite realities on errands for Omega World.

## Polar Seals

On the outer world, the polar seals are covered by oceans and ice caps. From the inner world the seals are covered in oceans, with two large mountainous islands at the center of each seal. Each of these mountains house numerous outposts and fortresses occupied by phase spider militaries. These units keep watch over the polar seals as well as across the entirety of Omega World's inner surface.

## Tethered Islands

Most floating islands, other than those orbiting around the central sun, are tethered in place by myriad webs anchoring them close to the ground. A handful are left to float through the atmosphere, serving as mobile transport platforms across the World City.

These islands are regulated by the Omega Council and reserved as territories to be doled out to cultures that have suffered catastrophic destruction at the hands of reality-altering threats. Such cultures are allowed to keep their local forms of government, but are expected to submit to the rule of the Council and dedicate a percentage of their resources to Omega World causes. Wars between cultures are rarely tolerated, although Idris wages mock battles to train their troops on the largest island left floating.

## Loki's Spell of Defense



Having fled fey pursuit from his home reality, Loki became an expert on evading pursuit and remaining hidden. When he arrived at Omega World, Loki made it his sole goal to keep the sanctuary, and its accumulated knowledge, hidden from any and all threats.

The Spell of Defense<sup>3</sup> limits where portals can open within Omega World to several hundred miles radius of the central sun, effectively limiting portals to the floating island rings that orbit the YMMV in the center of this hollow world.

Portals leading to any of the Omega Council's home realities can also not be activated on Omega World, nor can any portal leading to a reality that has been touched by the Outer Beings. If a reality has ever had

<sup>3</sup>Unless otherwise noted, the Spell of Defense only regulates portal magic within the inner shell of Mystara on this reality. The outer world (protected by a layer of World Shield Ore) is not affected.

contact with an Outer Being (or even one of their servants), it is not possible to open a portal directly to Omega World. Those realities can still be reached by reality sliders, however they must make additional slides in order to connect with them.

## OMEGA COUNCIL

The Immortals that make up the Omega Council<sup>4</sup> are all from different realities, each of them having fled to Omega World for their own reasons and purposes. Although they each have a unique reason for being here, they have decided to work together in furtherance of their shared objective—protecting themselves and their favored servants from the dangers of the infinite realities.

Unlike most Immortal-populated realities, the five Immortals that make up the council are the only Immortals known to exist here. As such, they roam the confines of the Hollow World alongside their mortal followers, and consider Omega World to be their home plane.

### **Aracne Prime (LG Energy)**

**Original World:** Entropy Wins

**Arrival:** BC 4,500

**History:** Aracne Prime attempted to unify the free races of her world in an alliance against evil, but was confronted by a group of plunderers who broke the alliance and scattered her followers. Aracne and those she could save fled to Omega World, but her reality fell to Entropic Immortals.

<sup>4</sup> Although the Immortals of the Omega Council are based on those found in *WotI* or *Codex Immortalis* (or other sources), they are by design different entities. Each has a unique history and motivation, and are from different Spheres of Power than their more known contemporaries.

**Omega World:** Aracne and her phase spider followers were the first to discover and colonize the interior of Omega World. Since then she has taken it upon herself to transform the interior of the planet into a sanctuary for those who have suffered the most at the hands of reality-spanning horrors.

### **Benekander (N Time)**

**Original World:** Galactic Rain of Fire

**Arrival:** BC 2,500

**History:** Benekander was trapped in the engine of his starship when it collided with Mystara's magical reality. When the nascent Immortal finally freed himself from his prison he found a universe devoid of all life (both mortal and Immortal). Luckily he was also able to discover an abandoned YMMV which led him directly to Omega World.

**Omega World:** Benekander spends most of his time studying the YMMV embedded in Omega World as its central sun. He has an extra artifact, a small hand-held version found on one of his infrequent forays, that he may lend out to worthy adventurers.

### **Idris (NE Matter)**

**Original World:** Dragons Steal Magic

**Arrival:** BC 4,000

**History:** Once Ordana's favored servant, Idris was the protector of the elven race in her reality. When her people were betrayed and driven to extinction, Idris fled with whatever remnants she could to rebuild elven society in a new reality.

**Omega World:** Idris and her elves are tasked with the protection of Omega World and the peoples that have flocked there. Whenever she can, Idris pulls dying elven societies from across the infinite realities

and finds homes for them in Omega World. Her armies train constantly, performing mock combats across the inner shell of the planet, using her floating garden island as a base of operations.

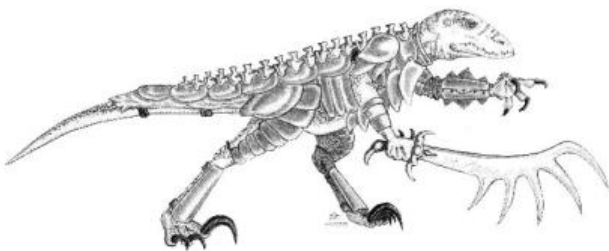
Idris has a strong hatred for dragons, and in truth distrusts Ka immensely, although grudgingly she admits the benefits of having him on the Council. She often partners with Ka and Benekander to find adventurous mortals that can do the Council's bidding in far realities.

**Ka (CE Entropy)**

**Original World:** Immortals End

**Arrival:** BC 4,000

**History:** Ka was one of the first carnifex to attain immortality in the Sphere of Entropy where he quickly rose in the ranks. The carnifex however, soon switched allegiances to the Outer Beings, and they and their patrons did their best to eliminate the old order of Immortals. Ka narrowly escaped his reality, vowing vengeance on all those that opposed him.



*A carnifex warrior, original drawing by author*

**Omega World:** From his inner sanctum in Omega World, Ka is a collector of information and secrets. Ostensibly he uses this information to strengthen Omega World and its forces; however Ka may have other plans as well. Overtly paranoid when it comes to the Outer Beings and their servitors, Ka dis-

trusts anyone of reptilian descent. He will often use adventurers as proxies to ferret out secrets and bring them back to him.

**Loki (CG Thought)**

**Original World:** Fey Ascendancy

**Arrival:** BC 1,600

**History:** Loki and his brother Thor were instrumental in keeping their people safe during a very tumultuous time in their history. They both achieved immortality just as the fey overthrew the Immortals and began to purge their reality of their enemies. Thor performed a last-ditch gambit to distract the fey, allowing Loki and a handful of Antalians to escape their pursuers.

**Omega World:** Loki is instrumental in keeping Omega World hidden from outside dangers and incursions from other realities. A "trickster god," Loki turns his penchant for deceit and deception outward, anticipating his enemies' moves and disrupting their plans before anyone is the wiser. Loki's Spell of Defence has enabled Omega World to remain hidden from dangerous realities for centuries, and he takes an active role to ensure that his magic, and vigilance, maintains its potency.

## Major Races

Nearly any race or culture from Mystara's infinite realities can be found here, although there are several prominent cultures that dominate Omega World.

### Antalians

By the time that the Antalians arrived, they were met by a world already populated by spider races and elves. Undaunted, and encouraged by their patron Loki, they claimed territory along the northern mountain peaks of Iciria, and have spread northward toward the pole ever since. Antalians have maintained a warrior culture, but one based primarily on guile rather than strength. They are proud warriors and can be trusted companions, always with a story on their lips. In other realities their tales are prized trophies, however they pride themselves on never speaking the truth about Omega World to outsiders, and in fact most have willingly accepted magical wards that ensure this.

### Elves

Elves have been on Omega World almost as long as Arachne Prime's phase spider followers, and the original followers of Idris have bolstered their numbers with refugees from other elven cultures across the infinite realities. There are forest elves, desert and ice elves, and even those that live in caverns beneath the mountains. All dedicated to Idris and her dream of a safe haven for elvenkind.

### Phanatons

Most phanaton are content to work alongside the spider-folk neighbors to build up and maintain the World City. Some clans have reverted back to a more primitive form of existence and live among the forests and jungles of Iciria.

### Spider-kin

There are dozens, if not hundreds of spider-kin cultures scattered across the World City. Phase spider followers of Arachne Prime are predominant, but other species abound as well, including aranea (those that change shape, as well as those that keep their form), chitines, choldrith, ettercap, kruthiks, and even some small populations of neogi.

The spider-kin in Omega World are what holds civilization together in this reality. They serve as leaders, scribes, architects, mages, and even warriors. Although cultures new to Omega World typically have an inborn fear of spider-kin, this quickly passes after only a few generations.



## Dangers of the Infinite Realities

Most Mystaras are variations of Mystara Prime, however some few are so different and alien that they present grave threats to the rest of the infinite realities. Some of those dangers are presented below.

### Urkarnns<sup>5</sup>

The carnifex of Immortal's End, otherwise known as urkarnns, have conquered their own reality, eradicating all traces of the Immortals and replacing them with the supremacy of the Outer Beings. A decade ago the urkarnns uncovered a strange artifact while excavating an ancient Immortal stronghold on their world. After studying the device, a YMMV, for a few years, the carnifex were finally able to decipher its uses. Now they have begun exploring the infinite realities, looking for worlds ripe for conquest.

Currently their expansion is slow-going. The urkarnns have begun infecting several worlds, moving troops and cultists to infiltrate key positions in the most powerful nations of each world. Once worship of the Outer Beings takes hold on these worlds the carnifex will unleash more of their forces and begin conquest in earnest. The real threat however, will come once the urkarnns are capable of creating more YMMV artifacts on their own, allowing them to spread quickly to more worlds in the infinite realities.

<sup>5</sup> The urkarnns are an homage to the kromaggs of the original *Sliders* series (whose name was a play on the early hominid species of cro-magnons) and to Geoff Gander's ur-carnifex (early carnifex variant) first seen in the Hollow Moon setting.

### Infinite Egg

The Egg of Coot captured its own YMMV and has since been reaching out across realities to other Eggs that have managed to survive across the ages. Every other version of itself that the Infinite Egg finds is rapidly consumed and replaced with a version of itself. Once the Infinite Egg has tendrils in an alternate reality it begins the process of consuming that world. The Infinite Egg is able to connect realities it has touched, merging them together and creating a network of linked realities where the Egg is the ultimate ruler.

Millennia have passed since the Infinite Egg began this process and it has completely consumed dozens of worlds and has its tendrils in dozens more. On most worlds that the Egg covets, its most fervent enemies are the remnants of Blackmoor, and sometimes even the contemporary Egg itself. Lately agents of the Rad Variance Authority (RVA see description below) have become interested in some of the same worlds as the Infinite Egg, and the two powers may start to clash.

### Ka Omega

Unknown to all, the largest danger to the infinite realities is Ka Omega himself. Ka has been seething with rage and a desire for vengeance since he was driven from his own reality by the Outer Beings. On some level he actually has a healthy amount of respect for the devastation that the Outer Beings caused in his reality, however Ka harbors the deepest resentment that those entities stole his opportunity to destroy his fellow Immortals. Long ago Ka decided that his only recompense would be to destroy the infinite realities altogether.



For millennia Ka has been amassing information and secrets regarding the infinite realities. He spends every moment of every day plotting and planning to destroy all of reality.

## Plot Seeds

The following are several plot seeds that can be used and expanded upon for use with Omega World or reality-spanning adventurers.

### Antalian Raiding Party

Omega Antalians constantly raid other realities from Omega World in order to bring treasures and secrets back to their Immortal patrons.

**Omega PCs:** PCs are part of the raiding party to a neighboring reality. They must successfully retrieve enough treasure to impress their superiors, and at the same time make sure they are not traced back to Omega World.

**Defending PCs:** The PCs are minding their own business when Antalian raiders appear out of nowhere. Unfortunately the Antalians make off with an item of great importance, and the PCs must track them down to retrieve it.

### RVA Infiltrators

The RVA has learned of an extensive list of interesting realities located in one of Ka's Vaults. Acquiring the list would give the dwarves countless worlds to plunder radiance secrets from.

**RVA PCs:** The PCs are agents of the RVA or have for some reason promised to work with them. They are tasked with the mission of breaking into one of Ka's vaults

and returning with information about radiance world locations.

**Omega PCs:** The PCs are tasked by Ka with preventing intruders from accessing one of his vaults. Additionally, Ka wants to know who would dare attempt such an act and what information they are looking for.

### Thor Escaped

Unknown to Loki, his brother did indeed survive their flight from the angered fey controlling their reality. The fey have been holding Thor ever since, in an attempt to find out how Loki and his followers escaped.



**Fey PCs:** PCs are on the side of the fey and must either defend their prisoner or follow those who rescue him back to their stronghold. When Loki sends his agents to free Thor, the PCs must be ready for either contingency.



**Omega PCs:** Rumors have filtered into Omega World that the fey of Loki's reality have an imprisoned Immortal. Loki hardly dares to hope it is his brother, but must find out. He sends the PCs to determine who the fey are holding, and bring them back to Omega World safely if possible.

Thor has been in captivity for millennia, possibly longer due to the way time works for the fey, and he has subsequently lost his mind. Regardless of which side the PCs are on, they will be in for quite a surprise once Thor realizes he might taste freedom. The shattered Immortal is more powerful than he lets on, and his crazed intellect makes him unpredictable.

## CREATING VARIANT MYSTARAS

By altering the history and demographic of Mystara at any given point in its history, one can create an entirely unique world for your players to experience. Pick a flashpoint of interest in Mystara and alter it so that the world unfolds in a different way, or use one or more of the tables (A to D) below to help you find a focal point for divergence in terms of history, cataclysms, nations, or races.

### Change History

Create a change in a time period which is important to the development of a nation or culture in Mystara's past.

<b>D100</b>	<b>Time Period</b>	
01-03	BC 10,000	Era of the carnifex and Lhomarrians
04-10	BC 6,000	Dawn of Elves
11-15	BC 4,000	Era of Blackmoor
16-20	BC 2,300	Aftermath of the Great Rain of Fire
21-25	BC 1,800	Kagyar alters the dwarven race
26-30	BC 1,700	Era of Taymoran and Glantrian cataclysms
31-40	BC 1,500	Era of Nithia
41-50	BC 1,000	Era of Alphatia
51-60	BC 700	Fall of Nithia and rise of Alfheim
61-70	AC 0	Rise of Thyatis
71-80	AC 400	Flaems find Mystara and rise of Braerje
81-90	AC 1,000	Modern era
91-00	AC 1,004	Wrath of the Immortals



## Change a Cataclysm

Alter a cataclysm that happened sometime in Mystara's past. You could remove the cataclysm entirely, have it happen during a different time frame, or alter any aspect of the event.

Table B: Mystaran Cataclysm		
D100	Cataclysm	Description
01–05	BC 3,000	The Great Rain of Fire
06–10	BC 2,400	Vulcanian volcanic eruption
11–15	BC 1,290	Oenkmarian volcanic eruption
16–27	BC 1,750	Taymora falls into the sea
28–40	BC 1,700	Blackmoor device in Glantri explodes
41–50	BC 1,000	Beastman invasion
51–60	BC 600	Alphatian lycanthropy
61–70	BC 500	Spell of Oblivion, Nithia erased from history
71–80	BC 500	Red Curse
81–87	AC 600	Destruction of the Sylvan Realm
88–94	AC 800	Glantrian plague
95–00	AC 1,006	Sinking of Alphatia



*Sinking of Taymora*



## Change a Nation

Modify something related to a single nation or region of the world. The changes could happen within the region of the specified nation, or to the peoples and cultures that live there.

<b>Table C: Mystaran Nations</b>		
<b>D100</b>	<b>Nation/Region</b>	<b>Description</b>
01–10	Thyatis	The Thyatians established a large empire on the southeast coast of Brun in AC 0.
11–20	Alphatia	Alphatians fled their home on an alternate plane circa BC 2,000 and wandered the planes until finding Mystara where they helped founding nations such as Glantri, Ierendi, and Alphatia proper.
21–25	Karameikos	Once a part of the Thyatian Empire, Karameikos was granted independence from the empire in AC 970.
26–30	Ylaruam	A desert nation on eastern Brun, Ylaruam was once ruled over by the Nithians, but the Spell of Oblivion has erased all memory of that nation from history.
31–40	Glantri	A cabal of arcane princes rule over the magocracy of Glantri. The center of their nation houses the ancient artifact known as the Nucleus of the Spheres.
41–45	Ierendi	Formed from the sunken lands of Taymora, Ierendi is now a nation of pirates and thrill-seekers.
46–50	Alfheim	Elves from the Sylvan Realm migrated to these lands in BC 700, and using their magic were able to turn the surrounding plains into a vast and dense forest home.
51–57	Rockhome	Dwarves established the nation of Rockhome circa BC 1,800 after migrating from northern lands centuries before. Their civilization covers both the surface of that region, as well as a vast system of caverns under the mountains.
58–60	Northern Reaches	Antalians have roamed these lands since the ice receded in BC 2,500. They are a culture of warriors and maritime raiders.
61–65	Five Shires	Hin from the Shires first settled Brun circa BC 1,300, and have established a succession of kingdoms along the coast over the millennia since.
66–70	Minrothad	Formed from the sunken lands of Taymora, Minrothad was colonized by settlers from Nithia and has since grown into a multi-cultural mercantile sea power.



<b>Table C: Mystaran Nations (continued)</b>		
<b>D100</b>	<b>Nation/Region</b>	<b>Description</b>
71–75	Broken Lands	Humanoids have populated the Broken Lands since they were formed by the cataclysm of BC 1,700. They have remained a constant threat to the civilized nations of the Known World ever since. <small>Sinking of Taymora</small>
76–81	Darokin	Darokin is a nation of merchants located at the western edge of the Known World.
82–85	Ethengar	Ethengarians have roamed these northern lands for millennia. Nomadic warriors who raid from horseback, the Ethengarians have a blood feud with the mages of Glantri.
86–90	Shadowdeep	Elves fleeing the Glantrian disaster in BC 1,700 were able to colonize these deep lands and are now known as shadow elves. Other creatures may also inhabit the deep realms, and tales tell that another world with a red sun can be reached through the passages.
91–96	Atruaghin	Ancestors of the Atruaghin survived the Great Rain of Fire by seeking shelter under the Great Plateau. Now their culture lives atop a Great Plateau that was rebuilt by the Immortals.
97–99	Savage Baronies	The Savage Baronies have been settled by waves of immigrants from the Known World over the ages. Several different nations now hold sway here.
00	Hollow World	The Hollow World was created circa BC 5,000 and is the cultural museum of the Immortals and houses cultures from across the eons of Mystaran existence.



## Change Races

Alter aspects of one of the races of Mystara.

<b>Table D: Mystaran Races</b>		
<b>D100</b>	<b>Race</b>	<b>Description</b>
01–20	Humans	Roll again on the Nations table to determine human ethnicity/nationality.
21–30	Dwarves	Dwarves migrated to Brun from the north circa BC 2,500, and have since radiated from Rockhome to the Savage Baronies, the Sea of Dread, and Alphatia.
31–40	Elves	Elves have had multiple migration routes to Brun throughout the eons. From Vulcania, the Sylvan Realm, and to and back from the Shadowdeep.
41–50	Hin	Hin migrated to Brun circa BC 1,300 from the shores of Davania.
51–55	Rakasta	Groups of rakasta have dwelt from the Savage Baronies to the deep interior of Davania.
56–60	Lupins	Lupins have existed since ancient times, in the regions of Ylaruam, Karameikos, and along the southwestern shores of Brun.
61–65	Aranea	Populations of aranea have existed on the Isle of Dawn, throughout the Sea of Dread, and in the Savage Baronies.
66–75	Lizardfolk	Ancient groups of lizardkin once lived in the region of Ylaruam and all along the southwestern coasts of Brun.
76–90	Humanoids	Humanoids have played a huge role on the continent of Brun from the time of the beastmen of Blackmoor to present day. They can include orcs, goblinoids, gnolls, ogres, trolls, and others.
91–95	Fey	Fey have existed on Mystara since time immemorial, and have interacted with and altered the world in numerous ways.
96–99	Dragons	Dragons are one of the first races to emerge on Mystara and have altered the course of countless cultures and nations.
00	Carnifex	On Mystara Prime, the carnifex were locked away for their crimes by the Immortals. Since, they have dwelled in a prison plane with their abhorrent patrons, the Outer Beings.





*Lupin, original drawing by I.Calvin*

## OTHER WORLDS

Following are just some examples of alternate worlds from the infinite realities. Most are simply parallel worlds that have evolved in different directions from Mystara Prime, however some worlds may also be home to reality-spanning adventurers and organizations.

### Dragons Steal Magic

#### Historical Fulcrum:

BC 6,000 Dawn of Elves and Dragons

At the height of elven civilization in Evergrun, Idris, the high priestess of Ordana, discovered a plot by evil dragonkind to steal elven magic. Idris was able to defend Ordana's sacred One Tree but at the cost of her own life. Ordana rewarded her servant by placing her soul in a new elven body, with Idris' memories intact. Idris spent her new life tracking down and destroying Ordana's enemies, eventually attaining immortality.

Unfortunately once Idris attained immortality the dragons made their move, destroying the One Tree and elven society. Even her patron Immortal Ordana was trapped and destroyed. Idris grabbed the last remnant of the One Tree and fled, unknowingly leaving her reality in the process.

### Dwarves of Glantri

#### Historical Fulcrum:

BC 1,800 Kagyar alter the dwarven race, and AC 800 the Glantrian plague

The dwarves of this reality were never altered by Kagyar in BC 1,800. When the Glantrian plague struck in AC 800, dwarves

died alongside everyone else and were never blamed for the plague. Records from the Shimmering Lands pointed to the radiance being responsible, and dwarves used that information to become the prominent leaders in Glantri.

Led by Rad, the Rad Variance Authority (RVA) rules over Glantri with an iron fist, using the power of the Nucleus of the Spheres (NoS) to become the preeminent nation in Brun, rivaling the power of the Alphatian Empire in the east.

#### RVA

The RVA is able to travel across the infinite realities and is dedicated to the discovery and acquisition of radiance technology. They have outposts on several different realities and continue to expand their influence.

### Entropy Wins

#### Historical Fulcrum:

BC 4,500 The Sacking of Thorn

Shortly after attaining immortality Arachne Prime began to fortify the Plane of Thorn, in the hope that she could protect it from the overwhelming forces of evil that had begun to encroach upon it. Ultimately Arachne and her forces were overwhelmed, and she and her followers barely managed to escape by fleeing to a parallel reality.

While this reality has many parallels to Mystara Prime, most of the mortal nations here worship Entropic Immortals, and devote their energy to entirely evil pursuits. The few non-evil Immortals (and their worshipers) that still exist here, do so as rebels and pariahs, fighting a never-ending battle against overwhelming odds.



## Fey Ascendancy

### Historical Fulcrum:

BC 1,700 Era of Taymoran and Glantrian cataclysms and Fey

Thor and Loki lead the Antaliens against the forces of Grondheim even as that nation's patrons complete a master stroke. The Troll Queen is able to use ancient magics combined with Blackmoorian technology to merge the Fey Realm with the Prime Material Plane. Shortly thereafter she and her fey court are able to overthrow and replace the Immortals.

In this reality the fey rule supreme, and Mystara has been merged into the fey realm.

## Forbidden Nation

### Historical Fulcrum:

BC 1,000 Era of Alphatia and  
BC 500 Spell of Oblivion, Nithia erased from history

When the Immortals of this reality cast the Spell of Oblivion something terrible went wrong. Memory of the Nithians was erased from the minds of most mortals, but also from the minds of the Immortals. The only living beings who remembered Nithia were the remnants of the Nithians themselves. Since then, they have rebuilt an empire beneath the expanding sands of Nithia, hidden from mortals and Immortals alike.

While maintaining a small stronghold underneath the sands of Ylaruam, the Nithian Wizards have deemed it safer to disperse across the infinite realities to keep themselves hidden from the Immortals of their world. They call themselves the Cabal of

None, and seek ways to protect themselves from Immortal magic.



*Nithian mummy*

### Cabal of None

Formerly wizards from Nithia, the Cabal of None have established small hidden outposts across the infinite realities. While they one day hope to reestablish the Nithian Empire, they also know that the Immortals in most realities would oppose such an effort. For now they travel in secret, looking for artifacts and magic that will help them to rebuild their nation and prevent the Immortals from erasing them in the future.

## Galactic Rain of Fire

### Historical Fulcrum:

BC 4,000 Era of Blackmoor

The *FSS Beagle* and its technological power source makes contact with Mystara's magical plane of existence, sending a technomantic energy wave through all of space-time. Magic shorts out of the universe, and most life forms starve and devolve. In just a few centuries the Immortals themselves have faded from existence and the Material Plane is a lifeless wasteland.

## Hutaakan Oasis

### Historical Fulcrum:

BC 700 Fall of Nithia and Rise of Alfheim and lupins

When Nithia falls, the hutaakans and their servitor races swoop in to fill the void. When the elves arrive in BC 700 and begin siphoning the water away from Nithia, the hutaakans realize exactly what they are doing and confront them. Rather than escalating the confrontation to violence the two cultures pool their resources and redirect the elven magic to territories outside of Greater Nithia (which contains the regions of Alfheim, Ylaruam, and portions of Darokin and Thyatis). Over the next few centuries southeastern Brun is transformed into a vast desert, except for the core of Nithia. Hutaakans and elves rule over their territories with an iron fist.

## IMMORTALS END

### Historical Fulcrum:

BC 10,000 Era of the carnifex and Lhomarrians

Soon after the carnifex forsake worship of the Immortals for the Outer Beings, the power dynamic in this reality shifts. The Outer Beings attain mastery here, driving Immortals from every Sphere, including that of Entropy, to oppose them. Unfortunately the concerted resistance comes too late, and the Immortals and their followers are purged from existence. A few Immortals, including Ka, manage to escape and vow vengeance on the Outer Beings and their servitors.

Now this reality is one dominated by the Outer Beings, inimical to native life forms and teeming with unspeakable creatures and horrors that defy sanity. Their primary servitors are the carnifex, a wholly twisted and perverted race of saurians.



*Illustration by Sofyan Syarief for H. P. Lovecraft's story The Call of Cthulhu, one of main inspirations for the Outer Beings created for Mystara by Geoff Gander*

## Urkarnns

The carnifex in this reality, known as the urkarnns, have very recently acquired a YMMV, and are beginning to probe neighboring realities with their forces. With only one working YMMV their expansion is slow-moving, but the depravity and corruption that they bring with them are contagious and spread like wildfire.

## Infinite Egg

### Historical Fulcrum:

BC 3,000 The Great Rain of Fire and the Era of Blackmoor

The Egg of Coot defeats Blackmoor and becomes supreme master of Mystara. One of the artifacts it finds underneath Castle Blackmoor is a YMMV. The Egg integrates this artifact into its technomagic circuitry. Although it can not travel into other realities physically, it is able to copy its mind into contemporary Eggs that exist in other realities.

### Intellect of the Egg

Not many realities exist where the Egg of Coot survived the destruction of Blackmoor, and the longer the Infinite Egg lives, the fewer it is able to find. Still it searches, looking for remnants of itself that survived the ancient times of Mystara... looking for versions of itself that it can consume. Once the Infinite Egg finds a version of itself, it begins the process of copying its intellect into that open vessel. Thus does the Egg of Coot's world grow.

## Reality Merchants

### Historical Fulcrum:

AC 1,000 Modern Era and Darokin

A minor trade house, Tabaur, stumbles across an amazing find while dealing with Hulean merchants to the west. The house scions acquire a strange puzzle box-like artifact, and are able to decipher its powers. Using the YMMV they explore several realities and are able to bring untold riches back to their House. Their meteoric rise catapults them to the highest levels of the Darokinian plutocracy, and their empire rapidly expands to cover most of the Known World.

### Tabaur House Merchants

Lanirah Tabaur, matriarch of House Tabaur, has led her family business for the past 17 years, 15 of those with access to a YMMV. The access to other realities that the device provides her, has allowed Lanirah to build a mercantile empire. House Tabaur slide from world to world looking for unique artifacts, artwork, and even secrets that they can sell back home or abroad.

## Rockhome Elves

### Historical Fulcrum:

BC 1,700 Elves and Rockhome

Elves fleeing the explosion of the Blackmoor device in BC 1,700 found themselves in subterranean caverns beneath Rockhome. The elves clash with dwarves in the process of rebuilding their civilization, and manage to wipe them out utterly. Few true dwarves remain, and those that do are fractured and scattered. Major dwarven settle-

ments over time are replaced by elven settlements from Rockhome.

The presence of magic-wielding elves in eastern Brun forestalls the destruction of Nithia by 1,000 years. Alfheim is never established, and elven influence on Nithia prevents them from welcoming the Alphanian settlers in the east. Once Nithia's corruption finally catches up with that nation, the destruction is catastrophic. Much of southeastern Brun lies smoldering even in the present day, as civilization attempts to re-establish itself in the region. The prominent civilization in the area remains the elves, who once again fled underground to avoid Nithia's downfall.

## SUNKEN GLANTRI

### Historical Fulcrum:

AC 1,004 Wrath of the Immortals  
and AC 1,006 the sinking of Alphatia

When Glantri unleashed their doomsday weapon upon Alphatia at the end of the Wrath of the Immortals war, the Nucleus of the Spheres failed catastrophically. Instead of destroying Alphatia, the destructive energies were unleashed upon Glantri, sinking it, and much of southeastern Brun, into the sea.

In this reality the nation of Glantri has been moved to the Hollow World by the Immortals, while Alphanian warlords fight over the remnants of what was once the Known World. Survivors of the cataclysm cling to



small island nations scattered throughout the Sea of Dread (which has expanded to encompass all lands from Glantri southward).

## Thara's Taymora

### Historical Fulcrum:

BC 1,750 Taymora falls into the sea and the Broken Lands

Taymora partially collapses, but does not sink into the sea. Instead a central sea forms in the Darokin-Atruaghin-Alfheim region. Amidst the destruction humanoids emerge from the depths and are used by the Taymorans to bolster their forces. Since then, the vampire queens and their new humanoid minions have expanded their dominion across the rest of southern Brun.

Queen Thara, an orcish vampire from Daro Province, has overthrown the local Taymoran governor and taken control of the region. Most of the eastern empire has flocked to her banner, and Taymora girds

itself for its largest civil war since before Brun sunk.

## Witch World

### Historical Fulcrum:

BC 1,700 Blackmoor device in Glantri explodes

The Troll Queen of Grondheim completes the ritual to grant her and her descendants magical supremacy, and in this reality the ritual is a success. The Blackmoorian device under northern Grondheim (southern Glantri/Broken Lands) does not explode, and the fey rules are able to bring the planar boundaries of Mystara and the Fey Realm closer together.

Giant kingdoms, all owing fealty to the Troll Queen, spring up along southern and eastern Brun, in Borea, and across the Isle of Dawn. The smaller races are relegated to servant status at best, and must struggle to eke out a living under their giantish and fey masters.

# DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

## 50-year Celebration in Finland

### Mystara on Display



By Ville Lähde

The Finnish Museum of Games, located in the Vapriikki Museum Centre in Tampere, has been operating since 2017. It is the first of its kind in Finland and even something special on the world stage. The people at the museum have a soft spot for classic RPGs in their hearts, especially old-school dungeon crawls. In the 2018–2019 exhibition on the history of role-playing in Finland, “You’re Caught in a Trap!”, original copies of Chainmail and the 1974 original edition had a pride of place in a glass display, marked with the familiar map symbol of an altar on the floor.

Thus, it was clear from the outset that the museum would have to celebrate the 50-year anniversary of Dungeons & Dragons. Researcher Niklas Nylund began gathering material early on and approached me: Mystara deserved pride of place, of course. Niklas was familiar with Mystara, having played in an ongoing 800’s Mystara campaign which I am running, but in this case, he asked my older gaming group to contribute. Our continuous Mystaran campaign has been running since 1988, and we were asked to contribute materials and descriptions.

Into the glass display went my original copy of GAZ1, my Red Box DM Rulebook, my battered Expert Set Rulebook, my trusty B10, and my original Red Box dice set, with original wax crayon included. Also present were the two issues of the Finnish zine “*Seikkailija*” (“the Adventurer”) which contain our first adventures, my hand-drawn maps of Karameikos, Black Eagle and Sulescu, some coffee-stained “parchments” from a wizard’s tome I wrote for one of our players, a PC portrait drawn by a high school friend, the original miniatures, and even a partially destroyed handout from an Iron Ring agent. Each item was accompanied with a textual description, and an interview could be accessed by a QR code.

The exhibit was physically small but bigger on the inside. In addition to the Mystaran display, there were five other displays by other gaming groups, one older than us, four younger, covering a wide range of D&D editions, player generations, and gaming worlds. The backbone of the exhibit was formed by a cavalcade of D&D editions, modules, campaign settings, novels, and even computer games. On the opening night, the representatives of the six gaming groups discussed the decades of D&D, different gaming cultures, styles of play and other crucial questions. It was fun and strange to have a large and attentive audience to this. We were among our people.



<https://www.vapriikki.fi/en/exhibition/50-years-of-dungeons-dragons/>

# Bruce Heard's

# WORLD

# IN FLAMES



FROM THE  
Vaults of  
Pandius

## An overview by Allan J Palmer

Created in the late 1990s, "*World in Flames*" is a vast campaign for the Mystara setting created by Bruce Heard (the "godfather" of Mystara). It unfolds after the dramatic events of "*Wrath of the Immortals*" and introduces a new great war that sweeps the Known World, spanning the years AC 1014 to AC 1019. The following paragraphs attempt to summarise the events of this far-reaching scenario as described by Bruce in his 1999 Mystara Message Board postings. Please visit the Vaults of Pandius<sup>1</sup> to immerse yourself in the larger detail of this extensive campaign.

In AC 1014 the "Thunderous War Horde" of the goblinoid tribes of northern Brun, united by Ugrah, invades Glantri, a nation still recovering from the aftermath of "*Wrath of the Immortals*". Ugrah, a shaman of Wogar, has rallied the goblinoid tribes of central Brun, drawing on the power that the Othwa goblin tribe has gained from a crashed neh-thalggu inter-planar ship. The Horde's numbers overwhelm Glantri's

<sup>1</sup> See "[World in Flames](#)" at the Vaults of Pandius



forces. The invasion is abetted by Prince Kol XIV<sup>2</sup> of New Kolland, who allies with Ugrah, betraying his recent alliance with the Glantrian Princes, leading to Ugrah's capture of Glantri City. Kol assumes the throne of Glantri in a deserted city, with the

<sup>2</sup> See AC1011: "*Poor Wizard's Almanac II*"



former Princes fleeing. Conflicts escalate, as while Kol ambushes a Darokinian relief force, an Ethengarian intervention introduces a new dimension to the war, with potential consequences for the entire region. Ugrah sends his Horde towards the mountains to block the approaching Ethengarian army.

To the north, refugee Glantrian Princes and their followers arrive in Wendar seeking aid to retaliate against the forces that have claimed their nation, even though Ugrah's Horde is making inroads into the Wendarian lands. As well as the Glantrians, Heldannic warbirds also arrive in Wendar, offering unexpected aid to besieged cities. Political alliances and betrayals add further complexity to the conflict, including the refusal of Karameikos to assist Darokin, as the kingdom fears reprisals from Thyatis.



Over the course of AC 1016, the war continues to expand across the Known World with new fronts opening in Thyatis and Karameikos. Ethengar, with its dwarven allies, launches raids into Thyatis, drawing them into a separate conflict. This development forces Emperor Eusebius to prepare defences and to seek support from other parties. In Karameikos the kingdom erupts in riots after a peace attempt by King Stefan fails. As a result of his failure, King Stefan abdicates, leaving the nation on the brink of

The following year, AC 1015, the war spreads across Mystara, with Ethengar emerging as a major threat alongside Ugrah's Horde. The goblinoid tribes succeed in conquering eastern Glantri, and with dwarven support on another front, capture the entire nation of Ylaruam. As the year moves on, Darokin finds itself being threatened by a dwarven army while enduring pressure from Ugrah and the Ethengarian forces. Elsewhere, Thyatis suspects a pact between Ugrah and Ethengar, and considers retaliation against this alliance. Combined forces from Thyatis and the Five Shires endeavour to assist Darokin against Ugrah. Another faction enters the situation as Shadow Elves capture the Darokinian city of Selenica. Then while emissaries from Darokin attempt to reclaim Selenica from the elven captors, Ugrah ransacks Corunglain, another city in the nation.



civil war. In the resultant civil unrest, followers of Halav rally the Karameikans for a crusade against the humanoid Horde that threatens.

Wendar and Darokin struggle to defend their lands against multiple enemies, facing losses and declining morale. However, Ugrah's southern Horde faces stiff resistance as it continues its attacks on Darokin. Wendar is now forced to fight a two-front war as Denagoth attacks from the north, but they are assisted by the intervention of Heldannic Knights who defend passes and deliver supplies to the Wendarians. In the Northern Reaches, Vestland falls to a joint invasion by dwarves and Soderfjord Jarls.

The Shadow Elves take a significant role during AC 1017, beginning with their manipulation of the goblins and the dwarves into fighting near Selenica. Ugrah is then captured by the Shadow Elves and executed, plunging the goblinoid forces into chaos as internal conflicts following Ugrah's death cripple the goblinoid threat. Without Ugrah's Horde to aid them, the dwarves are unable to retain Selenica, which is taken by the Shadow Elves. Significant numbers of the goblinoid armies retreat from Wendar and Darokin. The remaining goblin forces are trapped in Glantri, whose own military traps and eliminate the remnants of Ugrah's army.

Ethengar remains a major protagonist, bolstered by Alphatian refugees and capturing Biazzan in northern Thyatis. Heldannic Jennite cavalry join the Thyatians, turning the tide against Moglai Khan's Ethengarian Golden Horde. Regional power struggles and alliances continue to reshape the landscape, with Karameikos joining the fight against Denagoth, while Wendar and Darokin recover from siege. In the Northern



Reaches, the Ostland fleet is destroyed by the alliance of forces from Thyatis and Vestland. Norrvik is liberated from Soderfjord invaders by combined forces from Heldan and Vestland.

Although major wins have been achieved by different factions in different areas, it is clear that during AC 1018 there is no clear victor in any conflict, and most regions of the Known World remain in an unstable state. In Karameikos the internal strife that has spread across the nation over the past two years, weakening its position on the global stage, has thrust the realm into a civil war dividing the nation along ethnic lines as Queen Adriana and King Valen (each vying to be Stefan's successor) vie to hold the throne. Glantri's struggles continue as Alphatian refugees invade, leaving the nation divided between these arrivals and the Loyalists aided by their Black Jack warriors<sup>3</sup>. Thyatis, with the aid of Jennites and the Retebius Air Corps, fights back the Ethengarian invaders from Ylaruam. However, Thyatis now faces criticism from neighbouring nations as its influence in Ylaruam expands with its now strong presence there after repelling the Great Khan's Horde. On another front, the Wendar-Heldannic crusade against the forces of Denagoth remain stalled, forcing the Wendarians to

<sup>3</sup> See: Bruce's "[Black Jacks](#)" stats at the Vaults of Pandius

focus on establishing fortifications to prevent further incursion.

The first quarter of AC 1019 sees the scale of hostilities cutting back as exhausted leaders and troops attempt to minimise tensions. A breakthrough occurs in the city of Selenica, as members of the Western Defence League (Darokin, Ylaruam, Rockhome, the Five Shires, and Karameikos) together with Emperor Eusebius of Thyatis spend weeks negotiating what will become known as the Treaties of Selenica. Among the terms of the treaties are the cessation of civil hostilities in Karameikos, with Valen and Adriana renouncing their claims and Stefan reinstated as King after agreement to harsh terms. Thyatis agrees not to interfere with the internal affairs of the co-signatory treaty nations.



As the year progresses Glantri continues to face internal challenges even though it has managed to drive the Alphetian refugees out of its capital. Dwarven envoys offer the Alphetians a settlement in a ruined Rockhome city. The Ethengarians have retreated to the steppes after suffering losses in Ylaruam. Both Ierendi and Minrothad join the Western Defence League. The Known World enters AC 1020 with new alliances formed, but its future remains uncertain due to lingering tensions and unstable situations as the region continues to recover from major wars.

I hope that the preceding summary has provided an informative overview of the campaign idea created by Bruce Heard, and that it will entice you to look at the greater detail about it stored in the Vaults of Pandius. As usual, Bruce has provided a wide range of situations that could be utilised in an ongoing Mystara game at many levels – not only Player Character groups, but also mass combat and the governance of PC dominions.

## OTHER ALTERNATIVES

If you search the Vaults of Pandius, in addition to Bruce's work, you will find a number of alternate and/or future Mystara suggestions, including:

David Knott provides an "*Alternative Wrath of the Immortals*"<sup>4</sup> which departs from the course of the canon version. It starts with a debate between Rad and Ixion that leads to violence among the Immortals. Rather than involve mortals in a bloody war to eliminate

<sup>4</sup> See: "[Alternate WotI](#)" by David Knott at the Vaults of Pandius

the followers of Rad, Ixion decides to destroy Rad himself. In another article, David also provides some thoughts further on in the setting's timeline: "*Mystara 2000 AC*"<sup>5</sup>

Going even further into the future, some thoughts on "*Mystara 3000 AC*"<sup>6</sup> are offered by Sverre Midthjell. This era is also tackled by John ("Chimpman") Calvin in a piece about "*Shadow Elves 3000 AC*"<sup>7</sup> and the re-birth of Blackmoor. He continues this theme in another article on "*The Known World (3000 AC)*"<sup>8</sup>

A "*Future Timeline*"<sup>9</sup> covering the period from AC 1050 to AC 1200 by Stone Marshall includes Thyatis being defeated and overthrown by the elves!

<sup>5</sup> See: "[Mystara 2000 AC](#)" by David Knott at the Vaults

<sup>6</sup> See: "[Mystara 3000 AC](#)" by Sverre Midthjel at the Vaults of Pandius

<sup>7</sup> See: "[Shadow Elves 3000 AC](#)" by John Calvin at the Vaults of Pandius

<sup>8</sup> See: "[The Known World \(3000 AC\)](#)" by John Calvin at the Vaults of Pandius

<sup>9</sup> See: "[Future Timeline](#)" by Stone Marshall at the Vaults of Pandius

"*Dark Mystara*"<sup>10</sup> is, as author Giampaolo Agosta (*aka* agthokles) describes it, "...a (highly!) variant timeline for the post-WotI era." For this scenario covering AC 1005 to AC 1016, Giampaolo merges David Knott's "*Night of Hell: Fall of the Five Shires*"<sup>11</sup> idea with a breakdown of Darokin after the Shadow Elf invasion of Alfheim.

Further "*Ideas about the future timeline of Mystara*"<sup>12</sup> can be found in Joseph Setorius' campaign from AC 1000 to AC 1052.

These are just a selection of variant future timeline campaigns for Mystara, I'm sure interested DMs will uncover more.

<sup>10</sup> See: "[End of the Known World](#)" and "[Dark Mystara Part II: The Empires](#)", both by Giampaolo Agosta (agathokles) at the Vaults of Pandius

<sup>11</sup> See "[Night of Hell: Fall of the Five Shires](#)" by David Knott at the Vaults of Pandius

<sup>12</sup> See: "[Ideas about the future timeline of Mystara](#)" by Joseph Setorius at the Vaults of Pandius





# The FUTURE of MYSTARA

by Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)

An examination of the possible futures of Mystara as outlined in the Gazetteers, *“Wrath of the Immortals”* and the Almanacs

The purpose of these articles, which will likely be a series of two or three, is to imagine what the future of the Known World and Mystara in general could have been if the product line had continued beyond the Almanacs. As Mystara fans well know, the official Almanacs (*Poor Wizard’s Almanac I, II and III* and *Joshuan’s Almanac & Book of Facts*) stem from the events of the *Wrath of the Immortals* boxed set<sup>1</sup> and cover the years from AC 1,010 to 1,013. Some years later the fan community reprised the work to create the *Mystaran Almanacs*<sup>2</sup> which cover the years from AC 1,014 to

1,019, with AC 1,020 currently in production.

However the direction taken by the fan community could well be very different from the one intended by the authors of the official Almanacs. In this first installment, I’ll examine only the events of the official Almanacs, imagining what could have been the future developments. I’ll also highlight some ‘lost threads’ which were introduced in these Almanacs but never developed further later, either officially or by fans. In another article in a future issue of *THRESHOLD Magazine*, I’ll do the same work for the possible futures and the eventual lost threads as they appear in the fan Almanacs.

<sup>1</sup> The *“Wrath of the Immortals”* boxed set and official Almanacs can be bought as pdf on the Drivethrurpg website. See Resources at end for direct links.

<sup>2</sup> The *Mystaran Almanacs* created by the fan community can be downloaded for free from the [Almanacs section](#) of the Vaults of Pandius

## THE KNOWN WORLD<sup>3</sup>

Without any doubt, the most important event which affects the whole Known World in the Wrath of the Immortals boxed set and the Almanacs is the **Day of Dread**. On The Piazza forum there was a discussion about the possible medium and long-term consequences of this event<sup>4</sup> given that in the Joshuan Almanac it was specified that the event happens at different times in the world and therefore wizards and magical creatures from all over the world will eventually be able to pinpoint the origin in Glantri City. The Day of Dread could then literally make Glantri City the center of the world, with interesting but maybe not pleasant consequences for the local inhabitants and rulers. The arrival of Dolores of Hillsbury and her true nature is indeed already one such consequence and she is explicitly in Glantri to investigate the matter. The Day of Dread will certainly cause a lot more intrigue in Glantri City (as if the place had not plenty already) with agents of interested parties coming there from all over the world, not just the Known World. In the end the matter of the Nucleus will have to be resolved somehow, or else a full-scale world war could erupt, with even the intervention of far-off empires that will have the interest and the means to take or destroy the Nucleus.

Another very important event affecting the whole Known World and later potentially the whole world is the publication of **Clar-**

**ansa's Travels to the Center of the World** in Ierendi on Nuwmont 7th, AC 1,010. As specified in her description, Claransa traveled around the Hollow World from AC 1,004 to six months before the publication of the first Almanac, so we can assume mid AC 1,009. From this timeline, we can assume she does not know Alphatia was moved to the Hollow World, and therefore her book should contain only the Hollow World cultures before this event. Anyway, as we can see in the events of the Almanacs, even if many people will not believe such an account, many governments take it seriously and so Karameikos sends its expedition and Thyatis and Minrothad try to rebuild the Aegos' Pit. In the official Almanacs it's not really clear when the existence of the Hollow World is confirmed, as well as the presence of the floating continent of Alphatia. The Karameikan Expedition in fact in AC 1,012 is still trying to escape the Hollow World, and in AC 1,013 the support ship leaves Qeodhar, thinking its members all dead. But later in the first fan *Mystaran Almanac* set in AC 1,014 the Expedition returned and the New Alphatian Confederate Empire, created at the end of AC 1,012, officially confirmed the survival of Alphatia. We do not know if the authors of the official Almanacs would have done the same, but both things would have made sense. It would have been absurd not to make the Expedition return safely after we followed their adventure in three Almanacs. Also for the New Alphatian Confederate Empire it makes sense to declare to the whole world, and especially to Thyatis, that the might of original Alphatia survives and its empress lives.

What could be the consequences of these events?

<sup>3</sup> I will follow more or less the geographical division outlined by Harri Mäki in "[A geographical/political index for the almanacs AC 1014 to AC 1018](#)" which can be found in the Vaults of Pandius. I am working on an expanded version of this greatly useful list which I'll post in the Vaults after the publication of this issue of *THRESHOLD Magazine*.

<sup>4</sup> You can read it in the "[Day of Dread around Mystara](#)" topic at the Piazza Forums

## Cold and Hot War in Glantri City!

As mentioned above, sooner or later all the powerful nations of the world will pinpoint Glantri City as the origin of the Day of Dread, and likely send agents to investigate. This opens to multiple cloak and dagger and spy story adventures in the city as wizards from all over the world try to understand where the Radiance is concealed. If there are powerful empires in the world beside Thyatis and Alphatia (as the Master set map seems to suggest<sup>5</sup>) they will also get involved at some point. The event could provoke a full-scale invasion of Glantri and the Known World by an external power, as happened with the forces of the Master of Hule, or even by multiple invaders all at once!



The Chamber of the Spheres built by Rafiel in the City of the Stars should also be taken into account. If it eventually stabilizes the Radiance and allows the creation of new Immortals even easier than now, a lot of parties will be interested in controlling it, if they can find where it is.

### Only One World?

Claransa's book has been published. Her account by AC 1,014 at the latest has been officially confirmed by other independent sources, the Karameikan Expedition and the New Alphatian Confederate Empire. Sooner or later the existence of the Hollow World

will become common knowledge not just in the Known World, but everywhere. A rush to the Hollow World could soon begin. Countries nearest to the polar openings could have a major technical advantage, such as Norwold, Qeodhar, the Sylvan Realm, Nentsun or, in the south, Vulcanian nations and more. If multiple visitors start to arrive in the Hollow World, the nations there will not remain idle and maybe they'll send their own explorers. What will the Immortals do? What will happen to the Spell of Preservation? The very presence of Alphatia could jeopardize it without remedy anyway. In the end the world could become much smaller and much more 'globalized,' unless some catastrophe occurs.

<sup>5</sup> Obviously fans have created several powerful empires in Brun, Davania and Skothar, see also *THRESHOLD Magazine* issues [#5](#), [#17](#) and [#20](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

## AENG MOR AND THE SHADOW ELVES (AND ALFHEIM)

Only a few events are dedicated to them in AC 1,010 and 1,011, but in AC 1,012 Aengmor and the shadow elves are among the main protagonists of the unfolding history, with the War of Oenkmar against humanoids and Rockhome and its consequences, especially Oenkmar falling into the hands of the shadow elves and a lot of humanoids displaced to Glantri, Sind, and the Northern Reaches.

However after a time in which it seemed shadow elves could go to war with the whole Western Defence League, they seem instead more inclined to create the basis for a peaceful coexistence with the former Alfheim elves, whose help they'll need anyway to save the Canolbarth forest, which is becoming more and more dry and dead<sup>6</sup>. How then could the future of the elves of the Known World unfold? Maybe in three very different ways.

### New Alfheim and the City of Aengmor

The shadow elves and the former Alfheimers could reach a lasting peace, and start cooperating to the common benefit. Rafiel could become more tolerant to other elven Immortals and share with Ilsundal and the others the benefits of a completed Chamber of the Spheres. Canolbarth would be saved and a new elven empire rise, expanding to the borders of Rockhome and Glantri, pushing humanoids out of the region, and eventually maybe inglobating the whole Glantri. Such a force could become a major power to rival Thyatis, Alphatia, and any other empire of the world.

<sup>6</sup> Or should they fail, check "*The Fall and Rise of the Canolbarth*" by Robin from [THRESHOLD Magazine issue #10](#)

### No Elves



An opposite outcome could be instead a coalition of humanoids (likely maneuvered by Kol and Synn) defeating the shadow elves and even pushing them out of Aengmor, Glantri, and even out of the Shadowlands. Both Alfheimers and shadow elves would have to find a new home, maybe Norwold or the Sylvan Realm, and elves would become rarer and rarer in the Known World.

### Atzanteotl's Revenge

It seems quite stupid that this Immortal pushes his most powerful followers—Azcan, Schattenhalfen, humanoids, Tiger clan—to fight each other instead of cooperating. Maybe Atzanteotl could come to his senses and combine his forces to restore his former Kingdom of Aengmor and even an Azcan Empire! Should he succeed, his dominion could span the Hollow and the Outer Worlds, from Azcan lands to Aengmor, Glantri, and the Atruaghin lands. Darokin and Sind, now surrounded by powerful enemies, would fall and the Known World would belong to Atzanteotl.



## Atruaghin Clans

The official Almanacs have just some events for the clans, who are first enslaved by a cabal of Alphatian wizards who also destroy the elevator to the Bear clan, then free themselves and restore trade with Darokin via an underground route.

What consequences will these events have in the future?

### **The New Empire of the Sun**

If the Atruaghin clans integrate themselves better in the Known World, and in the meantime Atruaghin returns to power in Azcan lands, as an event of AC 1,011 seems to suggest, the clans could be unified under Atruaghin's rule and have an access to the Hollow World, boosting their trade with the rest of the world. Helping Darokin and Sind against the forces of the Master they could even expand to the west, restoring a new version of the Azcan and Oltec Empires.

## BROKEN LANDS, OENKMAR, AND THE HUMANOIDS

The events of the Almanacs could well mean the end of the humanoids in the region. Thar is gone to the Northern Reaches, Alebane and Zotl are defeated in Oenkmar when the city falls to the shadow elves, Xilochtli disappears with the Blue Knife. The only one rising to more and more power is Kol, who becomes a Prince of Glantri and welcomes in the Great Crater many humanoids displaced by the shadow elves.

What the consequences of these events will be?



### **New Monstrous Princes of Glantri**

Synn, Kol and their allies take more and more control of Glantri, which opens its borders to humanoids and all kinds of 'monsters.' Morlay-Malinbois is taken over by werecreatures allied with Synn, Boldavia and Klantyre become openly undead domains. Humans and elves are enslaved or pushed away. This 'monstrous' Glantri is bound to get soon in conflict with Heldann, Wendar, the shadow elves, and maybe even Darokin, but could find allies in Denagoth and Hule.



## Darokin

In the Almanacs Darokin has some troubles with humanoids, Hulean Sea reavers, floods, and shadow elves, yet also creates the Western Defence League, and eventually resumes trade with Atruaghin and Aengmor and hosts the first World Games. However Darokin as presented in its Gazetteer and in the Almanacs is quite a 'vanilla' nation, and the social consequences of such a classist country are very much ignored<sup>7</sup>. I think that Darokin could have the potential to be much darker or much lighter, focusing either on the worst or the better aspects of capitalism<sup>8</sup>.

### It's a Revolution

Promoted either by Benekander, rebelling against the Immortals' status quo, or by Hule for nefarious purposes, Darokin plunges into a revolution. The copper class overthrows the silver and gold classes. From here it can go in any direction: to an enlightened state promoting equality (or at least something resembling democracy), bound to clash with all its hierarchical and aristocratic neighbors such as Sind, Glantri, Heldann, or Thyatis; and/or to a Terror and maybe a genial General coming out of nothing who will conquer nation after nation to impose a new order on the Known World.

<sup>7</sup> On this topic, check "Dark Darokin" by Not a Decepticon from [THRESHOLD Magazine issue #28](#)

<sup>8</sup> Or more probably, mercantilism, a sort of 'ancestor' of capitalism focused on the accumulation of precious metals and discouraging imports. As such, mercantilism tended to foster conflict between countries rather than peaceful trade. This could be another reason why Darokin should be a bit darker than as presented in GAZ11: "The Republic of Darokin".

## The Corps

The DDC seemed a (relatively) nice organization trying to promote peace among nations in the interest of better and smoother trade, but has always been instead a secret organization working in the shadows to take control of other countries. Once ready, the DDC set its long-prepared plan into motion, ousting the former rulers of every throne or Council body of the Known World to place more friendly ones. Some nations could fall easily, others, like Glantri, could require much more work, or even war.

## Ethengar

Events for Ethengar in the Almanacs are few, and related only to the rivalry with Heldann. It seems the Ethengarians have too many enemies and not enough allies to really be able to do something. But what if they could establish some solid alliances?

### The Northern Alliance

It seems the only neighbor with whom Ethengar could get along is Rockhome, but what if the Great Khan, or a new Khan, were to establish a solid alliance with Rockhome, the Northern Reaches, Wendar, and Norwold? First, the Alliance could be just an answer to the WDL and an attempt to contain humanoids, but eventually could be used to defeat some common enemies: Glantri, Heldann, Denagoth, and the shadow elves. Should the Alliance be able to defeat all four, it could rapidly become the greatest power in the Known World.



## Horde of Chaos

The Great Khan is replaced by another one, willing to ally with Synn, humanoids, and the Church of Idris in Denagoth. This Horde of Chaos could ravage the Northern Reaches, then Norwold and Wendar, submitting the whole region to the plans of Synn!

## Five Shires

The Shires defeat the Black Eagle in the Almanacs, then are marginally involved in the War of Oenkmar. Not much else but some natural disasters and clashes with pirates. The Shires seem to be a nice and quiet place, so let's turn them to the dark side!



## Dark Shire

The Shires have some unique and interesting creatures living above and underground, such as the glaurants. They also lie in a land which was once an outskirt of Taymora. What if an alliance of undead, glaurants,

dragons<sup>9</sup> and dark hin<sup>10</sup> takes over the Shires? It could be a plot by the Master of Hule, Argos and Thalkor, or all of them, creating a lot of danger and trouble for the surrounding countries.

## Glantri

Glantri is a favorite topic of the official Almanacs and one of the nations accumulating the most events along with Karameikos and Thyatis. The arrival of Synn/Dolores and her intrigues, and eventually her clash with Prince Malachie, the failed attack by Thar and the ascent of Kol as Prince, the power struggle in Averoigne between Henry and Isidore, Von Hendriks in New Kolland, Ferdinand Lillipot and his Gargantoid, and much more. Glantri is full of events in the first three Almanacs, less so in Joshuan's Almanac, but still there is plenty of material. One important event of AC 1,010 and one of AC 1,013 have not been reprised by the following fan *Mystaran Almanacs*, if I recall correctly. One is the partial exodus of Erewan elves to Karameikos, something that could lead in the long run to their complete disappearance from Glantri, as indeed Synn and Kol plan. Another is the joint expedition of the Glantri City and Krakatos Schools to study the Behemoth in the southern seas. So there is a lot simmering in Glantri, but what could the future bring?

<sup>9</sup> See: "[Who's Who Among Dragons](#)" by Bruce Heard at the Vaults of Pandius. Argos and Thalkor could ally against Azem, who is likely one of the most powerful protectors of the Shires

<sup>10</sup> See: "[The Dark Shire](#)" by Geoff Gander at the Vaults of Pandius



## Bright Glantri

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After reading the Almanacs we sort of expect there will be a showdown between Good and Evil in Glantri. Even if Good is likely quite relative in Glantri, we could expect a different nation if the first one wins. Clerics, dwarves, hin and gnomes will be fully accepted, as well as werereatures. Such a new Glantri could establish good relations with all neighbors, even humanoids maybe, and become a force able to help Darokin and Sind against the Hulean menace and maybe Wendar against Denagoth, expanding more or less peacefully into the Adri Varma plateau.



## Dark Glantri

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The opposite result is obviously a triumph of Synn and her allies and/or, maybe, Branart and Morphail. The question here is only if this Dark Glantri will also ally with Denagoth and Hule, or just one of them. Depending on this, it could also happen that this 'Dark Glantri' will actually protect the Known World against Hule or Denagoth, at least temporarily.

## Heldann

Barely mentioned in official supplements before *Wrath of the Immortals* and the *Almanacs*, Heldann becomes a real protagonist with the war against Ethengar, the attempted attack on Helskir, and the invasion and conquest of southern Norwold and Oceansend. In AC 1,013 however the start of an Inquisition seems to forecast a season of internal strife, and in the Hollow World the Heldannic forces are defeated by the Alphatians. It seems the Heldannic Order could either head to triumph or disaster.

## New Antalia

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Allying with Wendar, Heldann invades Denagoth and takes over half the region. Then with wars, diplomacy or coups they also take over the Northern Reaches, Helskir and Norwold, establishing a peace with the Wyrksteeth dragons. Finally the Empire of New Antalia takes advantage of chaos in Thyatis to take over the whole Empire.





### **End of the Order**

The Wurmsteeth dragons take over Denagoth and, allied with Norwold, invade the Heldannic lands, promoting in the meantime a revolt against the Knights. Alphatian forces attack Vanya's Rest in Davania. The Fall of the Order is a major stroke for Vanya, who loses ground and followers also in Thyatis proper.

### **Ierendi**

There isn't much in the Almanacs about Ierendi but some pirates, natural disasters, and the Tournament. I think the place could become more interesting if the likely conflicts between the local oligarchy and common people is accentuated. Adventurers and Makai, maybe with the support of the King and the Queen, could try to promote some changes, and pirates could exploit the situation or maybe be exploited by both parties.

### **Anarchy in the Known World**

Adventurers and pirates take over Ierendi for real, creating a sort of anarchist pirate republic with the naval power of Honor Island. Using this superior naval power, they free from feudal lords and merchant princes the coasts of Karameikos, Darokin, Minrothad, Sind, and Jaibul. The Shires and the Turtle clan could become allies, the Tiger clan would be occupied. And then onward to take the biggest bite, Thyatis.

### **Thyatian Naval Power**

It could start as in the previous scenario, but the outcome is that Thyatis conquers Ierendi again. Minrothad would be unlikely to maintain its independence, and from here the Empire would force other nations—starting with the Shires and Karameikos—to obey its will or be absorbed. Then there is the West and Davania.



## Karameikos

Like Glantri and Thyatis, Karameikos has a lot of events in the Almanacs. Alfheim and Erewan elves settle in the country, the Black Eagle falls, the School of Magecraft is founded in Krakatos, and several Alphatians settle too. The relations with Thyatis are mixed, as Stefan becomes more and more independent and friend of the Alphatians, yet helps Thyatis during the famine and the plague that hit the Empire. He also grants asylum to political enemies of the new Emperor Eusebius, however. Karameikos also hosts the second edition of the World Games in AC 1,013 and starts a new age of exploration, sending an expedition to the Hollow World in AC 1,010 and another to circumnavigate the world in AC 1,013, and another in cooperation with the School of Glantri to study the behemoth. It seems the country is poised to become an important player in the Western Defence League and in the Known World. But what'll happen in the future of Karameikos? Let's see two extreme scenarios, even if Karameikos could simply survive and prosper under the current dynasty.

### **Elven Confederation of Traladara**

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After crises in Thyatis and Darokin, Queen Adriana promotes a confederation which unifies elven territories in Alfheim/Aengmor, Thyatis, Minrothad, and Karameikos, and pacifies the humanoid territories. Eventually the Shires join too and the former Karameikos, now renamed Traladara, becomes the most important nation in the Known World.

### **Battleground**

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Karameikos implodes when Thyatian agents arrange for the assassination of Queen Adriana; the puppet king Justin is killed just a year later. While the south is occupied by

Thyatis, the central and northern parts of the former country are invaded by the elves of Aengmor/Alfheim, not so secretly supported by Darokin and the rest of the WDL.

## Minrothad

The events about Minrothad in the Almanacs are mostly about pirates, the dispute with Ylaruam about an artifact, later solved peacefully, the Behemoth, and the alliance with Thyatis to reopen the Aegos Pit. The future of the islands could well be in the shadow of Thyatis. The Merchant Princes could be willing to sacrifice their independence to gain profitable trade in the Hollow World. But the opposite could happen too if Thyatis gets weak or suffers some major crisis.

### **Merchant Kings**

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The Princes start a profitable trade with the Hollow World and later, adding skyships to their merchant fleet, with the rest of the Outer World. Contacts with Alphatia increase and eventually the Princes remove the Thyatian Emperor with a bloodless coup, establishing a Republic with them as the real puppet masters of the Senate.

### **New Taymora**

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Vampires, undead and wercreatures from old Taymora take over the Guilds and finally all the islands. Refugees sweep to Ierendi, Karameikos, and Thyatis. Undead pirates give to the Sea of Dread a whole new meaning.

## Ostland, Vestland and Soderfjord

The Northern Reaches in the Almanacs see some important events. In Ostland Queen Yrsa and later King Finn outlaw slavery and start modernizing the nation, while in Soderfjord Ragnar is crowned King and tries to defeat the kobolds in the mountains, with mixed success. In the meantime Vestland is seriously threatened by King Thar, who is unifying the humanoids of the Makkres mountains.

### Humanoid Power

A first, relatively obvious, future is that Thar and Psagh unite, gain the assistance of giants, and win over Soderfjord and Vestland, sacking the capitals. Ostland intervenes to stop them, but the humanoids use ships to invade the islands too. The Northern Reaches have fallen, Heldann intervenes too but it's completely defeated as well. Thar and Psagh ally with Ethengar, and are ready to march to the conquest of the whole Known World.

### Nordhartar Kingdom

King Finn, or another one, intervenes to save the other kingdoms from humanoids and succeeds. Thar and Psagh are killed, humanoids are expelled to Ethengar, destabilizing it for years. King Finn defeats Heldann and then marches to Denagoth, incorporating also Wendar and southern Norwold, creating a true New Antalia.

## Rockhome

The civil war, the deaths of Denwarf and Everast XV and the lost war of Oenmar against humanoids and shadow elves are important events for Rockhome, something which really could prompt a rebirth or a decline of the dwarven country.



### Dragonhome

Ambur and Jagnir kill Druuwor<sup>11</sup>, and gain the alliance of many other dragons, giants and humanoids, and make a pact with shadow elves too. Together they attack Rockhome from all sides, and the dwarven homeland falls. Dwarves escape to Thyatis, Karameikos, and Minrothad, or other surrounding countries. Rockhome becomes a haven for humanoids, expanding to the Orclands and the Northern Reaches, becoming a serious threat for Darokin and Glantri.

### Greater Rockhome

King Everast XVI realizes he cannot fight two powerful enemies at once, so he signs a peace treaty with the shadow elves, granting them much to obtain free hand in attacking

<sup>11</sup> See: ["Who's Who Among Dragons"](#) by Bruce Heard at the Vaults of Pandius

humanoids. The Rockhome army wins and pursues enemies to the Orclands, the Broken Lands, and then to the Great Crater. It's war with Glantri, but Everast XVI had previously allied with Amanth<sup>12</sup>, Ethengar, and rogue Alphatian wizards eager to get revenge. Attacked from three sides, Glantri falls. The north is given to Amanth, the east to Ethengar. All the rest, from Sablestone to Monteleone, is a dwarven country. Rockhome is now the biggest nation of the Known World.

## SIND AND JAIBUL

In the Almanacs these countries are respectively occupied by and firmly allied with the Master of Hule, constituting a serious menace for Darokin especially and the whole Known World. Hulean Sea Reavers start attacking Known World shipping from Jaibul, and there are serious hints they are also expanding the slave trade. There are all the premises and more to run *X10 Red Arrow*, *Black Shield*, i.e. another war with the Master. But we also know that there are Freedom Fighters in Sind, and the new religion of Gareth is born with the prophets Anand and Sitara.

### **Master of the Desert Nomads and the Sea Reavers**

The Master attacks Darokin and Glantri from Sind, while from Jaibul a fleet of Sea Reavers sweeps over the coasts of the Known World. Combined with the destabilizing effects of the Master's plans (as in X10), this strategy defeats Darokin, Ierendi, the Shires, Karameikos, and Minrothad. Ethengar and Ylaruam ally with the Master, and some Glantrian Princes do the same. Soon almost the whole Known World is enthralled to the

<sup>12</sup> See note 11.

Master, and just Rockhome, Aengmor, Thyatis, Heldann, and the Northern Reaches remain free, for now.

### **Gareth's Light Shines**

Anand and Sitara first free Sind from the Master's occupation, then Jaibul. The new religion of Gareth, preaching freedom from the Immortals and a new social order, soon spreads also in Glantri, Darokin, and Hule. When all three fall to Gareth's prophets a new Empire is born.

## Thyatis

A lot happens in and to Thyatis in the Almanacs. At first the disappearance of Alphatia seemed to allow an easy conquest of the Isle of Dawn but soon the reaction of Thothia, slave revolt, plague, famine, and the death of Thincol created serious difficulties for the Empire. Finally the new Emperor Eusebius seems able to bring stability, but also repression of any dissent, and he'll have to deal with the confirmed survival of Alphatia.

### **Death of an Empire**

Thyatis struggles with instability while Alphatia, slowly but steadily, organizes reliable means of transport from the Hollow World. Eriadna's resolution has not been changed by the events: Glantrians and Thyatians have to be defeated. Finally her plan is set in motion. Mercenaries from Adri Varma and Denagoth attack Glantri and Heldann along with Norwold, Ethengar, and Rockhome. Ylaruam, the New Alphatian Confederate Empire boosted with troops from the Hollow World, Karameikos, Ierendi and Minrothad attack Thyatis while revolts spread in the Hinterlands, Ochalea, and the





Pearl Islands. The Empire is overwhelmed and defeated, the Torion dynasty ousted, the Thyatian mainland territories are divided among Karameikos, Ylaruam and Minrothad, the Isle of Dawn among Helskir, Thothia and Ochalea. Glantri becomes an Alphatian colony open to massive dwarven immigration, parts of it given to Ethengar and humanoids. Alphatia is triumphant in the Hollow and Outer Worlds.

### **Thyatis Triumphant**

Eusebius stabilizes the Empire, but decides to leave the Alphatians be, and focus on the north and the southwest. Minrothad and Helskir become exarchates, Heldann is conquered alongside Oceansend, and the Empire intervenes to stabilize the Northern Reaches and makes them close allies. Still Eusebius refrains from invading Norwold, instead allying with Wendar, the Wyrms-teeth dragons and Norwold itself to conquer Denagoth. He conquers and settles the Thane-gioth archipelago, but obtains the help of Darokin, Ierendi, the Shires, the Atruaghin and Karameikos to free Sind and Jaibul from the Master's forces, then begins to plan an alliance against Hule with Slagovich and the

Savage Coast. Cooperating with Glantri and Yavdlom, the Empire starts to expand into the Adri Varma and the northern Davanian coast. Leaving the East to the Alphatians, Eusebius lays the foundations to a long-term expansion of the Empire in Brun and western Davania, at least until equally powerful empires are encountered.

### **Wendar**

The Almanacs have almost nothing on Wendar except for the fact we know from *Wrath of the Immortals* that many Alfheim elves settle there and a tree bearing magically healing fruit is discovered in AC 1,013. The greatest development of Wendar and Denagoth, following the outline of *X11 Saga of the Shadow Lord*, has mostly been done by fans, mostly by the Gazetteer written by JTR and others<sup>13</sup> and subsequently in the fans' *Mystaran Almanacs*. Still the place is too near to the Known World to not be considered a part of it.

### **Descent of the Shadow**

Wendar falls to Denagoth and the Church of Idris, whose power has been seriously underestimated by many. The Church has an innumerable supply of humanoids and dragons from Northern Brun, and soon enough the Adri Varma is also overwhelmed. Norwold, Heldann and Glantri are seriously threatened and if in the latter country Synn allies with Idris (or is even an avatar of her!) then the whole Known World is now in mortal danger.

<sup>13</sup> See: [Wendar section](#) in the Vaults of Pandius

## **New Essuria and Greater Wendar**

Wendar, Heldann and Norwold ally to conquer Denagoth and divide its territory. While Heldann rules over a reborn Essuria, Wendar takes back the Geffronell and Lothenar forests and the Northern Wildlands, thus becoming the biggest elven nation of the world.

## **Ylaruam**

There are some events in the Almanacs, as the murders of a Nithian mummy and the discovery of an artifact in Minrothad, plus one raid in Thyatis, but it seems the potential of the country is a bit undeveloped, especially the presence of Barimoor, Magian Fire worshippers, and undead lizardmen as outlined in the Gazetteer.

## **Barimoor Ascending**

Finally Barimoor not only takes control of several artifacts, but of the whole Ylaruam. Then he attacks Thyatis and conquers it too, proclaiming a new Empire of Nithia. Barimoor would try to maintain peaceful relations with the Alphatians while expanding in the Isle of Dawn and Thothia. Later yet he could make another move to take control of all the former Alphatian territories, basically unifying former Thyatis and Alphatia in one single Empire under his name, at least until Eriadna strikes back from the Hollow World.

## **The Great Caliphate**

Thyatis falls to Ylaruam and the Caliphate is born. The Caliph establishes an alliance with Alphatia, at least temporarily, and focuses the expansion of the new empire toward Davania, Sind, and the West, with the ambition to bring the faith of al-Kalim to

many new territories in Davania and Brun. If the New Alphatian Confederate Empire is weak enough, the Faith could even expand to the Alatians, Bellissaria, and beyond.

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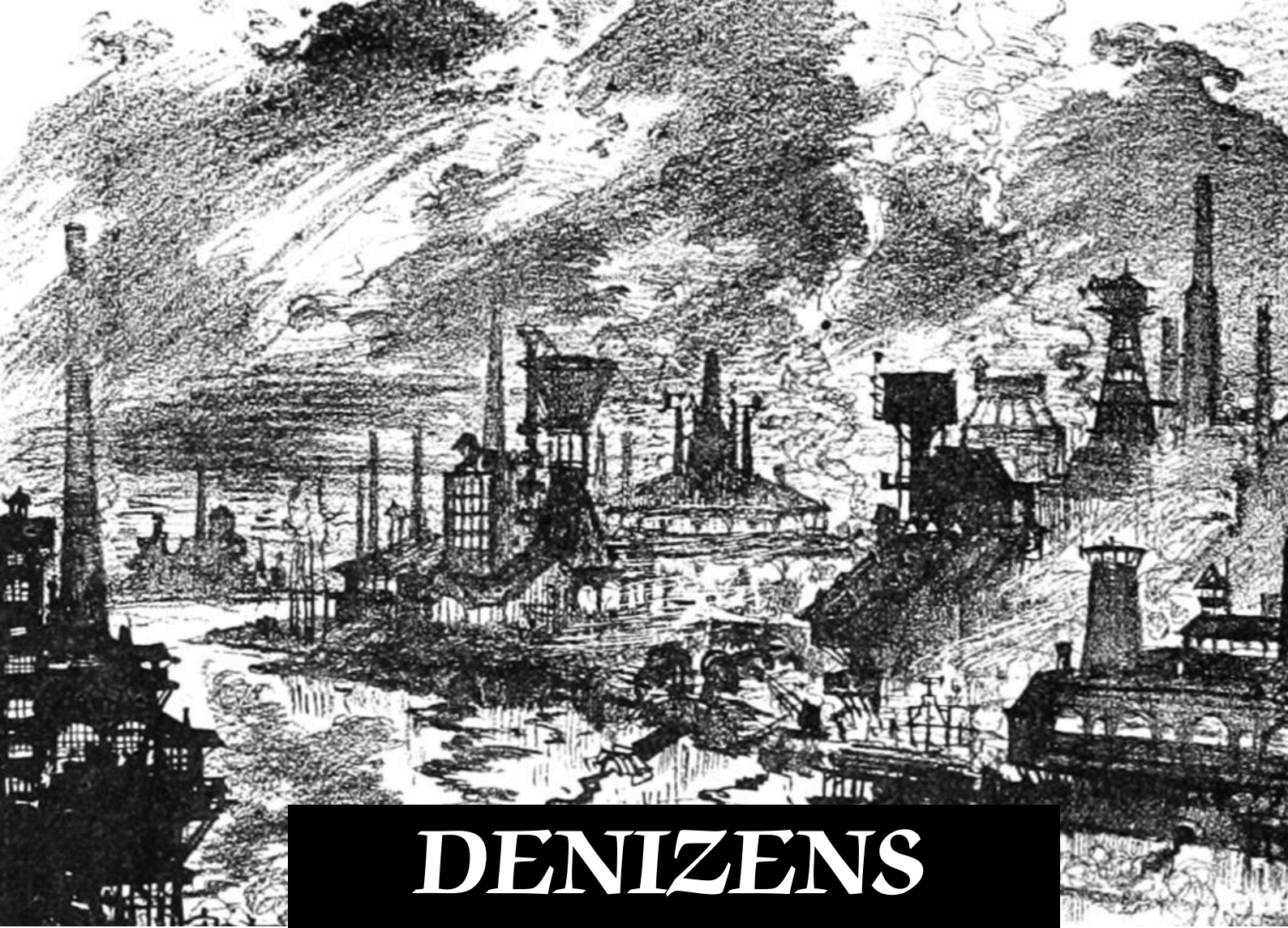
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# DENIZENS

## of Returned Blackmoor

by Doctor Necrotic (Brian Rubinfeld)

I've talked about the happenings and groups that exist, but what of the people? So much is out of their control, but they still live in these rather interesting times. Despite a tumultuous history within both the ancient past and the near present, an enduring Blackmoor persists. Even if Blackmoor is a relic ripped out of time, its people are not stuck. To say nothing else, they are tenacious, resilient and hardy against all means of adversity. Even the fears of the apocalypse did not ultimately stop this homeland. Even if the greater empire had fallen, the Kingdom of Black-

moor lived on. Even after the kingdom was abolished and a new state usurped it, the rest of it ultimately lived on. Even as plagues of entropy, disturbed mutant cults, technocratic warlords and a leader's growing mania threaten Blackmoor, it too shall keep returning and so shall the people.

A lot of statistics that involve what's left of Blackmoor favor Blackmoor City above all, as it was the crown jewel of the empire in its heyday. In its current struggle, this is no longer the case. Statements arise from offi-

cial powers to say otherwise, but few would openly disparage or disprove these words in public. While it looks like demihumans have languished and faded within Blackmoor, the opposite is quite true. Despite the cruel policies and beliefs of the God-King, overt hatred against potentially devoted citizens is not out of them. Given that he desires all beings to follow under his rule, bloodlines and origins matter less to him. This does not erase the problems of the past or ongoing sins, most of which remain present within Blackmoor, just without direct legal support or enforcement.

## HUMANS

“Me? I’m just an office drone. Good pay, but men in armor show up to glare at us every few hours. Can’t complain.”

–Justin Treistrand,  
*Blackmoor Royal Security Division*

The human race makes up the majority of Blackmoor, with a diverse array of ethnicities and cultures that have flocked to the once mighty nation or struggled against it. Despite this, a sense of sneering imperialism ultimately triumphed. Those who joined Blackmoor were assimilated into their ways for a long time, only succeeding in getting worse as the Beastman Crusades proved popular. Not even the dangerous lands of the Afridhi were immune. The Afridhi were heavily devoted to a sinister Immortal known as Zugzul, a burning rage consumed by fire. Their war against Blackmoor eventually turned against them. The majority of the Afridhi people were wiped out in targeted brutal warfare. Those who survived chose to let their creations carry on their name and culture. In the centuries

to decades leading up to the Great Rain of Fire, many descendents of these cultures expressed their ire and frustration against the colonial mindset that their state had adopted. Calls for reform to outright revolution did eventually spark change within borders. While the multitude of cultures and people were recognized within Blackmoor itself, the far greater multitude of sins beyond national borders were constantly hidden. In the end, much of it was buried by the time of the Great Rain of Fire, but not all of it. What was revealed sparked much rage from the masses. This only aided the military coup organized by General Gwyn.

The general’s airing of social grievances only drew people toward him, as the disgruntled and jaded found comfort in his manifestos and speeches. The Crown of Blackmoor had failed them, but they could prove useful to the usurper general himself. The ignorance and suffering in Blackmoor ultimately did the impossible of uniting countless banners under one, that of the Crown Hawk Killer. But, like the Crown before them, the Killer only sought a different kind of exploitation. And through both private and public aid in the uprising, most of the Blackmoorian royal family was extinguished like doused candles in mere days. Celebrations brought a short-lived sense of peace and solidarity to Blackmoor at last. The state attempted to ease social concerns, but this did not ease the fears of the authoritarian order that the self-appointed “God-King” quickly put into place. This sense of newfound community was then restricted and regulated to fit the new mold of leadership. Joy was dashed, but the people remained unified even in their suffering. Those who didn’t fully assimilate found strength in strong ethnic neighborhoods. However, these streets were given less

attention and care compared to more assimilated regions. Fears of retribution haunted the general, as the nobility wasn't as dead as he hoped. Even accidental copies, like the AI known as Uther V.1, formulated means of reversing the coup.

The world beyond became unknown and the roots of the many were seemingly lost. Even as the planar barrier absorbs and assimilates land<sup>1</sup>, it cannot recreate the disconnected homes and lives beyond Blackmoor. Even more disheartening, the barrier has begun to slow and may one day stop. And thus, many lands beyond will truly be lost. A growing restlessness returned again, complete with the demonization of rogue researchers who escaped Blackmoor to survey Skothar decades ago. While attempts have been made to make a more accepting Blackmoor, this only exists internally. The paranoia and distaste for the outside world have become an all-encompassing fear for human cultures alone. After all, do their descendents still exist? Would they recognize them? How did they survive the Great Rain and how did they evolve? Due to their proximity, the Peshwa and Skandaharians lucked out the most, with nearby Thonian lands gaining some favor. For wayward Thonians and distant cultures like the "future" Jennites and distant Tanagoro, their answers are far less clear. Even within Returned Blackmoor, rebels loyal to the crown have much work to do, as many civilians would chafe at the return of old nobility. All the while, the true to the crown grow sick of their squabbling. Sir Robert Cheerfellow<sup>2</sup>, the "Savior of Woodenbridge," has been a vocal critic of fellow rebels and regime defectors alike.

<sup>1</sup> The cloaking shields, as seen in the article "Returned Blackmoor" in [THRESHOLD Magazine issue #20](#)

<sup>2</sup> A knight in service to Clan Andahar, known for leading the evacuation of Woodenbridge in AC 999.



*A Blackmoorian bureaucrat*

He often refers to the former as brigands and the latter as crown killers, attempting to promote a division that refuses to work with either. As a trusted ally of the royal clan and a valiant war hero, his voice has proved convincing.

Several cultures and ethnicities have attempted to endure and persist, despite fears of their ancestors being washed away by cataclysm and the sands of time. Despite the unification under an umbrella of the human race, many critics decry a favoring of some ethnic divisions over others. The Thonians make up the majority population of Blackmoor and nearby lands, tracing themselves back to the very state that rebelled against Thonia to begin with all those ages ago. Their knowledge of the current new state of Thonia is speculative at best, but some fear reprisal and retribution from the distant empire. The majority of Thonian Blackmoorians have proved welcoming and have accepted the changes over time. But a fringe group of Crown supporters take an extreme ethnic national perspective. They

seek to restore the Crown, in hopes of barring not just demihumans from influence, but also other human ethnicities. This extremist group is a small sect of the rebellion and lacks greater influence itself, but could still cause great damage. The Tanagoro often feel like strangers in a strange land. Do as they may, many still keep to neighborhoods and chronicle remembered customs to ensure they carry into this grim future. While many have garnered success in the past through various industrial fields, a lack of trade with their homeland has financially crippled their communities and ways of life. In regards to other populations, the Tanagoro do not face the same prejudice as other populations, mostly a tragic disregard at worst. Both the Jennites and Skandaharians are held with suspicion, but no legal harm is to come to them. Propaganda has spurred hateful and criminal acts, but no origins of this have been discovered. The Peshwa, however, remain legally oppressed. Relegated to sectioned-off land, they are scrutinized and put under hidden surveillance. Their sacred lands have been stripped and many holy rites banned under Blackmoorian law. The genocidal campaign against the Afridhi has been used to antagonize and subjugate the Peshwa in the past. For all of the regime's horrors, there have been attempts to amend this. While this has resulted in rolling back attacks on Peshwa traditions and faiths, this has mostly opened up doors for assimilation and integration as a greater part of the state. This has led a disgruntled youth, Turak'on, into a quasi-nationalist movement. Teaming up with the pirates and raiders, including the Lord of Bloodshed's men, he aspires to carry out a coup against the state. Barring that, forcing its hand for reparations for past atrocities and a recognized legal status for Peshwa states is just a first step. That is far from enough for him.

## Brief Summaries of Human Ethnicities

- Thonian – This is the primary population of Blackmoor, descendants of those raised in the Thonian Empire of old. In time, the territory of Blackmoor struggled against neighbors generally hostile to Thonia. A hero arose to break those people away from harm and ultimately liberate Blackmoor, much to the chagrin of the Thonian Empire. Even now, they make up the majority of human demographics within Blackmoor.
- Tanagoro – The people of Tangor, long detached from the ways of distant southeastern Skothar. Few are aware of the ultimate spreading of their people to the present-day Pearl Islands and Yavdlom. Many have a repressed wanderlust to know more of their ancestry, even after a powerful representative went missing years ago following an expedition.
- Skandaharian – The northern folk from the border of Blackmoor into current Nentsun. Despite a tumultuous history with Blackmoor, often involving raids and piracy, relations have somewhat mellowed, though their presence within Late Era Blackmoor has been one of discontent. The current remains of Skandaharia seek to reunite with its current Mystaran cousins, infiltrating spy networks and pirates in hopes of seeking any info on the outside world. Rumors involving this have tied the people to underground activity and have sown a sense of distrust for many.
- Jennite – From southern Skothar, this was the result of migration into northern Skothar. Explorers and settlers accidentally set upon Returned Blackmoor

as it leapt out of time. Their presence is minor, but they culturally share some roots with the Peshwah, granting them some sympathy for these ancestors. This land proves alien to them, as they seek a way out without drawing too much attention or ire. In the meantime, they live on the fringes and pose as Peshwah. Their numbers are otherwise few.

- **Peshwah** – One of the few people whose lands were partially taken by Blackmoor’s leap. Nonetheless, they are a shadow of their former selves. Many who fled Blackmoor’s destruction built the roots for the Jennites. Those who remained with Blackmoor were truly broken people, barred from many traditions and often living in squalor. Many have joined factions in the name of vengeance while others try to piece together what risks being lost.
- **Deep Blackmoorian** – A terrifying enigma. These people live in a throw-back to a time maybe akin to King Uther, but maybe even prior. They speak a dialect thought lost to the lands well before the Great Rain of Fire. Those aware of the lands above them are just as afraid of them. Despite a deep technophobia, most are adaptable and prove capable of understanding. However, deep societal pressure and a stigma towards the “Over Worlders” keeps them at a safe distance. Their strange boons and immunities have left them desirable to particularly greedy and predatory denizens above, further forcing them into hiding. This has turned their policy towards outsiders to often attack first, ask questions later. Oddly, Ignur’s Kingdom lacks these strange powers and is less fearful of abductions as a result. Regardless, all



*Deep Blackmoorian*

humans of this variety are viewed as primitives by the wider Blackmoor.

- **Afridhi** – Despite many survivors becoming like the proto-gnolls, some still carried on for a little longer. These human populations of the Afridhi tried to integrate elsewhere. Most lied about their origins, predominantly assimilating into the Peshwah or Thonian groups. This furthers the irony of disdain for the Afridhi, as many Blackmoorians have this ancestry within their blood. They’re likewise unaware that the gnolls of Blackmoor share their blood ancestry too.

- Other – Various denizens of Brun and beyond have accidentally come upon Blackmoor, only to be captured or far worse. Among these victims are residents of Glantri, Alphatia, Thyatis, Ser-raine, and Darokin. Without a doubt, others will probably make the mistake of getting too close in time.

## DWARVES

“Horrid orcs, why won’t they leave the mountains? Where did they even come from?”

– *Elder Horfenbiyrg, clan elder*

Those who have forsaken life upon dwarf-dominated lands have struggled to fit in elsewhere. The remains of the Stormkiller Mountains are appealing to outcasts, while many find an uncanny comfort in the mobile work towns that shelter and shuttle labor forces to various dangerous “job sites.” In this new timeframe, they are pariahs to Kagyar and treat him similarly. While much of Blackmoor has been torn asunder by warfare and hatred, the Stormkiller dwarves and nearby lands have endured against all. Their welcoming of the hin had them marked by the state, following the halflings of the land being branded as rebels and traitors. The Crown Killers of Blackmoor launched newly created types of weapons in hopes of teaching the dwarves a lesson. Many perished quickly; others fell ill. While none are devout of Kagyar, the Immortal was mortified by what had occurred and granted his wayward children a boon. While not as strong as those he saved in the Great Rain, the majority of these dwarves recovered from the weapon-borne illnesses that ravaged their lands. Other effects contin-

ued to haunt them, literally. Both the Iron Hills and Stormkiller Mountains are haunted by strange incorporeal undead not alike the Blighted Dead that roam the detritus swamps of the Westwood. These phantasmal creatures, while lashing out at the living, seek final rest and will welcome it if offered. Dwarven priests within both realms have worked to deliver these trapped souls to the beyond.

This is not to say that these dwarves live endlessly grim lives. If anything, they have become less involved in the greater politics of the region. Their interactions are mostly out of some obligation or necessity; otherwise they often keep to their own respective enclaves and endure the bare minimum such as paying taxes or required trade. This has built a facade that they’re neutral toward Blackmoor, and nothing more. In truth, most of the clans live in fear of Blackmoor lashing out. Such a gray and emotionless presentation is merely a coping mechanism to keep the wider lands from taking too much interest in the dwarves. Even current outcasts who find the mountain ranges appealing are told to keep their heads down and avoid negative attention. To reflect this, life in these lands offers few passions beyond the value of hard work. This isn’t entirely like traditional dwarven lifestyles of ages past, but there’s an overbearing alienating blandness to everything. While the dwarven approach to emotions is different from the humans’, this has taken it to a new level. Many chafe under these conditions, considering them sterile and hopeless. Others find them oddly tranquil and meditative. As such, religious connections of the dwarves have slowly mended since the late days of Blackmoor. To them, they were caught in a sinful technocracy and became wayward from their roots. If anything, the cruel ways of the State



awakened them to a need for their olden ways. A renaissance for the dwarves may be near, save for those who fear that there will instead be further stagnation and isolation.

Barring the dwarves that clung to hills and mountains, others sought to make their living within the greater nation. Ultimately, many felt alienated living in such artificial cities devoid of any dwarven tradition or values. As such, many took to mobile work towns to practice their crafts in relative peace. Their presence has grown from the rare oddity to a sizable portion of the workforce, often cast into such roles as engineering, maintenance, hazard control, and manual labor. A few who have proven themselves have moved up to quartermaster, lead engineer, foreman, and various positions with far more power. While most dwarven workers are treated as superior but exploitable machines, those who can rise up further are shown far more respect and dignity. Those adjusting to this largely transient life fear that they may be outcasts, should they try to return home. And for those whose ancestors dwelled beyond Blackmoor? This is perhaps all they have now. This is their new clan. Even those more assimilated within Blackmoor try to hold on to what they have. The siblings, Battlestein and Blunthammer<sup>3</sup>, do all in their power to maintain clan connections despite being well revered crafters within the Blackmoorian military.

<sup>3</sup> From "The Factions & Foes of Returned Blackmoor", in [THRESHOLD Magazine issue #26](#)

## ELVES

"These Blacklore degenerates, they are not elves, but something far removed. When we strike, they come next."

– *Elduglas Fineglade,*  
*Redwood warrior radical*

No demihuman proved as polarized as the elves. A great divide began at the Redwood and affected elvenkind well beyond the immediate reach of the advancing empire. True elves were meant to reject the strange and artificial technomancy encroaching from Blackmoor. Those who were lost in these new ways were denounced as Blacklore elves. Even those who haven't faced as deep a schism are divided. Tradition has been harshly maintained on the masses and flaunted to neighbors in protest. Elders fear that without drastic measures, their people might fade as an identity within a generation. So far, nearby populations have stood down on direct conflict. However, any raids upon nearby lands are held in the deepest of contempt. Unsure of what to do with themselves, the most powerful elven group finds itself at a dangerous crossroads. Meanwhile, far less powerful groups face this existential threat on a greater level, either because they dwell upon now generally ominous and perilous lands or because they butt heads with other forces of Blackmoor.

Within the Redwood, a diplomat aiming to mend ties with Blackmoor has arisen. Galdjentora Flarebark has acted as a mediary between recent disputes, with her goals of keeping Blackmoor and elven forces as neutral as possible. While she seeks a position upon council seating in Blackmoor City, her heart remains with her people. There is a fear among many of the Redwood

that her neutrality will only bring stagnation rather than real answers. Meanwhile, Yuldiak Vinestock takes another approach. A Blacklore elf in their most sinister, her aspirations play into the coffers of God-King Gwyn. This isn't to say that her greed is fully pro-Blackmoor, as she is quick to broker information to the highest bidder. In the end, she wants the bureaucracy of Blackmoor to whittle away and mentally break the elves into compliance, rather than spark more costly wars. She blends in, temporarily forsaking Blackmoorian trappings to ensure hiding in plain sight. One group to arise from this conflict is the Blackwood elves, a middle ground that seeks to meld concepts between the two groups. Their belief is that progress is inevitable, but one can hold onto traditions and preserve the natural world. They have become the largest proponents and caretakers of the Living Forest<sup>4</sup> project around Blackmoor City, helping to add green diversity to the chromatic monotony. Even the Menagerie of the Extinct has been given much support by this movement, despite potential ties to political corruption. Given how this project is available to few in the public, such a privilege is not taken lightly among these elves. And despite their attempts at mending ties, they find few allies among the other splinters.

The other elves, while more detached from Blackmoorian politics, have no shortage of their own troubles. Contrary to popular belief, not all of the Westwood elves have fallen into The Detrituswood. While many are entropic mockeries of their former selves, many have banded into new survivor tribes. While untrusting of the greater region, many have willingly cooperated with the rangers that help to combat the blight. Should enough of the straggling

bands join together, it could turn the tide against the vile contagion that has overtaken the once lively region. The Westryn elves are all but gone from a mixture of their collateral during their anti-lycanthrope crusades, the returning Egg of Coot, nearby widespread destruction, and the Plague of the Arcane. However, their demise also holds the key to another secret of Nyela's maniacal cult.

The overall elven population numbers, as proven by this survey, stand much higher than the official Blackmoorian census. Very few within the various tribes and factions are willing to directly correspond or supply accurate data to the current regime. The majority that have are the "fallen" or Blacklore elves that have been claimed by the alien lifestyle of the humans. Others within the wider nation aid quarantine rangers against the detritus blight or defend protected natural enclaves. The Living Forest and Menagerie of the Extinct prove especially enticing. Even elven populations that hold no ill will or aggression towards the human majority do not want to deal with them. As such, overall population surveys conducted during the repairing periods of Returned Blackmoor are skewed and look upon the elves as a people in sharp decline. In many ways, this is reality for reasons unknown to the record takers. But in other ways, the elves may be on the verge of a major comeback. The events in the years to come will be the ultimate judge of this.

<sup>4</sup> See [THRESHOLD Magazine issue #20](#)

## HALFLINGS

“Rebellion? No, I’ve stayed loyal. Besides, my farms are essential for all. No farms, no food!”

– *Edna Riverwalk, hin farmer*

Few were more scarred by joining the Crown Killer than the hin of Blackmoor. To them, revolution was a chance to be taken seriously within society once more. What they received proved a chilling cautionary tale. Following the massacre at Castle Blackmoor, groups of hin scouts discreetly defected and fled towards the Stormkiller Mountains for temporary shelter. The dwarves gave a short-lived haven as plans for new shelter were devised. Numerous, sparsely populated territories became ideal; refuges from the maniacal eye of their former liberator. More and more, the hin banded together in solidarity and trauma in spite of the new growing power that ensnared them. Many early rebellion movements were likewise started up by these shaken but determined hin. This would be the ultimate undoing for much of the population, as most of them gathered around settlements dedicated to revolt and revolution. The fall of Woodenbridge also marked a buried genocide against the hin of Blackmoor, with the territory becoming their new home. Rumor had it that a double-agent among them saw their people as soft traitors in need of retribution. Should this prove true, the weight of this intelligence might have proved too heavy for them. Strangely, the dwarves who offered initial aid were punished to a less severe degree. This still led to experimental weaponry tested on the Stormkiller Mountains, killing many.

Unlike the elves, the hin have actually been reduced to a fraction of their old population. The overly rebellious ideologies found in most communities of Blackmoorian halflings cast them into suspicion and disdain. Even before Woodenbridge fell recently, various villages were raided and suspected conspirators were either captured or executed on sight. Booh and Ramshad were heavily targeted before turning into shameful moments in Blackmoorian history. Those who resigned peacefully were spared, many of whom moved into spaces that could be monitored with greater ease. Does this mean that they only make up 4% of the total population of Returned Blackmoor? Likely not, especially since those statistics are biased towards Blackmoor City itself. While not given the same graces as elves, many too have gone into hiding.

## BALEBORN/ORC

“Little, little men. They are in our way to true power.”

– *Grep’durb, orcish warlord*

An early evolution of beastman bloodlines. The strange powers of the Egg of Coot caused countless beastmen near Blackmoor to become the humanoids of Mystara far earlier. Most of these creatures would ultimately be purged by the Great Rain of Fire, with survivors scattering through Skothar and beyond. Among these survivors were three tribes of these quasi-orcs. Against many odds, they remained within Returned Blackmoor, adapting to the strategies used during the Beastman Crusades. The Plague of the Arcane also fabricated or mutated more humanoids into existence, many of which were beastmen during this late age of

Blackmoor. These mutated and remolded orcs have since found new purpose alongside their Blackmoorian brethren. Some see this remnant of Blackmoor as a threat to their desires, while others seek to indulge old habits of conquest and violence.

The orcs of Blackmoor, as they have come to be known, are not unified. In fact, their own tribes and bands aren't unified either. Arguments are consistent and the loudest or most brutish often wins. Should one empowered by the Egg arrive, then temporary order is established. The end goals of these evolved beastmen are rather scattered, much like their behavior. Some want to bring praise and celebration to the malignant force that bolstered them into what they are now. Some wish to escape Blackmoor and see what has become of the world at large. Others view Blackmoor as a mistake, a plague, a poisonous blight and other such things that must be destroyed. Some simply don't care outside of whatever becomes their fancy at the moment. These new orcs are not well understood by Blackmoor either, with much of the land still considering them to be beastmen. As for orcs lucky enough to break the Blackmoorian barrier, they have no pretenses about ever returning, even if it means abandoning their contentious brethren.

## LUPINS

“I know I’ll be hunted for this, but... the taste of Blackmoorian, it is so worth it.”

– *Gror Nighthide,*  
*wolfenfolk outcast,*  
*eating a slain royal soldier*

The canid people of Mystara. The vast majority of the population descended from slaves or older mutants. Beyond a prisoner from Renardie known as “Scratchy Pete,” there are no lupins from outside of Blackmoor. The mythology of the Blackmoorian lupins states that their ancestors were enslaved in current-day western Brun. It is likely that these breeds existed before BC 5000, as Blackmoor slowly rose to prominence.<sup>5</sup> Older generations distrust humans and demihumans at the very least. Even younger generations prefer isolation, if it can be helped. The domestic lupins have found their places within Blackmoorian society over the ages, some even rising to prominence. Even when successful, they’re treated as oddities and never fully integrated into their wider world. At best, they’re treated roughly on par with the average Blackmoorian. Much of the time, there is a patronizing sentiment that they’re mere steps beyond a sentient pet. This may range from patronizing nicknames to villagers fawning over perceived cuteness. The elderly Short-Herder ranger, Sir Dylan, has often complained about being patted on the head like a dog while on duty. This cannot be said for the wild lupins, who are relics belonging more to the Hollow World than the Over World. This irony isn’t lost upon Blackmoor, which is just as out of place. Despite this, the wild lupins are true

<sup>5</sup> See also: “History of the Lupins” by Átila Pires dos Santos and Agathokles, from [THRESHOLD Magazine issue #2](#)

Lupin: Original drawing by Jeffrey Kosh (<https://jeffreykosh.wixsite.com/jeffreykoshgraphics/home>)



to their name. They seek to be free from the dimensional shackles that protect their strange relic prison. Meanwhile, others are content waiting out the days till Blackmoor collapses once and for all. Thanks to the more chaotic and less genuine branches of the rebellion, some clans have succeeded in breaking free of Blackmoor. These lupins willingly shed any connection to the technocratic empire vestige. Those who stay aim to carve a home for themselves. None of these lupin tribes are overly eager to engage, but will fight to the death if their existence comes into question again. Thanks to reluctant cooperation between the Wolven and Coyotl, their chances for survival have begun to increase.

And thanks to the Immortals of Blackmoor, new forms of lupin emerge amidst endless calamity and strife. The Red Lupin is a hybrid of the early Wolven and Coyotl, merged together in an attempt to unify warring tribes. This succeeded in de-escalating tensions, but they are still not direct allies. The Red Lupins themselves are begrudgingly accepted by both Wolven and Coyotl, but not truly respected. Some wild lupins, in their quest to find themselves, have fallen under the slumbering influence of the Egg of Coot and have been twisted into its unholy minions.<sup>6</sup> Likewise, a dying breed maintains itself beyond the struggling lands of the Wolf Wood. The Westryn elves had long since befriended lupins in their efforts to rid the lands of lycanthropy. Ultimately, the tolls of war, disease, and general calamity claimed these allies of the elves. The elves petitioned the Immortals, namely Ordana, to save the lupins by granting them

<sup>6</sup> The Coot Hound, as referenced in the article, “Threats and Terrors of Returned Blackmoor” from [THRESHOLD Magazine issue #27](#). They are disgusting and disfigured, carrying strange mutations granted by the Egg of Coot.

elven boons. The Sylvan Lupin<sup>7</sup> was born, clad in silver fur with wisps of spiritual power upon the tips. Their existence is a very young one, only decades leading up to the jump between time. This new era of Blackmoor brings new troubles for the struggling new lupins, to say little of the remaining old lupins and Westryn elves. It is likely that another major attack would cause them all to perish, lest they be taken into the Hollow World soon enough. It is likely that the Westryn elves would go with them.

## RAKASTA

█ *“I defy thee, metal man! \*yowl\*”*

– *A Nyela cultist’s final moments  
against a minion of A.M.*

The felinids of Mystara. Most rakasta here are outside arrivals, with a few older mutants not purged during prior wars. Rakasta migrations to a new home came from the northern range of the Nentsun Peninsula and westwards from reaches near Esterhold. A similar tribe to the Esterhold refugees originates on the eastern portion of the continent towards Tangor. The more native mutants and their children are rarely given proper treatment, despite being quite acclimated to Blackmoorian ways of life. Many are considered a few steps above beastmen, with some earning favor similar to the “civilized” lupin varieties of Blackmoor. One-Eyed Tommy is one such sad soul, a former marine for the Blackmoorian Royal Navy. The Change brought upon the Great Rain remade him as he is now. Shellshocked and traumatized already from a life

<sup>7</sup> These lupins are infused with elven magic, thus use the Elf class as written for BECMI. Likewise, apply any Lupin bonuses from the race.

of conflict, he took to the streets. After years devoid of home, he took to busking while sharing his talents of singing shanties for some alcohol money. One gang of miscreants got him drunk before proceeding to beat and mutilate him, resulting in the loss of his left eye. Now older and withered, Old Tommy acts as a mentor and elder for “stray” rakasta lost within Blackmoor City. Likewise, “Sparks” is the child of two mutant rakasta, now under the custody of High Priestess Nyela. While he is accustomed to the bustle of urban life, he is well cared for by the plains clans. However, his dependency on cybernetics has him worried. As none of the tribal villagers are rehearsed in artifice, he fears that failure could mean death.

The most well known of these rakasta would be the tribe that Nyela now oversees. These Fast-Runner rakasta formed together from a mix of Tangoran and western continental refugees. The central village deep within southern Blackmoor is known as Brashi, named after the scrublands that fill much of the region. Further south, past the Wyvern Hills is the village of Iliyotiwa Chumvi, not far away from the Salted Road. Emissaries have been more inclined to survey Brashi, but other villages have been noted by mobile work towns that have ridden past the rakasta settlements. Few of these places have proved open to wider Blackmoor, whether out of caution or fear of continued reprisal. While the plains rakasta have suffered less than their more cold region cousins, they have faced forced movement on more than one occasion. As this tribe has a history of nomadic living, this poses no major threat to their life beyond a deep cultural offense. The exotic nature of Blackmoor has proved very enticing for many of the plains rakasta of faraway Skotharian lands. Discontent with

old tribal life, some have carved a niche within the slums of Blackmoor’s mega-city. The House of Glassed Plains has proved to be a cynical enterprise that has raised some funds for the wider tribes. At first glance, it is an ornate tavern covered in tribal rakasta motifs and art. Likewise, it offers exotic foods alongside unique drink recipes, exotic furnishings for sleep and relaxation, and local bits of culture. In truth, it’s a gambling den with hard-to-comprehend games meant to fleece drunk customers. Likewise, some attendants may double as “special companions” for loyal customers. Many of the wider tribes of Fast Runners and other plains dwellers decry the establishment as shameless and untrue to their ways. However, they do not balk at the earnings granted to them. This does not offset the added stress of tribe members acting as surrogate parents for quite a few children brought to them.

The mountain rakasta of Cloudtop and beyond have faced far more strife, ranging from surviving giants to conflicting with Blackmoorian outpost ranger stations. The Serrated Ice Militia compound has proved especially taxing on the mountain rakasta. Those who hunt too close to the militia’s base are fired upon. Most gruesomely, the severed head of a hunter named Spire-leaper is disdainfully mounted upon a pike near an entry trail. The Serrated Ice are not formally endorsed by the rangers or the greater Blackmoorian government. However, the isolationist mercenaries have been willing to gather intel on neighbors in the past. Since Blackmoor has become secluded, the mountain rakasta may have an argument for disbanding the militia with extreme force and prejudice, due to rumors of the mercenaries holding deeply rebellious anti-government ideals. Beyond these conflicts, the mountain tribes aspire to keep

to themselves. However, attempts at diplomacy have begun with the dwarves. This could lead to a cooperative relationship and possibly mend both broken societies.

## DETRITUS BLIGHTED

“Spare a coin for a walking corpse, friend?”

– *Bill Nasty,*  
*Detritus Blighted mutant*



*Detritus elves*

The radiant blight consumes you. Your sanity and sense of self sometimes flash before your eyes, should your energy fail you. However, the new power that courses through you does a good job of preserving you as long as you stay alive. Or at least, as

close to alive as you are now. However, the entropic power trapped within you does not like to be caged. Upon death, it activates to desecrate your body with rot and taint your mind. Every time you fall, you become closer and closer to a mindless roving husk. However, there are boons to becoming this strange form of undead. Hazardous work sites have seen the quasi-undead in higher numbers, due to their ability to withstand all sorts of toxics and plague-ridden filth without issue. As such, mobile work centers have employed them in greater numbers as well, if partially because they're away from main society. This is done with care and scrutiny, as they are considered volatile and ultimately dangerous. Many fear that they could degenerate into dangerous monsters at any moment.

The cause of your contagion can vary. More than likely, you were reborn upon Skothar, either in the wastes surrounding the original Blackmoorian grounds or in the tainted marshes of the Detrituswood.<sup>8</sup> You may have been exposed to heinous super weaponry, or the dark magics of the Detritus elves grasped your very soul. Perhaps a foul radiant lich sees you as a pawn for its growing army of the dead. Regardless of your origins, you are among the walking dead. Unlike the shambling corpses, you maintain your faculties and most of your previous looks. You still claim both of these, for now. However, the stronger death pulls, the more you risk losing yourself. Allowing this dark pull to transpire causes your looks to deteriorate and decay, as your mind dulls and your sense of self fades. And should you fall too far, you hollow out into little more than a

<sup>8</sup> The Detritus elves are explored in “*Threats and Terrors of Returned Blackmoor*” from [THRESHOLD Magazine issue #27](#)



ravenous and vile shell. These undead are in many ways little different from zombies. However, many still maintain some level of proper motor function and some memory of their past. This allows blighted husks to still be dangerous and capable opponents.

Within Blackmoor, Detritus-blighted are among those mutants given far less clemency. Their association with the taint of undeath, the sphere of entropy, and the follies of Blackmoor itself mark the blighted as pariahs. Fortunately, their strong resistance to lethal pollution and incredible fortitude open them up to work opportunities that few others can handle. This does not make such jobs any less deadly, as these living dead often contend with terrifying monsters and generally hostile environments. Others simply isolate, to prevent the risk of accidentally hurting the non-afflicted. Those who attempt to return to civilization often struggle, as the public fears that they might turn into little more than a zombie at any moment. While much of this is superstitious fear, it is not unfounded. Despite the fact that they no longer seem to age, their bodies risk natural degradation if not maintained and cared for. Coupling this with a constant balance of managing pain and numbness, the existence of the blighted is a deeply grim one. Those who fall too far risk degenerating into mindless and violent husks. Beyond the Detrituswood, several places targeted by powerful weapons have spawned these degenerated blight monsters.



*Blighted dead*

The GM grants the following:

- You gain a +15% XP penalty to class XP.
- You are mechanically treated as an undead creature, as stated below.
- You cannot be affected by poisons.
- You do not need to eat nor drink to survive, unless stated otherwise.
- You only need to sleep for class abilities.
- Healing magic has half effectiveness on you.
- You can carry disease, but are not affected by it.
- You can be *Turned* by a priest, like other undead. Consult the Turning Undead chart for the Cleric. Your level determines what form of undead you are *turned as*, rather than what a Cleric can turn. The last rating of turning before being *auto-turned* (usually 7) determines what undead you are treated as. This increases until Level 21. For example, a Level 1 Blighted is *turned*

like a Skeleton while a Level 21 Blighted is *turned* like Special. The save number does not go below 7 and into *Auto-Turn* however. (Consult Page 15 for chart.)

- At GM's discretion, you may take the Claws or Bite option for Weapon Mastery, starting with Basic proficiency.
- Creatures killed by you have a 10% chance of becoming a hostile Blighted Dead NPC; this increases to 25% with death by Bite or Claw attack. Both of these increase by 10% for every reanimation that you have suffered, to a maximum of 80% in either.
- Death is rarely the end for you. Ten minutes after dying, you are horrifically reanimated by your curse. Each death drains Charisma, the target must make a d20 check that is under the total. Success = your current Charisma score, as you continue to fester and lose your touch on life. Failure = Undead NPC, as you have lost all connection to life and become an Entropic pawn.
- Being affected by disease-curing or curse-removing spells grants you a new saving throw. Failure does nothing. Success instead restores 1d3 points of Charisma, up to your original score. Undead Blighted NPCs who failed may make the save, but must roll 5 or lower. Upon failure, they cannot be targeted for upwards to 24 hours. Upon success, they are restored to at least 9 Charisma and cannot be restored further for up to 1 week.
- If you are killed and your body is consecrated within 10 minutes of death, you are instead just dead. There is a 50% chance your soul will be stuck in Limbo

until you are resurrected. Doing so has a 70% chance of removing the Blight upon revival.

It is possible for an afflicted character to avoid hollowing out through magical protections, such as consecrating a body upon death. However, this will ensure that the victim simply stays dead without reanimation available at all. Many afflicted seek out this final death as an alternative to becoming a hateful monster of the grave. This is still possible for characters that have been deeply afflicted by the blight, especially those close to turning.

### BOONS OF THE CULT OF THE DETRITUS BLIGHTED

The elves of the Westwood are fallen and tainted. However, their previous knowledge and power has fused with the horrific entropy of the land. These mixtures of magics congeal into truly heinous dark arts. Among their more skilled are dread mages capable of bestowing boons upon devout warped dead. Blighted Dead are capable of receiving fell gifts from their Detritus elven masters. Boons can vary, here are examples.

- You are capable of unleashing a wave of anti-life energy (negative energy). A burst of energy comes forth from you, affecting all living creatures within 15 ft. of you. They must make a Save vs. Death Effect or suffer 1 level of level drain. Upon using this ability once, you must wait 48 hours before you can use it again.
- When you attack another creature, roll a d6. Upon getting a 6, you may drain a level (or effective equivalent) from them.

As long as you attack, you may attempt this ability again.

- Your natural attacks become progressively more magical. Starting at Lv. 2, your natural attacks count as both magical and silvered for facing other undead such as vampires. At lv. 6, your natural attacks gain magical bonuses. At certain levels, they gain the following bonuses: Lv. 6 – +1, Lv. 10 – +2, Lv. 14 – +3, Lv. 18 – +4, Lv. 22 – +5.
- For up to 2 hours, you may disguise yourself as if you were healthy and alive. This may be done up to 3 times in a 24-hour period.
- Increase your Undead Turning by 1 effective hit die. You cannot exceed the maximum for the Cleric's Turn Undead chart.

## BEAST MUTANT

“Err... Am cat now?”

– *A fresh rakasta mutant*

The often confused and muddled byproduct of Afridhi magic, lycanthropy introduced through the Warrens of Madness, Nyela's bid for Immortality, and Old-as-Dust's radiance-infused magic. Indeed, such creatures are four times cursed, but not to the strength as those afflicted by the Red Curse in the Savage Baronies and beyond. It is sadly common for mutants to suffer bouts of hysteria and psychotic outbursts, as their old selves clash with the new. Animalistic instincts, sounds and mannerisms mix with their old habits, speech and quirks. Physiologically, most mutants look far more feral than demihumans such as rakasta and



*Beast mutants*

lupin. They are pushed to hone their new abilities, all while attempting to retain their old skills. Some willingly forget their old skills in favor of the new. Unless further touched by magic, they still retain some hint of what they once were. For example, former elves retain a distinct grace and awe to them, while former dwarves retain a sturdy hardiness to them.

As the machinations of the Afridhi creations and Nyela's bid for power become known, the more retaliation mutants will face. Many will fail to integrate back into society, while others will face endless strife. If knowledge of the potent magic that created them isn't purged, a similar threat could arise and warrant Immortal intervention. Knowledge of involvement from Faunus and Zugzul could likewise spark a skirmish among the Immortals as well. Given the antipathy towards them by Gwyn's regime and supporting lands, this could be a boon for Returned Blackmoor. Little else is known about the affliction spread by the mad high priestess Nyela, at least by wider Blackmoor. A hidden cabal in service to Gwyn has some ideas, but cannot prove too

much. Their means of trying to explore this have mostly involved capturing beast mutants for heinous procedures. Among these procedures are mental extraction directly from an exposed brain or vivisection while siphoning the remaining magic. While they have not uncovered much, it has led them on a trail towards the unhinged rakasta. Likewise, one can banish the effects of this curse with potent enough magic. Only the most powerful of mages and priests have any luck. Though, it is said that a radiant undead horror is willing to offer a cure at a dire price.

The GM grants the following:

- 30% XP penalty per level—balancing the beast requires patience and extra focus.
- Take a -1 penalty each to Intelligence and Charisma. The GM may grant a +1 bonus to Strength, Dexterity or Constitution. Alternatively, take a -1 penalty to Intelligence or Charisma and gain no further bonus.
- Requires 1–7 days of verbal training in order to regain verbal means of spellcasting.
- Gain a natural weapon choice, starting with basic proficiency. (See also: New Weapon Mastery. Can only select Claw in the Fists/Claws options.)
- You may attempt to train in other relevant natural weapons as you gain levels.
- Replace AC progression with the following: -1 bonus to AC from level 2 through level 13 (AC 8 through -3), gain additional at 15, 18, 22, 27, 33, 36 (to a total of -9 AC bonus). This bonus exists while wearing no armor. Furthermore, armor

is more uncomfortable and takes twice as long to equip.

- Armor feels at odds with your growing bestial power and sense of mind. While attacking in armor, you take a penalty to your die roll. The penalty starts at -3 at 1st level and increases by 1 every 6 levels until reaching -10 at level 36.
- There is a 5% chance of spell failure per spell level, to a maximum of 45% at 9th spell level. However, at 12th level, this is reduced to 3% per level. At 24th, it is 1% and 0% at 36th level.
- You may speak with animals based on your mutant form.
- Gain one relevant Skill (such as: Hunting, Survival, Tracking or others up to GM discretion) as well as up to 2 of the following (treated as Thief skills): Hear Noises, Sense Smell, Climb Walls, Hide in Shadows, Move Silently.
- The GM may grant an animal racial feature like infravision, enhanced speed, or flight with restriction (such as not being able to wield weapons or limit total weight load while flying).
- You are immune to lycanthropy, as well as infectious fellow beast mutants.
- The majority of these creatures are of Chaotic alignment and all of them automatically fail attempts to resist magical charms/domination by animalistic demi-humans/humanoids (such as lupins and rakasta).

## BOON OF THE CULT OF NYELA

Those who heed the mad agendas of the high priestess may be rewarded a boon. By fusing her strange magic with sacrifices captured from the warrens and the crazed proto-gnolls, a foul elixir is bestowed upon those ready for a higher gift. This is typically reserved for devout clergy.

Boons can vary. As with the Detritus Blighted, some examples are provided below.

- You have been imbued with blood from the Warrens of Madness, which has made you a shapeshifter. This ability may be activated at will, but takes 1d4 rounds, and it is possible that you may take a full animal form, a humanoid/demihuman/human form, or both.
- Your natural attacks are infectious, akin to the Curse of Lycanthropy. When hit, the creature must Save vs. Paralysis. Should they succeed, they are immune, while failure causes the target to become an animalistic creature over the course of 1d20+4 hours.
- Your natural attacks become progressively more magical. Starting at Lv. 2, your natural attacks count as magical. At lv. 6, your natural attacks gain magical bonuses. At certain levels, they gain the following bonuses: Lv. 6 – +1, Lv. 10 – +2, Lv. 14 – +3, Lv. 18 – +4, Lv. 22 – +5.

## OTHER DENIZENS OF BLACKMOOR

### Blackmoorian GNOll

“The Afridhi are not dead, as I am right here.”

– *Toska the Reawakened,*  
ambassador for the Afridhi gnolls

A hidden secret of Blackmoor. While the creatures at the time of Blackmoor were not true gnolls, they shared many traits. At the time, they were merely hyenoid humanoids that fused aspects of rakasta and lupin alike. There was no connection to Pflarr, the Hutaakan, or Ranivorus—let alone Nithia. In truth, these creatures mostly fled from Blackmoor during the Great Rain of Fire, later integrating with the gnolls of Nithia and merging back with the population in Skothar. What hyena-like humanoids existed on the continent at the time have since died out or been bred out by the current stock of gnolls. Only the most devout priests know this, but guard this knowledge tightly, for fear of what such revelations may bring. To everyone else aware of Returned Blackmoor, Skothar did it first and was forgotten. Due to the acquired blood of Known World gnolls, the madness of Ranivorus courses through them. The vast majority are Chaotic, even if many no longer seek to destroy Blackmoor. Perhaps more than other humanoids and beast-kin, their interactions with humans and demihumans are often awkward at best, sometimes incomprehensible at worst. For some, it is the Curse of Zugzul continuing to haunt them. For others, they blame the remaining decadence of Blackmoor for not understanding them.

The culture of the Afridhi endures, adapts, and evolves through their proto-gnoll creations. While the worship of Zugzul has long since been banned, many teachings have been molded into a more acceptable modern format. The Afridhi gnolls love the sun and fire, even if forced to revere less anti-Blackmoorian Immortals. As more of their past has been made clear to them, a divide has formed between the gnolls. One faction sees Blackmoor as the slayers of their progenitors, seeing a return to Zugzul and those he aligns with as righteous. Their disdain for humans/demihumans/other humanoid has manifested in numerous ways, ranging from mutagenic cult priests to butchering warriors. These gnolls are scions of Entropy, antagonistic towards the actions of heroes and many villains alike. They are akin to the degenerated and mad remnants of the Afridhi who dabbled with black magic, integrating with their creations. The far less extreme side of this anti-Blackmoor faction seeks to find a way to leave, so they may integrate elsewhere. The other faction is pretty pro-Blackmoor and simply wishes to be left alone, seeking no more than acceptance. A few of the pro-Blackmoor faction see the rest as passive, but do not wish to return to old destructive ways. They've joined humans and other races seeking less violent means of change. Many of these gnolls have taken up being adventurers.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Either use the above rules for Beast Mutant or follow the rules presented in GAZ10: "The Orcs of Thar", with slight variation. Alternatively, use the "[Cyclopaedic Companion](#)" stats (from the Vaults of Pandius) created by Cab and give the gnoll a choice of fighter or cleric classes.

## GNOMES

"Is this the afterlife? I think I've found salvation."

– Zaddergath Wentlestone,  
crashed pilot turned prisoner



Gnome

Post-Blackmoorian entities that still found their way here. Much like how Kagyar created the modern dwarves to spare a fading population of Kogolor, Garl saved others and created the gnomes. By accidental happenstance, the traveling Serraine caught a glimpse of something wonderful in Skothar. It was another great artifact, not unlike the wondrous machine that gave the city its flight! As the gnomes took off to investigate, time was warped around them. In no time, their frigid dig site was suddenly near an existing town. Upon exploring further, they uncovered an advanced but suffering people. None were able to leave, save for one curious

young explorer who ventured with most of the gnomes to Serraine. While some of his travels and history were documented, the young man died of a mysterious disease within days of leaving Skothar. The gnomes buried their “future man” and set back to learn more of Blackmoor. Decades passed until there was finally enough push to give another look. The survey teams who were dispatched never returned, leading Serraine proper to fear the worst. In reality? They were absorbed by the magical barrier that shields Blackmoor. The mad General and his forces heard of the strange sky tinkers in the years before Blackmoor’s ascension to the planes beyond. The most iconic is Zadder-gath Wentlestone, a pilot from Serraine who crashed into Blackmoor.

As of now, the gnomes exist in a strange space. There are few of them within Blackmoor’s limits. The dwarves do not understand them, the humans barely do either, the halflings are unnerved by them and those are all their main allies. The more tricky and whimsical gnomes get along with the elves to some degree, but there are no true ties. Many find jobs related to their origins. While there are even fewer ground gnomes, they’ve taken to the magical crafts that still flourish in such an advanced realm. For the others? The alien magitech is an incredible field of study for them. However, their penchant for slightly off and chaotic tendencies do not collide well with Blackmoorian society. Their incredible pools of knowledge and skill are well respected, but their seemingly crude and awkward presentation marks them as potential pariahs. As such, they tread carefully, fearing retribution and knowing they are unlikely to ever make it back to their homes. Deep down, they hope more of their kind can make it over and bring positive change to Blackmoor. This place could be

their utopian ideal, if it wasn’t weighed down by tyranny and corruption.

## Ursai

■ “Leave me be, meat.”

– *The last words a weary traveler heard in an Ursai’s cave*

Enigmatic outlanders for countless ages in Blackmoor, they were just as prone to being friend as they were foe. Some tribes proved rather beneficial to Blackmoor, while others took the mantle of their enemies. Elves and dwarves brought many in for their strength and potential for construction and defense. Like most humanoids and beastly kin, their days upon Blackmoor were tested by the Beastman Crusades. For eons, the Ursai fell silent, retreating to hidden dens and other solitary places. Only a small population failed to evade the purge, usually spread far enough from giving the position of others. This seclusion spawned a disconnect from other races, as their earlier aloof and seemingly alien mindsets returned with each passing generation. The only thing to bring them out of their figurative torpor was a series of explosions that rocked the very foundations of their lairs. No matter the protective shamanistic magic enforcing their walls, the Great Rain of Fire was the end for all Ursai who did not retreat into or dwell in the land of their oppressor. In the decades since, the mysterious bear people have become a dour and fearful sort. Many will flee at the first sign of a Blackmoorian, but those confident enough will attempt to trap and slay them. Others arose thanks to the dread beast cults in recent years. Regardless, the vast majority have come to blame Blackmoor for their current suffering.

## Goblinoids

“SCREEEEEE!”

– *Raiding goblins*

A mixture of post time-jump invaders and mutating beastmen from the Great Rain. Many have been intimidated into serving the orcish tribes of Blackmoor, if they didn't break away to create their own problems. Many find the unfathomable horrors of the Egg of Coot to be enticing to their dark desires. Even bugbears fell in line with the more organized orcs, including the strange psychic mutants. Alongside other less prominent humanoids, they are more inclined to create short-term problems, often tackled by Blackmoorian patrols or hired out mercenaries.

## Cyborgs

“I still love, fear, laugh, cry, and so much more. And yet, you still treat me like a war machine.”

– *Sgt. Gunnery Ander Westernson, addressing Blackmoor Veterans' Services*

While not a race all their own, those augmented with Blackmoorian magitech are still considered an “Other” by many. Those with covert augmentations are far more adapted for social situations, while those who offer less subtle upgrades are treated as oddities to gawk at in many situations, or glorified killing machines in far bleaker ones. It doesn't help that rumors abound that the military is biologically engineering super soldiers, alongside mechanical implants. These “Supreme Knights<sup>10</sup>” have

<sup>10</sup> Supreme Knights are magitech super soldiers, seen in [THRESHOLD Magazine issue #27](#) (page 86).

not been proven within the public sphere, but may very well exist. Also, not all cyborgs are human. With the return of dragons prior to the final years of Blackmoor, many learned to integrate technology into themselves and increased their own power. Likewise, smarter humanoids, such as the psychic orcs, have discovered the benefits of cybernetics as well. Others, like the minions of Augmented Machine, exist in toil and agony by their changed existence.

## MINIONS OF THE EGG

“When I twist my face at this angle, does it scare you?”

– *A minion torturing a captured ranger*

Abominations twisted to serve the agenda of an eldritch being. Not all of these creatures are gnarled and warped into the grotesque. Among the most horrific of these entities are ones that have been reshaped into the desired “perfect” image of their respective race. These harbingers of cosmic doom are perhaps the most mentally alien and truly evil. These “pleasant” spies have infiltrated nearly every part of Returned Blackmoor, some even feeling their way through pirates and rangers who have gained access to wider Mystara. Even slightly tainted minions are considerably off-putting. Many heed the calls of the Egg, slowly embracing corruption out of a personal desire or a chance to evade their growing insanity.



## NEW WEAPON MASTERY

This option is available to player characters with natural weapons. Likewise, NPCs above Animal Intelligence (3 or higher) may also have access to it, if it is relevant to them. If you include cybernetics, they can count for these rules or separate weapons.

<b>Bite/Tail*</b>			
Hand-to-hand, never thrown, natural weapon			
Ba	1d6		
Sk	1d6+2	H: -1 AC/1	Delay
Ex	1d8+2	H: -2 AC/1	Delay
Ma	2d6+1	H: -2 AC/2	Delay
Gr	2d8+2	H: -3 AC/3	Delay
<b>Fists/Claws*</b>			
Hand-to-hand, never thrown, natural weapon			
Ba	1d4		
Sk	1d6	H: -1 AC/1	Claw, Claw, Bite
Ex	1d8	H: -2 AC/1	Claw, Claw, Bite
Ma	1d8+2	H: -2 AC/2	Claw, Claw, Bite
Gr	2d4+4	H: -3 AC/3	Claw, Claw, Bite
<b>Slam/Hind Legs/Hooves/Horns*</b>			
Hand-to-hand, never thrown, natural weapon			
Ba	1d6		
Sk	1d8	H: -1 AC/1	Stun
Ex	2d4+1	H: -2 AC/1	Srun
Ma	2s4+2	H: -2 AC/2	Stun
Gr	2d6+2	H: -3 AC/3	Stun

\*Each counts as their own weapon, simply merged with another for brevity.

### Special Effects:

- **Two-Fist Combat:** With fists or claws, you are always considered to be wielding two weapons. Instead of per the two-weapon combat rule, you may make your off-hand attack by taking a -2 penalty to the To Hit roll. This cannot be repeated in the same round of combat.
- **Claw, Claw, Bite:** Upon hitting with both attacks from a Two-Weapon-Combat based Natural Weapon, you may also make another Natural Weapon attack with a -2 To Hit penalty. This cannot be repeated in the same round of combat. Likewise, you do not gain the special effects such as Delay or Stun from a trained attack.

Before we crossed the  
**Threshold**  
there was the...

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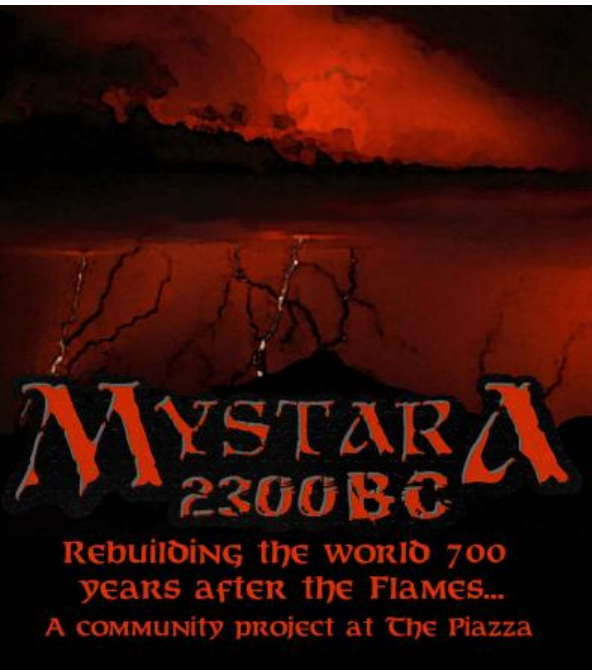
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[Almanacs at the Vaults of Pandius](#)



[2300 BC sub-forum at The Piazza](#)

A detailed illustration of a medieval-style interior, possibly a library or study. The room features high, arched windows with diamond-patterned glass. Several people in period clothing are seated around a large wooden table. In the foreground, a man with a beard and a headband is adjusting a vintage, wood-grain portable radio on the table. The radio has a prominent speaker grille and several knobs. Candles are lit on the table, providing light. In the background, other people are engaged in study or conversation, and a chandelier hangs from the ceiling.

# Radio and Robots

## High-Tech Equipment for Classic D&D

by Cab Davidson

Whether you're trying to equip a party of NPCs from high-tech societies such as oard or planar spiders, running a science fantasy game such as Blackmoor at the very peak of its civilisation, or even just wanting to drop a few oddball items into a normal fantasy campaign, a list of high-tech equipment is a must have. This is something we see frequent reference to in old-school D&D without ever really getting anything like a comprehensive list. So here is a selection of some of the weird, wacky, wonderful and (just sometimes) useful items that might be available to buy, steal, or that might flat-out kill you next time your party is shopping at Alpha Proxima Megamart or exploring the smoking remains of a crashed starship.

Much of the equipment here is adapted from TSR's classic "*Star Frontiers*" game, while other items are influenced by technological items in classic *D&D*, such as the DA module series and "*Wrath of the Immortals*". This article is an attempt to consolidate the whole topic of high-tech equipment in a simple, easy to use list, and to add many new options not given in earlier products too. Included is a simple guide to vehicles in high-tech societies, essential for when your budding wizard-monk character needs to sell their speeder to escape a backwater desert planet and join the galactic rebellion, and a short guide to robots and cyborgs.

But first, some general notes on what you're about to read.

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### Costs

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These are assumed to be gold piece equivalent. Whether you're paying Republic Credits, Galactic Ningis, or actual gold pieces, treat these costs as ratiometrically correct. A flashlight may not literally cost you 5gp (or if that's how the economy works on your planet, it may) but it's probably fair to say that a personal wormhole, rated as costing 5,000gp, is worth about a thousand times more than that.

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### Encumbrance

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Precise weights are not given, as I'm assuming that you're using the simplified classic *D&D* encumbrance rules from the 1983 *Basic Set*. If that is not the case, then feel free to add weights to each or any of the items here. Some items, such as an all-weather blanket, weigh practically nothing but are quite bulky and might have a nominal encumbrance of 20cn despite weighing less than 5cn, whereas a chronocom may weigh around 2cn but being worn like a wristwatch means it has no measurable encumbrance at all. DMs are encouraged to think rationally about how much detail they wish to add.

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### Power Sources

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Power sources for powered equipment, where not included in the item themselves, are interchangeable with those used to power high-tech weapons (see accompanying article). Energy clips are roughly palm-sized, rechargeable units weighing 3cn that slot into the handle or stock of the weapon, holding 20 charges that can be expended before charging. Belt packs are around 8" by 4" by 2", weigh 50cn, and hold 50 charges. Multiple devices can be plugged into belt packs, and they can also be

recharged. Power backpacks are larger still and hold 150 charges. They can also be used to simultaneously power multiple devices, but they are heavy, having an encumbrance of 150cn, and they prevent any other backpack being worn. Lastly, for static guns or linking to huge numbers of smaller devices (typically used with heavy lasers) static power banks can be used. These may come in capacities ranging from 500 to 2,000 charges, can simultaneously supply power to many devices, but they are essentially immobile. Ships and other large vehicles and installations contain many generators, and can be used to charge any rechargeable power source, at a rate of 20% of maximum capacity per hour (for example, a 20-charge power clip gains 4 charges per hour if left charging).

## Item Descriptions

**Allweather Blanket:** Foil and plastic laminate material, will keep a single creature warm while sleeping in conditions as cold as  $-20^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $-4^{\circ}\text{F}$ ).

**Anti-Shock Implant:** Must be implanted by a surgeon. Confers immunity to stun and delay effects and gives a +4 bonus to saves vs. knockout and paralysis. Battery life is 2 years.

**Babelvox:** Worn like a band around the neck, with a wire connecting to an earpiece (or to two), this device detects incoming languages and translates any known language into whichever language it is programmed to output for the user, and likewise translates the user's words into the language it determines those nearby can hear. It can learn a new language in  $d\%$  hours of exposure to that spoken tongue, and all are pre-programmed with all known Frontier languages and Interlac (a simplified language common on Federation and Frontier worlds). A babelvox uses 1 charge per day of use and can hold up to 6 charges.

**Breathing Apparatus:** Fits over the head, with goggles, for environments without breathable air but with traces of oxygen, and where a simple gasmask is insufficient. Comes with scrubbers and oxygen-concentrator gills. One standard charge lasts 20 hours.

**Bugbot:** A slow-moving (30') but tiny and inconspicuous (half an inch across) semi-autonomous (RC2) robot that can be synced with a chronocom or any other personal computer device to allow tracking and sound recording, with a transmission range of 12 miles (or up to 100 miles from an orbital position). Can easily be destroyed if discovered.



**Chronocom:** A miniature computer (RC4) worn on the wrist like a watch. It can be used for video and audio communication or for interfacing with robots and other devices under the operator's control. Without other devices to boost signal (such as transmitter towers or radiophone) it can contact other chronocom or padcomp devices within 5 miles. This device is charged by the motion of its wearer, but if unworn it runs out of charge after 1 week.

**Envirosuit:** A tight-fitting, environmentally controlled suit that incorporates breathing apparatus or a gasmask, for survival in hostile environments. It uses 1 energy charge per day to heat or cool, or 1 charge per hour if it must also protect its wearer from vacuum or high/low pressure environments. It has standard energy and data fittings.

**Everflame:** A small lighter, containing a tiny radioisotope source which converts the air ¼" above it to burning plasma when a button is pressed, igniting any combustible material it is brought into contact with. Each device has an anticipated lifespan of 5 years and cannot be recharged.

**Exoskeleton:** A frame constructed to be worn outside any clothing, joining to arm and leg joints, and bracing the neck and back of the wearer. Donning or removing an exoskeleton takes two full turns. It allows the wearer to run at up to double their normal movement rate, with four times their normal carrying capacity. They may jump straight up into the air 20', or forward by 30'. The wearer gains a +3 bonus to their strength. Exoskeletons containing slots for weaponry, welding tools, etc., are known from certain military and other specialised providers but are not easily available. An exoskeleton uses 1 standard charge per minute of operation.

**Flashlight:** A small torch that can fit a standard energy clip or be linked to any other energy pack, using 1 charge per 10 hours of use, illuminating an area up to 30' across up to 300' away.

**Freezefield:** A personal (5" by 5" box) stasis field that can be activated for a single individual to which it is (potentially very rapidly) attached. When used with a dead or dying victim within 2 minutes of any form of death not too extreme (damage inflicted taking the subject to no more than -50hp) this places the patient into stasis, no longer degrading any further, for up to 200 hours (at which point its internal battery runs out and the patient dies). During this time a medic, cleric or medbot may try to revive the character (who is treated as if alive, but with 0hp).

**Gasmask:** Where toxins or dangerous gases are present in an otherwise breathable environment, a gasmask confers immunity thereto.

**Gravboots:** Boots with small gravity generators, allowing the wearer to walk and run normally in low-gravity environments. Can be toggled to a padcomp or chronocom for wireless control (allowing, for example, a character to take a run up and then turn the gravboots off to cross a chasm with a single jump in low-gravity environments). They contain their own power supply, which needs recharging (equivalent to 10 standard power charges) after 24 hours of use.

**Hazard Gauge:** A device typically worn round the wrist which alerts its user to risks, lighting up blue if exposed to hazardous radioactivity, red in low oxygen conditions, and yellow if toxic substances are detected in the air. A user may also push a central button to get readouts of all three parameters on screen, which will appear green if no hazards are present. It can be linked to a padcomp for data logging or transmission. It is powered by the wearer's movement.

**Instaraft:** Around the size of a suitcase, the removal of a pin and pulling of a string causes an immediate inflation of a life raft therefrom. The vessel is 12' long, 6' wide, covered, and made of a very robust rubbery plastic. With a single entry point that can be zipped up, it can fit 6 people with limited comfort. It contains sufficient survival rations for 6 people for 2 weeks, and 2 dozen emergency water bottles with reusable filters (allowing them to be used to desalinise and remove any toxins from water). A small beacon light is found at the point of the roof cover, and an emergency radio transmitter can be activated by passengers.

**Ion Boots:** Each boot is powered using a standard energy clip, using 1 charge per day. While turned on, the wearer walks roughly 1" above the surface of the ground, allowing them to walk on water or any similar liquid, and allowing them to avoid pit traps.

**IR Goggles:** These can operate in two modes. In *passive* mode they provide infravision to a range of 90', but only in darkness. In *active* mode they give infravision to a range of 120', in any lighting conditions, but the wearer is very visible to others with infravision due to the emission of bright IR light that is needed for this function. In passive mode they use 1 standard charge per day, while in active mode they use one charge per hour.

**IR Jammer:** A small box worn on a belt. This confers invisibility to IR goggles or infravision, using 1 standard charge per hour.

**Jetpack:** A small, portable rucksack (weighing around 100cn) that allows the wearer to fly. Any standard power pack can be used, including a power backpack (to which it can be attached). Jetpacks confer the ability to fly at up to 360' per turn, at the cost of 1 charge per turn, or at emergency speed up to 360' per round, also at the cost of a single charge per round. Usually they are steered by the wearer holding a portable joystick in one hand, but some may be configured to read the direction the wearer's head is facing.

**Life Jacket:** A tough, self-inflating floatation device that can either be worn under or over clothing or packed into a ball around the size of a fist. Pulling a string causes it to inflate instantly. It also contains a small light source that will remain visible for up to 2 days, and a whistle.

**Magnigoggles:** Can focus on items from 6" distance to anything within sight, providing up to 10x magnification. They take a standard energy supply and use 1 charge per turn of use.

**Medkit:** A standard medkit contains the following:



**Acid neutraliser.** 1 bottle of liquid to neutralise acids (restores half of all acid damage if applied within 2 rounds).

**Antiseptic.** 5 cans of spray to clean and disinfect a skin area (if applied within 6 rounds, any disease-causing effect is neutralised).

**Surgeon Bot.** A small machine that keeps wounds open and controls bleeding during surgery, and which can allow a surgeon to perform minor procedures on themselves.

**Laser scalpel.** Used to make incisions.

**Mediscan.** An electrical instrument used to diagnose ailments (determining the

nature of any and all injuries, poisons or illnesses).

**Microforceps.** Adjustable, used to remove shrapnel and bullet fragments from wounds.

**Medical Glue.** 5 cans of spray that closes wounds and heals burns (treat as *cure light wounds*).

**Hypospray.** Syringe used to give shots without a needle. Contains:

**Universal Adjuvant.** 10 hypo doses that increase the body's ability to recover from diseases (treat as *cure disease*).

**Antitox.** 10 hypo doses to neutralise poisons (treat as *neutralise poison*).

**Stem Cell Booster.** 20 hypo doses to stimulate very fast healing (treat as *cure serious wounds*).

**Veritas Blend.** 10 hypo doses of truth serum (victim must save vs. poison or be forced to tell the truth for 1 turn).

**Stim.** 10 hypo doses to revive unconscious individuals (removes knockout, stun and paralysis effects).

**Save dose.** 10 hypo doses to sustain a dying person for 20 hours (treat as *cure light wounds*, but only for subjects with under 10hp).

**Painaway.** Local anaesthetic. 10 hypo doses to relieve pain.

**Panacyclin.** A near universal antibiotic. 10 hypo doses to control infections.

Charges of hypo-spray treatments and other consumables from the kit can be replaced at a cost of 30gp equivalent each.

**Nanite Pack:** A small, hand-sized box containing millions of tiny robots, with a miniaturised control dial on the outside of the box. A number of mission settings can be chosen for the nanobots, and the box placed on one creature (possibly necessitating an attack roll) at which point the nanites will work to complete their selected



mission. A list of standard missions includes the following:

**Heal:** The nanites work for 5d6 rounds, restoring 1d6+1hp of damage per round.

**Protect:** Predictive algorithms allow the nanites to shield the subject from incoming damage. For 1 hour, each time the recipient would take damage they may make a saving throw vs. spells to reduce that damage by half.

**Enhance:** The recipient benefits from bonuses of +2 to strength, dexterity and constitution for 1 hour.

**Accelerate:** The recipient's standard movement rate is doubled for 1 hour.

**Harm:** The nanites work for 5d6 rounds, inflicting 1d6+1 damage per round.

**Soften:** The algorithms designed to protect a user are instead used to maximise the force of incoming damage. Each time the recipient would take damage, they must make a saving throw vs. spells or instead take double that damage.

**Hinder:** The recipient, if struck by the nanite pack, suffers -2 penalties to strength, dexterity and constitution for 1 hour.

**Slow:** The recipient is, if struck by the nanite pack, slowed for 1 hour, being able to move at only half of their normal movement rate.

Note that any nanite pack applied to any creature under the influence of an already active nanite pack will immediately neutralise the first effect. No creature can have two nanite packs active at any one time. If a character wishes to remove a negative effect of a nanite pack, *cure disease*, *neutralise poison*, *cure all* or other similar effects will do so.

**Nanosolv:** A small, single-use aerosol of a solvent that can be used to dissolve *web*, tangle grenade strands, polymer rope bonds, glue, and similar materials.

**Padcomp:** A small (5" by 4") hand-held, touch-screen computer (RC4) and communications device, made to wirelessly link to any standard computer terminal or communicable robot. Can be used to control and program such devices, as well as to interface and communicate *via* ships or land-based networks. Can connect to orbital transmitters, and has a range of 20 miles for communicating with robots and other padcomps or chronocomps. An accompanying earpiece can allow hands-free communication with others connected to a network. Uses 2 standard charges per day, can hold up to 10 charges.

**Parawing:** Essentially a parachute with small rocket motors, facilitating escape from high altitude, and conferring the same effects as a *fly* spell for up to 3 turns. It requires 30' of space to open.

**Personal Wormhole Generator:** A handy device fitting around the wrist, which fits a standard energy clip. For the expenditure of 4 charges, the wearer can step to any visible location within 240', as per a *dimension door* spell.

**Pocket Tool:** A small pocket multitool, reminiscent of a Swiss Army Knife, with the following functions:

- A penknife blade
- A universal screwdriver
- A small, adjustable wrench
- A miniature saw blade
- A pen
- Tweezers
- A corkscrew

Vice pliers  
A hole puncher  
A small flashlight

**Quantum Communicator:** Also known as a quantophone. Similar to a radiophone, but massively more powerful. Using quantum waves it can be used to contact any known radiophone, quantum communicator, or other communication device within the same star system, and up to 1 plane of existence away (the ethereal from the prime, any of the elemental planes, the astral or the prime from the ethereal, etc.).

**Radiophone:** A long-range communication device, around 8" by 8" by 4", able to connect with stations and ships in orbit and other radiophones within 1,000 miles, regardless of connection to computer networks. 10 minutes of use drains one standard charge from any power pack. Can be used to connect padcomps or chronocoms within 1,000 miles to produce a network.

**Robocom Kit:** Standard toolkit for robotics and computer specialists. Contains:

*Breadboard circuits.* Standard boards for mounting robot circuitry.  
*Sonic Calipers.* Capable of taking measurements as small as 0.0001'.  
*Components.* Box of transistors, diodes and computer chips for robot circuits.  
*Demagnetizer.* Electrical tool to demagnetise fouled circuits.  
*Sonic Driver.* Rotates all shapes and sizes of screws and bolts.  
*Sonocutter.* Powered metal-cutting shears (sheet metal only).  
*Insulated wire.* 30'.  
*Plasma Tape.* 6" wide x 15' long, bonds directly to any metal.  
*Lasoldering iron.* Laser soldering iron.  
*By-pass clips.* 10 small connectors used

to short-circuit wiring.  
*Miniature flashlight.* 20 hours of light; magnetised handle.  
*Needlenose pliers.* Similar to 20th century tool.  
*Oscilloscope.* Miniaturised viewer which displays information on electrical flow and other aspects of circuitry.  
*Solv Spray.* Spray solvent to remove dirt from the robot's works; 10 applications.  
*Spray Lube.* 10 applications of pressurised oil.  
*PTFE Spray.* Will insulate circuits, cloth, etc., from moisture; five applications.  
*Sonic Scalpel.* Tool for cutting plastic, metal or flesh; makes a smooth, bloodless incision up to 5mm deep.  
*Solder.* 1-metre roll of conductive soft metal.

**Scancorder:** A powerful sensor device, a rugged hand-held (RC4) computer and scanner that can log information about its surroundings. It can be used to analyse and record sound, electromagnetic and ionising radiation, motion, the chemical and physical makeup of materials, power sources, and the type and number of living organisms, all within a range of 100'. The closer the subject interrogated, the better the information gained. A scancorder can be used to detect and identify diseases and injuries, or for diagnosing mechanical defects and damage to machinery. It can be calibrated to detect both invisible and magical effects, if used by skilled operatives. It uses 1 energy charge per hour of use and can hold up to 20 charges, and can be wirelessly linked to padcomps, robots of RC4 or higher, and other communications and computer devices both to reprogram for unusual sensing applications and to upload data.

**Polyblastix:** The standard plastic explosive used across the Federation often referred to as “kaboomite”. Only a licensed demolitions expert can purchase this legally. It is typically used with a variable timer/detonator, which can be set from 1–60 seconds, 1–60 minutes or 1–60 hours, but radio detonators are also known. A 1cn charge inflicts 8d6 damage to any creature within 3' of the explosion, with each additional 1cn increasing damage by 4d6, to a maximum damage of 20d6. For each 2cn added, the area of effect of the explosion is increased by 3', to a maximum area of effect of 60'. For damage to buildings, a well-placed charge (with a successful skill check) does full damage to any construction, with a failed skill check or inexperienced use of the charge only damaging the building as per normal rules for fire damage. Note that with safe packaging, polyblastix must contain at least 2lb of packing material, whether 1cn or many hundreds are carried.

Polyblastix is somewhat more stable in pentaspaces than traditional ammunition (see the accompanying guns article for details) but can still be unpredictable. It is only likely to explode unpredictably in large volumes, of more than 10cn. Every 2cn above this is treated as an extra round of ammunition for determination of instability.

**Starflare:** A small, dense, single-use power source with a rocket attachment that, when triggered, flies straight up 600' (or until it hits a hard ceiling) before discharging its power over 1 hour, illuminating an area 1 mile across.

**Suction Gun:** A pistol containing a single charge that fires a piton on the end of a long (300') rope. It has a

laser pointer projecting a point at a target, giving a +4 to hit, and with a hit roll modified thus the gun propels the piton to a target where it embeds. A button can then be pressed, causing the rope to coil back into the gun, with straps from the handle of the gun wrapping around the user's wrists either taking the user towards the target or the target towards the user (if it is not held and it is lighter than the user). This can be used to climb sheer surfaces, get up to a bridge from below, grab an item from a distance, *etc.* If used as a weapon it causes 2d6 damage, and if skewered by the piton, the wielder (if desired) may pull the target towards them (or if the target is heavier, be pulled to the target). A save vs. paralysis roll is allowed to avoid being skewered by the piton and pulled to the wielder. The cord recoils at a rate of 60' per round.

A suction gun is a single-use item.

**Sungoggles:** Thick sunglasses, for use in bright environments.



**Survival Rations:** Foil-wrapped survival rations, usually in biscuit or slab form, with dissolvable tablets to purify up to 2 gallons of water. The cost is the equivalent of 1gp per person per day.

**Techkit:** The standard tools of a technician. Contains:

*Sonic Driver.* Rotates all shapes and sizes of screws and bolts.

*Sonosnips.* Powered metal-cutting shears (sheet metal only).

*Insulated wire.* 30'.

*Plasma Tape.* 6" wide x 15' long, bonds directly to any metal.

*Hammer.* Large ball-peen high-impact head.

*Jack.* 5,000 kg capacity, 18" lift, collapses to a 10" cube.

*Mag grips,* Electromagnetic vice-grips.

*Wrench.* Adjustable (as socket wrench).

*Polybond.* Tube of plastic filler, bonds to any plastic surface in one minute; five applications.

*Prybar.* 3' plasteel rod, collapses to 6".

*Spray lubricant.* 10 applications of pressurised synthoil.

*PTFE waterproofing.* Will insulate circuits, cloth, *etc.*, from moisture; 5 applications.

*Socket wrench.* Adjustable from ¼" to 2".

*Uninsulated wire.* 80', can support 2 tons.

*10 pneumatic hoses.* Of assorted sizes.

*500 nuts, bolts, clamps, screws and nails.* Of assorted shapes and sizes.

**Tracker:** A small (around 2" square), self-adhesive transmitter that is activated by tapping it to a com unit (padcomp, chronocom, *etc.*) which pairs it to the tracker. After which, the pad can give a direction and distance reading to the tracker, as long as it is

still working, is not shielded in any way, on the same plane of existence, and is within the same star system. The tracker gives no further information than location.

The backing of a tracker is engineered to stick to nearly any surface but is typically attached to vehicles or robots. A tracker has sufficient power to transmit location information for up to 5 days.

**Utility Drone:** A small (18" by 18") circular quadcopter drone designed to attach to any standard power charger on common vehicle and generator type to charge, and able to operate independently for up to 24 hours on a single charge. Its standard operation is simple, and it can be paired with any padcomp or chronocom.

The utility drone serves many functions. It can be set to rise to a height of up to 800' and circle, scanning the area with weak microwave emissions that penetrate soft cover (tree canopies, crops, *etc.*) to create a map of an area 1 mile across. This process takes 15 minutes. It can be instructed to rise to a height of 1,600' and act as a data hub, linking a group of up to 100 mobile computers of any type to a single secure network, with a range of 50 miles; while in this use, the drone can be set into 'guard mode'. In this configuration, if it detects a creature taller than 18" approaching within a quarter of a mile of a given location, it will send alerts to all devices in its network. While using guard mode it can be set to active IR, during which time it will appear as a bright heat source to anyone with infravision as long as it is in line of sight, the IR light it produces being sufficient to allow infravision or standard IR devices (such as the utility drone itself) to work in daylight and to double their range at night. A user can also pilot the drone from their

padcomp, with a range of up to 3 miles, viewing a real time camera feed on screen.

Utility drones have an AC of 4, and 20hp. They cannot attack. They have a movement rate of up to 360' (120').

**Vitahydrate Pills:** Sold in packs of 12. If two per day are taken, this reduces the need for water by 25%, thus they are immensely valuable in hot environments.

**Vortex Gloves:** Gloves made of a silky, white, smart plastic, each with a standard energy attachment allowing them to be linked to any standard energy pack, and each also containing a pass-through socket allowing powered items held to be connected to any carried power packs via the gloves. At a cost of 1 charge per round, the gloves can be used to manipulate objects at distance, effectively opening small wormholes between the user and any point

within 180', allowing the user to wield objects at a distance, make hand to hand attacks, *etc.* Any objects held also appear, with the hands, at the other end of the wormhole. Note that while this may confer surprise (most creatures will not expect to be attacked thus), the wormhole is a two-way phenomenon, and the wearer of vortex gloves is not immune to damage from creatures at the far end.

**Water Pack:** 8 reusable plastic water bags on a simple frame allowing them to be attached to or worn as a rucksack. Each also contains a reusable cleaning and desalination filter, turning potentially dirty water clean, allowing bags to be refilled almost anywhere.

**Table 1: Other Tech Gear**

Item	Cost	Note
Allweather Blanket	20	Plastic, protects to -4°F
Anti Shock Implant	2,000	Confers immunity to stun and delay
Breathing Apparatus	200	
Babelvox	1,000	Translator device
Bugbot	100	
Chronocom	100	Watch/communication device
Compass	10	
Envirosuit	100	
Everflame	100	
Exoskeleton	3,000	Extra strength and carrying capacity
Flashlight	5	200 hours, 300' range
Freezefield	1,200	Emergency stasis field
Gasmask	30	



Item	Cost	Note
Gravboots	500	Points feet down
Hazard Gauge	100	Detects dangers
Instaraft	500	Emergency escape boat
Ion Boots	1,000	
IR Goggles	200	24 hours on full charge
IR Jammer	600	Invisibility to infravision
Jetpack	1,500	Flight enabler
Life Jacket	10	
Magnigoggles	200	Binoculars and magnifiers
Medkit	500	Doctor's kit
Nanite pack	1,500	1 dose
Padcomp	400	Small computer
Parawing	250	Jet parachute
Personal Wormhole Generator	5,000	Dimension Door tool
Pocket Tool	20	Multitool
Quantum Communicator	10,000	Contact other planes
Radiophone	600	Communicator
Robcomkit	500	For robotics and computers
Scancorder	3,000	Universal sensor
Nanosolv	10	Spray escape
Polyblastix	50/cn	Explosive 'kaboomite'
Starflare	50	Goes up 600', illuminates 1 mile radius
Suction Gun	100	Rope gun
Sungoggles	2	Thick sunglasses
Survival Rations	1	Water purifier pill and 1 days food
Techkit	500	Standard technician's toolkit
Tracker	400	Locator device
Utility Drone	1,500	Handy surveillance drone
Variable Timer/Detonator	5	
Vitahydrate Pills	10	Salt replacement, reduces need for water
Vortex Gloves	750	Manipulate objects at range
Water Pack	5	8 resealable bags



## HIGH-TECH VEHICLES

As in all things in high-tech societies, a myriad of means of getting around are produced by countless manufacturers. For simplicity these are divided into various categories presented below and summarised in table 2, with numerous vehicle classes representing many makes, models, and types. As per real world experience, many differences between near identical vehicles may be purely cosmetic, or a DM may choose to amend individual vehicles with small differences in performance.

### Explanation of Vehicles Table

**Vehicle:** Refers to the type of vehicle. While there are many kinds of each (just as there are different manufacturers of cars and helicopters in the real world), for convenience they are divided into simple groups.

**Speed:** Motorised vehicle speeds are given in maximum miles per hour and yards per round. Note that vehicles do not have combat speeds *per se* but can operate at up to their maximum speed. Acceleration or

deceleration of up to  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the vehicle's maximum movement speed per round counts as a single manoeuvre, trying to accelerate at  $\frac{1}{2}$  speed counts as 2 manoeuvres,  $\frac{3}{4}$  as 3 manoeuvres, and to go from static to full speed in a single round counts as 4 manoeuvres.

Hover vehicles can maintain top speed over most terrain, including water, but cannot cross heavy seas, go through dense forests or through areas of large rocks. Wheeled vehicles can only reach top speeds on flat roads, and occasionally on some extremely flat natural terrain. Traditional (cobble) roads effectively top out speeds of ground cars and ground transports at half maximum, with dirt tracks and similar modifying the speed according to the DM's judgement. E-cycles and explorers can travel at up to 75% of full speed on dirt tracks and cobble roads.

**Seats:** The number of seats that a vehicle can easily accommodate. Note that vehicles may be converted to carry more people, with ground transports and hover transports being easily adaptable into buses, exchanging cargo capacity for up to 80 seats.

**Table 2: Vehicles**

Vehicle	Cost	Speed	Seats	Cargo (cn)	Fuel	Manoeuvring factor	AC	HP
E-Car	5,000	120mph (600yd)	6	3,000	P2	3	1	200
E-Transport	15,000	90mph (440yd)	3	200,000	P3	2	3	400
E-Cycle	2,000	120mph (600yd)	2	400	P1	4	2	100
Hovercar	8,000	160mph (800yd)	6	2,000	P2	2	1	200
Hover Transport	20,000	120mph (600yd)	3	200,000	P3	1	3	400
Hover Cycle	2,000	160mph (800yd)	2	400	P1	3	2	100
Explorer	20,000	100mph (480yd)	6	40,000	P3	4	0	600
Helijet	40,000	300mph (1,500yd)	4	1,000	P4	3	3	400
Aircar	50,000	600mph (3,000yd)	4	6,000	P4	3	2	700

**Cargo:** Cargo capacity is treated as normal.

**Fuel:** All of the vehicles described are powered by parabatteries. These range in size from fist-sized to 1 cubic metre. The following four types referred to as P1, 2, 3 and 4 are used in vehicles.

P1	E-cycles and hovercycles (6" cube, 400cn)
P2	E-cars and hovercars (18" cube, 600cn)
P3	E-transports, hover transports and explorers (2' cube, 800cn)
P4	aircars and helijets (3' cube, 1,000cn)

**Manoeuvring Factor:** The number of manoeuvres that a vehicle can make per round (see flying vehicle rules in "*Dawn of the Emperors*").

**E-Car:** A ground car is a wheeled vehicle very like a modern car, running on battery power. They are manoeuvrable and convenient, and commonly used. Ground cars can cross almost any type of terrain if they have ground clearance, but they are not as fast as hover vehicles on level ground or roads.

**E-Transport:** Ground transports are heavy, wheeled trucks. They can have open or enclosed cargo areas, or can be adapted for carrying passengers.

**E-Cycle:** Electric motorcycles. They are fast and very manoeuvrable.

**Hovercar:** A hovercar, often known as a skimmer or a speeder, is a car that floats on a magnetic cushion of air a foot above the ground. A pair of turbo fans propel a hovercar through the air. Hover vehicles are

faster than ground vehicles but are less manoeuvrable and limited to travelling on fairly level surfaces or calm water.

**Hover Transport:** A hover transport is a heavy truck version of a skimmer.

**Hovercycle:** Hovercycles are two-man hover motorbikes. They are easier to ride and control than a ground cycle but less manoeuvrable.

**Explorer:** Heavy, four-wheel drive vans built for travelling and exploring in rugged areas. Manoeuvrable and reliable. Each wheel has its own motor, and the extra-wide tyres make it very stable. Explorers are air-tight and have a retractable rudder so they can cross open water, but they can be capsized by high waves.

**Helijet:** A helicopter with jet engines. At low speed they fly by means of helicopter rotors. Using the jet engines allows them to fly at high speed.

**Aircar:** An aircar is a vertical take-off and landing vehicle, or VTOL. It takes off and lands like a helicopter, but flies like an aeroplane.

## Range

All vehicles listed above can travel 1,000 miles on a fully charged parabattery before being out of energy, at which point the battery must be recharged or replaced. Full charging requires access to a power generator and takes 4 hours multiplied by the battery type number. For example, to fully charge a truck battery requires 12 hours.



## Operating Vehicles

Tech vehicles work almost exactly the same way as flying mounts and ships, using the rules from “*Dawn of the Emperors*”, with only a few differences. Firstly, if evenly spaced through the round, instead of one manoeuvre per round being free, two manoeuvres can be carried out for free, with further manoeuvres (up to the MF value of the vehicle) requiring skill checks. However, the initiation of a 2- or 3-manoeuvre turn in one moment always requires a skill check. This means that the speed of a vehicle may make tight turns extremely difficult, because of the motion of the vehicle between manoeuvres, perhaps necessitating slowing to turn without losing control.

Attacking vehicles is treated as if attacking buildings, with damage from weapons, physical and magical attacks handled as for stone constructions. When initially a vehicle takes 10% of its total HP damage, then for each successive 20% (therefore at 30%, 50%, 70% and 90% damage) roll on table 3 to determine the effect on driving. Roll d% and add the total % vehicle hit points lost to the roll. Note that damage is cumulative – a vehicle may take 20% followed by two 40% reductions in speed, and thus be immobilised.

When a moving vehicle is being attacked, remember that it may only be possible to attack it for a tiny proportion of a round. It may only be within range for a melee or



missile attack for a second or less and it is important to apply rules for partial targets only available for a fraction of a round as given in the *Rules Cyclopeda*, potentially increasing the maximum to hit penalty further than the -8 given therein. Targets inside a vehicle are treated as having full hard cover, unless the windows are open, at which point they are treated as having three-quarter cover (unless bending down for protection). Users of hover bikes and e-bikes have no cover.



**Table 3: Vehicle Damage Table**

Damage Roll	Effect	Description
11–40	Cosmetic damage	Paintwork is damaged, or bodywork dented. Perhaps the glass is cracked.
41–60	20% speed reduction	Top speed and acceleration reduced by 20%.
61–80	40% speed reduction	Top speed and acceleration reduced by 40%. Smoke or sparks may also be coming out of the vehicle.
81–100	Skid	The vehicle moves at 10% of the speed planned that round, and a skill check is required to regain control. Current speed is reduced by 90%.
101–120	Spin	The vehicle is spinning and will move in a randomly determined forward direction at 10% of its speed, and finish the round stationary (or falling), facing a random direction.
121–140	Roll	The vehicle has been upended and is rolling. It will overturn 1d6 times while moving at 10% of its former speed, causing 1d6 damage per roll to all occupants, before coming to a rest. Each roll inflicts a further 6d6 damage to the vehicle, and a flying vehicle will fall while rolling. A skill check at -4 is required to bring a falling flying vehicle back under control.
141–160	Burn	The vehicle is on fire. It continues moving as before. The vehicle takes 10d6 damage per round until the fire is extinguished, and all occupants likewise take 10d6 fire damage but can save vs. dragon breath for half damage.
161–180	Burn and roll	The vehicle suffers the effects of both roll and burn (see above).
181–200	Explodes	The vehicle explodes, inflicting 20d6 damage to all within 40'. Those outside the vehicle may save vs. dragon breath for half damage, whereas those inside take full damage (no saving throw).



## COMPUTERS, ROBOTS AND CYBORGS

Computerisation is nearly ubiquitous on high-tech worlds, and it is impossible to detail every type or application thereof. But general notes for the use of computers, robots and cyborgs are provided.

A computer is any mechanical device designed to run programs, sets of instructions facilitating an almost endless set of tasks. A robot is a powered device that uses a computer to process information, with a body or physical form to carry out work. Cyborgs are robots with organic components making them very similar in appearance to living things, and contain only the most advanced computer brains. Experts in computer programming are skilled in creating the instructions to make computers and robots operate, whereas robotics experts specialise in the interactive physical forms of robots.

Robots and cyborgs range from very cheap, menial items to extraordinarily complex proxies for the most intelligent humans, from simple bottle washers to horribly beweaponed battle droids, and consequently the costs for purchasing them are hugely variable, based on the capabilities of the machine and the quality of the computer brain that operates it. Prices for buying them are summarised in table 5.

There are hundreds of varieties of computers and robots used across Federation, oard and planar spider worlds and within their ships, and computers of various forms are embedded in almost every form of technology. They vary from the most menial (shoe polishers, pocket calculators, carpet cleaners, traffic regulators, *etc.*) through to

strategic brain bots that govern the movement of vast sums of money through markets and AI-capable robots dealing with the most profound research questions in hypermathematics and quantum multiverse theories. All robots are immune to *sleep* and *bold* spells, all poisons and poison gases, and take half damage from fire, electrical and cold based attacks (saving for a quarter). Class 1–5 robots and computers are immune to *charm* spells, whereas RC6 are vulnerable to such but may make a saving throw with a +4 bonus.

**Computer (CC) or Robot Class (RC) and Intelligence:** Computers including those embedded within robots and the various types (padcomps, chronocomps, *etc.*) described in the equipment section are constructed with different classes of processing power graded from class 1 to class 6. The capacity of this artificial brain governs the number of programs it can run simultaneously, but higher-capacity systems come at significantly greater cost. Each higher category of computer can accomplish all of the mental tasks of lower category robots, with extra abilities. Computer and robot classes are categorised in table 4.





Table 4: Computer and Robot Classes

Class	Int	Description and Examples
1	0	Can run 1 simple program (polish a floor, shoot at approaching targets, perform as a calculator, etc.).
2	2	Can run multiple simple programs or a more complex set of tasks (e.g. crush rocks and sort an ore, shoot at targets that don't have a password, etc.). Can receive encoded radio instructions.
3	4	Can run multiple simple programs, or more complex tasks, and can receive and respond to verbal commands (and ignore them if they contravene programming). For example, a class 3 domestic servant robot may be able to run a household, prioritising tasks in order of importance to complete them to a schedule.
4	8	Can act semi-independently to accomplish a goal, thus programming can be based on a required goal rather than actions. This flexibility allows them to work out how, from any number of options, to complete a given task. Can act as a sensor and mission hub for other robots.
5	16	Can act fully independently, prioritising tasks and fully controlling other allied machines <i>via</i> encoded data links. For example, a security bot may choose to rescue victims of a criminal while simultaneously organising pursuit of the miscreant using other robots. Can be programmed to download software to accomplish unexpected tasks as needed, making a good proxy for independent but occasionally uncreative thought. Possesses the computer security skill (see below).
6	Up to 20	A sentient, fully autonomous robotic mind able to create and modify its own programming or that of linked devices, such as when running a factory to respond to real-time economic data, or to throw in 'wild card' unexpected tactics in combat to surprise and destabilise opponents. Capable of empathy and conscience, creativity, and strategy. Possesses computer programming and computer security skills (see below).



## Robot Types

### Infbot (Infantry Robot)

AC:	-23
HD:	8**6
Movement:	120' (40')
Attacks:	2 weapons
Damage:	By weapon
No. Appearing:	2d6 (2d6)
Save As:	F16
Morale:	10
Treasure Type:	Nil
Robot Class:	2-5
Alignment:	Lawful
XP Value:	1,750

Standard military-grade infantry robots, typically bipedal and designed to take the role of living infantry soldiers and commonly also used in policing. Most are of lower RC, while sergeants are usually RC4 and officers typically RC5. All contain two weapons (see accompanying article on high-tech weapons) inserted in standard weapon bays, which are for most infantry either dual blasters or lasers, occasionally with heavy-weapon models carrying grenade launchers in place of one of the blasters. Policing and riot-control units may also include grenade launchers with sleep or tangler ammunition and can incorporate needler guns for less lethal law enforcement. Melee weapons (laser and sonic swords) are sometimes preferred, but all infbots are configured to strike as if wearing shock gloves that are capable of discharging up to 6 charges (for 6d6 damage). Almost any combination of weapons can be added for different mission profiles.

A typical military squad of infbots contains around 8 members, most configured for small arms with one or two equipped with

heavy weapons, but larger regiments of many hundreds are employed for specific tasks.

Infbots are able to function for 24 hours at full activity level without needing to recharge and can enter a standby mode that expends only 1 minute's worth of normal power per hour, utilising only acoustic and optical sensors while doing so. They have infravision to a range of 60'. Weapons packs may contain up to 200 standard charges, and 40 grenades or 100 needler rounds. Models fitted with jetpacks or able to control military vehicles are known.

### Ubot (Utility Robot)

AC:	-3
HD:	6
Movement:	30' (10')
Attacks:	1 grapple
Damage:	1d4
No. Appearing:	1d6 (2d6)
Save As:	F8
Morale:	6
Treasure Type:	Nil
Robot Class:	1-5
Alignment:	Lawful
XP Value:	275

Standing between 3' and 4' tall, and flying on a magnetic cushion around 1' high, ubots are slow servants designed for the automation of countless tasks, everything from laundry and washing dishes through to repair of the exterior of spacecraft. While individual programming is often limited, the adaptability of the ubot means that almost any tool and software package can be used, making the ubot universal on Federation missions, in factories and in homes. Typically, a ubot carries 1d4 separate tools for various jobs, and while class 1 ubots are limited in the work they can do, higher

class ubots are used for almost every automatable job.

While anything may be weaponised, ubots are approaching harmless, and it takes very specialised programming to make them hostile. If attacked they will usually wave their tools to return the attack before, typically, seeking to raise an alarm to get help.

**Ecobot (Ecology Robot)**

AC:	0
HD:	12**
Movement:	120' (40')
Attacks:	1 needler
Damage:	1d8+Special
No. Appearing:	1 (1)
Save As:	F24
Morale:	10
Treasure Type:	Nil
Robot Class:	4-6
Alignment:	Lawful
XP Value:	3,000

Almost identical in appearance to the ubot, ecobots are more robust, with a toughened duralloy case. This case is equipped with a holographic projection unit that allows them to hide their presence, allowing them to surprise any foe on a 1-5 on 1d6. They are designed to collect ecological specimens from worlds visited by Federation vessels, carrying 60 rounds of needler ammunition to allow them to stun animals, with a range of cutting and sampling tools to take specimens of air, earth, water, and plant matter. They are capable of conducting complex biochemical and genetic analysis of any plants, fungi, stunned or knocked-out animals, and can instantly synthesise serum to incapacitate them for 2d6 hours, during which time they are typically programmed to contact their mothership and await collection.

Ecobots are not aggressive, but in their desire to fulfil their programming they are invariably tenacious. An ecobot usually contains sufficient charge to remain active for 72 hours, or up to 6 months on power-saving mode, allowing them to wait and monitor a location for an extended period.

**Sbot (Service Robot)**

AC:	5
HD:	3
Movement:	90' (30')
Attacks:	1 weapon
Damage:	By weapon
No. Appearing:	1d6 (2d6)
Save As:	F6
Morale:	12
Treasure Type:	Nil
Robot Class:	2-5
Alignment:	Lawful
XP Value:	35

Typically constructed to resemble their makers (a human would normally build a human-shaped sbot, a vrusk may have vrusk-shaped sbots, etc.), service robots are typically found doing domestic and menial work. They are commonly found acting as servants in the home, tour guides, teaching assistants, etc., anywhere that an anthropomorphic form would be preferred to something more abstract. While generally resembling their creators, they are not easily mistaken for living creatures in the way cyborgs are, usually having no organic components.

Most are class 3 or 4, being able to adapt to many simple tasks, but a few are class 2 (typically restricted to opening doors, polishing metalwork, etc.) and RC5 specimens (taking charge of other domestic robots within larger households, operating departments in large shops, etc.) are also known.

They cannot (according to Federation law) be programmed for violence or aggression, but they may protect their masters if attacked (containing firmware requiring that they fight to the death to do so if necessary), typically attacking with a single weapon.

Sbots are not designed for endurance, and usually only contain a small power cell allowing 12 hours of constant action before requiring charging. Some models do allow the sbot to plug in a second battery that can charge while they are active, thus swapping their own power supply and remaining active for longer.

### Riotbot

AC:	-3
HD:	16**
Movement (flying):	180' (60')
Attacks:	2 weapons
Damage:	By weapon
No. Appearing:	1 (2d4)
Save As:	F32
Morale:	11
Treasure Type:	Nil
Robot Class:	2-5
Alignment:	Lawful
XP Value:	4,050

This is a medium-sized (6' x 6') autonomous or semi-autonomous quadcopter designed to work in unison with others of its type to control crowds, provide information, and suppress riots or uprisings where necessary. Each is equipped with a loudspeaker, a light projector and a screen on the underside such that messages may be transmitted vocally or visually to any who can see or hear it (usually from below), and two weapons from a wide range of available options (including needlers with 80 rounds, lasers or sonics with 200 charges,

gyrojets with 75 rounds, and grenade launchers containing up to 20 rounds) that can be deployed at any targets lateral to or below the robot. In addition to standard weapons, one of the bays may be configured to contain gas cylinders containing 8 charges of a gas, which can be sprayed in a 200' cone, 80' wide at the far end. All those within the area of effect may make a save vs. poison or succumb to the effects of the gas. Various gases have been encountered, including those causing sleep, charm, fear, and deadly poison.

Typically, class 3 and 4 riotbots are deployed for most tasks, but for complex missions a type 5 is usually used for command and control of larger swarms.

### Medibot (Medical Robot)

AC:	5
HD:	7
Movement (flying):	360' (120')
Attacks:	4 scalpels
Damage:	1d4 each
No. Appearing:	1 (1d6)
Save As:	F14
Morale:	12
Treasure Type:	Nil
Robot Class:	4-5
Alignment:	Lawful
XP Value:	175

Medibots are crudely humanoid in form, with four large fans located to force air through their bodies (on their shoulders and hips) to allow for quadcopter-style flight, to allow them to travel rapidly to an injured character. Most used in civilian roles are RC5 whereas to save cost most employed in military roles are RC4. Their role is to travel to a site of need (an accident or injury), rapidly assess the situation, provide emergency medical care, and



**Hbot (Heavy Robot)**

AC:	2
HD:	20–40*
Movement:	90' (30')
Attacks:	1
Damage:	4d10 to 10d10
No. Appearing:	1 (1)
Save As:	F36
Morale:	12
Treasure Type:	Nil
Robot Class:	1–6
Alignment:	Lawful
XP Value:	4,500 to 13,000

arrange evacuation of the patient (typically via a second quickly deployed robot).

They are not programmed for combat but will try to hold any attackers at bay while treating a patient, being programmed to do so at any risk to themselves. They have four arms, with which they can apply medicines, perform medical tasks, or wield scalpels in defence. They carry a range of treatments and medications, including antitoxins, liquid skin, bandages, tourniquets, and full standard-issue Federation medipacks. For simplicity this can be treated as the capacity to *cure critical wounds* up to 6 times on a single load, *neutralise poison* up to a dozen times, and *cure disease* 4 times. They can also employ freeze fields to put up to 5 dying characters into stasis and can remain alongside to maintain this shield until assistance arrives.

Medical robots are made for fast response rather than resilience, and typically have around 12 hours of charge.

Existing in various forms, from quadrupedal with heavy machinery on a huge platform, to massive humanoid machines, through autonomous tracked vehicles with cranes, diggers, and rock-crushing devices. They are essentially the machinery for the heaviest kinds of mining and industry, entrusted to do the work of many thousands of workers for months on end. They are to be found running everything from nuclear reactors to forestry plantations, from farm equipment to machine assembly. Most can be programmed for a variety of tasks, only limited by hardware. Most have battery power for up to a week.

Heavy robots are rarely programmed for aggression but will defend themselves or their work if attacked. While none have weapons as such, being hit with a crane, run over by machine tracks, or picked up and hurled into a rock crusher can cause immense damage. Class 1 robots are used for single jobs, while the responsibilities of a RC5 hbot may extend to controlling other robots in entire production lines, mines, or farms, while RC6 models may even control whole colonies or modify production lines in response to real-time market data.



**Offbot (Officer Robot)**

AC:	-2
HD:	12**
Movement:	120' (40')
Attacks:	2 weapons
Damage:	By weapon
No. Appearing:	1(1)
Save As:	F24
Morale:	10
Treasure Type:	Nil
Robot Class:	5-6
Alignment:	Lawful
XP Value:	3,250

Typically constructed on similar lines to infbots, offbots are created to lead and control other robots in combat, law enforcement, security, and other tactical situations. Highly intelligent and able to create and transmit novel programming for themselves and other robots in their control, they are capable of complex tactical and strategic planning. While not primarily designed to do so, they are more than capable of fighting, with similar capacity to infantry robots, and they have a more substantial build quality. Understanding their strategic importance, they are willing to sacrifice infbots to ensure their own survival.

**Cyborgs**

In some ways the peak of robot design and construction, cyborgs are constructed from toughened duralloy components and high-spec robotic parts over which organic tissue is grown. They are in effect robots with organic components, which often allow them to be mistaken for humans (or other organisms that they can be built to resemble). While most are constructed to do the work of organic creatures where this would be too dangerous or too difficult, and while many cyborgs are strictly programmed to inflict no harm, there are numerous forms that have been or can be programmed to kill.

All cyborgs possess 60' infravision and have excellent hearing and vision. They can only be surprised on a roll of 1 on 1d10. Their reactions are faster than those of any human, and in the first round of any combat they gain +4 to initiative, and each subsequent round they are treated as having a dexterity score of 18 (thus +3 to individual initiative). They can handle any weapon as if of skilled weapon mastery, and if it is anticipated they need to use such they are usually equipped with both melee and ranged high-tech weapons. Their incredible response time also allows them to operate twice as fast as most creatures during a combat round, with a combat speed of two thirds of their standard speed.

Cyborgs can both receive and send programming and can be instructed from a distance. They can act as hubs for whole fleets of lesser robots and will obey their masters' instructions even to the point of self-destruction (an explosion causing 20d6 damage to all within 20', as if a *fireball*, all within range saving vs. spells for half damage). They contain self-regulating

atomic power sources that allow the cyborg to work independently for up to 6 months, but which then require replacement (their power cells cannot be recharged).

Cyborgs are immune to poison, *sleep*, *hold* and similar magic, but being RC6 they are susceptible to *charm* and other mind-affecting magic.

**Standard Cyborgs**

AC:	0
HD:	12**
Movement:	120' (80')
Attacks:	1 fist/1 weapon
Damage:	3d10 or by weapon
No. Appearing:	1d4 (1d4)
Save As:	F20
Morale:	10
Treasure Type:	Special
Robot Class:	6
Alignment:	Lawful
XP Value:	3,000

Appearing as normal members of any sentient race, standard cyborgs tend to have rather stilted speech patterns and unusual mannerisms that may give them away as artificial constructs. They are therefore poor at infiltration but are tirelessly capable of many complex tasks. While in pristine condition from the factory they are almost incapable of violence, but numerous simple software patches can be applied to turn them into formidable warriors. They are typically tasked with maintaining and operating spacecraft while the crew are in hypersleep, and with managing teams of robots with specific tasks.

Standard cyborgs do not carry treasure, but are often entrusted with protecting valuables or cash, their owners understanding that this may be useful in many environments.

**HK (Hunter Killer) Cyborgs**

AC:	-4
HD:	24**
Movement:	180' (120')
Attacks:	2 fists/2 weapons
Damage:	4d20 or by weapon
No. Appearing:	1 (1)
Save As:	F24
Morale:	12
Treasure Type:	Nil
Robot Class:	6
Alignment:	Lawful
XP Value:	8,750

Designed and programmed with a specific purpose, to hunt out and kill specified prey, HK cyborgs acting as assassins are feared across the Frontier. They appear and act very like standard cyborgs but are massively more dangerous. Containing collapsium rather than duralloy frames, they are both more durable and more damaging. HKs are constructed for a single job, to seek out and kill named individuals, and once tasked with this they will continue until either their target(s) or they are destroyed, or until a recall notice is received from their owners. Capable of reprogramming other robots they come into contact with, and able to create new programming for them on the fly, they are especially dangerous in and around other robots, which they freely employ for their purposes.

HKs are treated as 'expert' with all weapons, and may be armed with almost any weapon available to their owners.

### Infiltrator Cyborgs

AC:	3
HD:	10**
Movement:	120' (80')
Attacks:	1 fist or 1 weapon
Damage:	2d10 or by weapon
No. Appearing:	1 (1)
Save As:	F20
Morale:	9
Treasure Type:	Special
Robot Class:	6
Alignment:	Lawful
XP Value:	2,500

Infiltrators are designed with composite polymer components, utilising a minimal amount of metal in their construction to allow them to pass through simple scanners without detection. In behaviour and action, they are more akin to the creatures they're built to resemble, and to most who meet them they are nearly identical to normal members of the species. Indeed, without some magical means (or a more complex scanning technology) they will remain undetected unless their programming necessitates they do something suspicious.

Infiltrators are made to find information, store it, and send it back to their owners (using their inbuilt communications device) when that will not be detected. They act as spies both for governments and businesses but also as scouts amongst primitive societies in which they may be planted for anthropological research. They may be programmed to commit acts of violence if that would be necessary to blend in and are treated as having skilled weapon mastery with all weapons.

### Cyborg, Pleasure

AC:	9
HD:	5**
Movement:	120' (80')
Attacks:	1 fist or 1 weapon
Damage:	2d10 or by weapon
No. Appearing:	1(1)
Save As:	F20
Morale:	10
Treasure Type:	Nil
Robot Class:	6
Alignment:	Lawful
XP Value:	325

Constructed to fulfil the wishes and desires of their creators, pleasure cyborgs are almost invariably created to represent physical perfection as perceived by their owners. Skilled as musicians, actors, cooks, masseurs, in all acts of physicality, but also in medicine and psychiatry, they are used to help maintain the physical and mental health of crews in long space missions. They may be gym buddies, confidants, players of games, or they can fulfil any other roles required. They are as adept at acting the role of their portrayed species as infiltrators but without the complex programming necessary to maintain a hidden identity. They are frequently found on starships in deep space, where they may be imagined to provide little practical worth but are viewed as essential parts of crews.

While not usually programmed for violence, they, like every other invention, may be hacked for such a purpose.



**Table 5: Costs for buying robots and cyborgs**

Robot Class						
Type	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Robots</b>						
Ecobot	-	-	-	12,000	16,000	32,000
Infbot		8,000	12,000	16,000	20,000	-
Hbot	5,000 to 20,000	7,000 to 22,000	10,000 to 25,000	15,000 to 30,000	25,000 to 50,000	50,000+
Medibot	-	-	-	20,000	35,000	-
Offbot					30,000	60,000
Riotbot	-	10,000	15,000	20,000	25,000	-
Sbot	-	500	1,000	4,000	8,000	-
Ubot	1,000	2,000	4,000	8,000	16,000	-
<b>Cyborgs</b>						
HK	-	-	-	-	-	100,000
Infiltrator	-	-	-	-	-	75,000
Pleasure	-	-	-	-	-	20,000
Standard	-	-	-	-	-	40,000



## Technology Skills

While most technological equipment can be used by any character, to get the most from complex items it is useful if a character possesses the correct skillset. Skills listed below are common in high-tech societies but almost unheard-of in magical worlds.

Typically, many skills available in standard D&D games are also available to characters from high-tech worlds. Profession and science skills are essentially the same, but more specialised forms are available allowing greater depth of knowledge, e.g. there are botanists in both fantasy and high-tech settings, but molecular botany and exobotany may only be found in societies that have greater scientific capability.

### Alien Anthropology (Intelligence)

Spacefaring characters frequently find themselves on worlds with primitive or, at least, very alien intelligent species. While the moral and social codes thereof are almost infinitely variable, some themes and trends tend to emerge as such societies develop. A specialist in alien anthropology can categorise such cultures based on material, scientific and artistic cultural materials and artefacts, and a successful check can allow a character to interpret the actions or motivations of natives of alien planets and may allow them to make peaceful or, at least, less dangerous contact.

### Computer Programming (Intelligence)

Use of computers is universal in high-tech societies, but writing programs to make a computer do something new is a somewhat rarer skill. Ordinary use of a computer (retrieving information, using installed soft-

ware, *etc.*) does not require the use of a skill, but adapting a computer or robotic brain to do a new task does require the use of a programming skill. Note that a new program cannot change the basic capabilities of a computer – a class 2 computer can accomplish simple tasks, and can never be capable of fully autonomous action like, for example, a class 5 or 6 computer. The time required to program a computer is determined by the DM, but more complex tasks require more work.

### Computer Security (Intelligence)

The employment of complex software and coding to make computers and robots secure. To protect a computer from hacking, a skill check is required, and the DM should record the number rolled. When trying to alter the software of a computer programmed and protected thus (to hack somebody else's programming), a skill check is required, beating the initial skill with an opposed check by as far as it was made, modified by -1 per level of the computer.

For example, a character with the computer security skill wishes to protect a class 3 computer brain from hacking. That character rolls a d20 and the result is 5 under their intelligence score. A second character tries to hack that computer and change the programming, and to do so they must make a computer security check by 8 (the 5 that the initial check was made by, +3 because it is a class 3 computer brain).

### Demolitions (Intelligence)

While almost anyone can set an explosive charge with a detonator, to understand their best use for destroying buildings, bridges, vehicles, *etc.*, requires a skilled

demolitions expert. A successful check allocates the full damage of an explosive charge to the HP of a building or other target to which the explosive has been applied, whereas an unskilled use of explosives can still damage buildings, but is treated as fire.

### **Driving (Dexterity)**

Operating a ground-based vehicle. While there are some technical differences between transport, land cars, hoverbikes, *etc.*, their basic control is similar. Ordinary operation does not require a skill check, but use in stressful situations, chases, *etc.*, does require a check.

### **Mechanical Engineering (Intelligence)**

Repairing vehicles and other equipment for use, a highly skilled process in a technological society with a myriad of different machines. If spare parts are available, a successful check will allow a character to repair damage to vehicles at a rate of  $1d6+1hp$  per hour of work. If spare parts are not available, a maximum of half of all damage to an item can be repaired. This skill is

required to add equipment to robots, fix vehicles, replace broken parts of computers, and to effect any complex repairs. While most characters in a high-tech society can manage some repairs (replacing a tyre, fitting a memory chip to a computer, *etc.*), more complex work is best carried out by a skilled operator.

### **Medic (Intelligence)**

A successful skill check gets the maximum from futuristic medical equipment (i.e. maximum number of HP restored, most rapid removal of paralysis, *etc.*).

### **Piloting (Dexterity)**

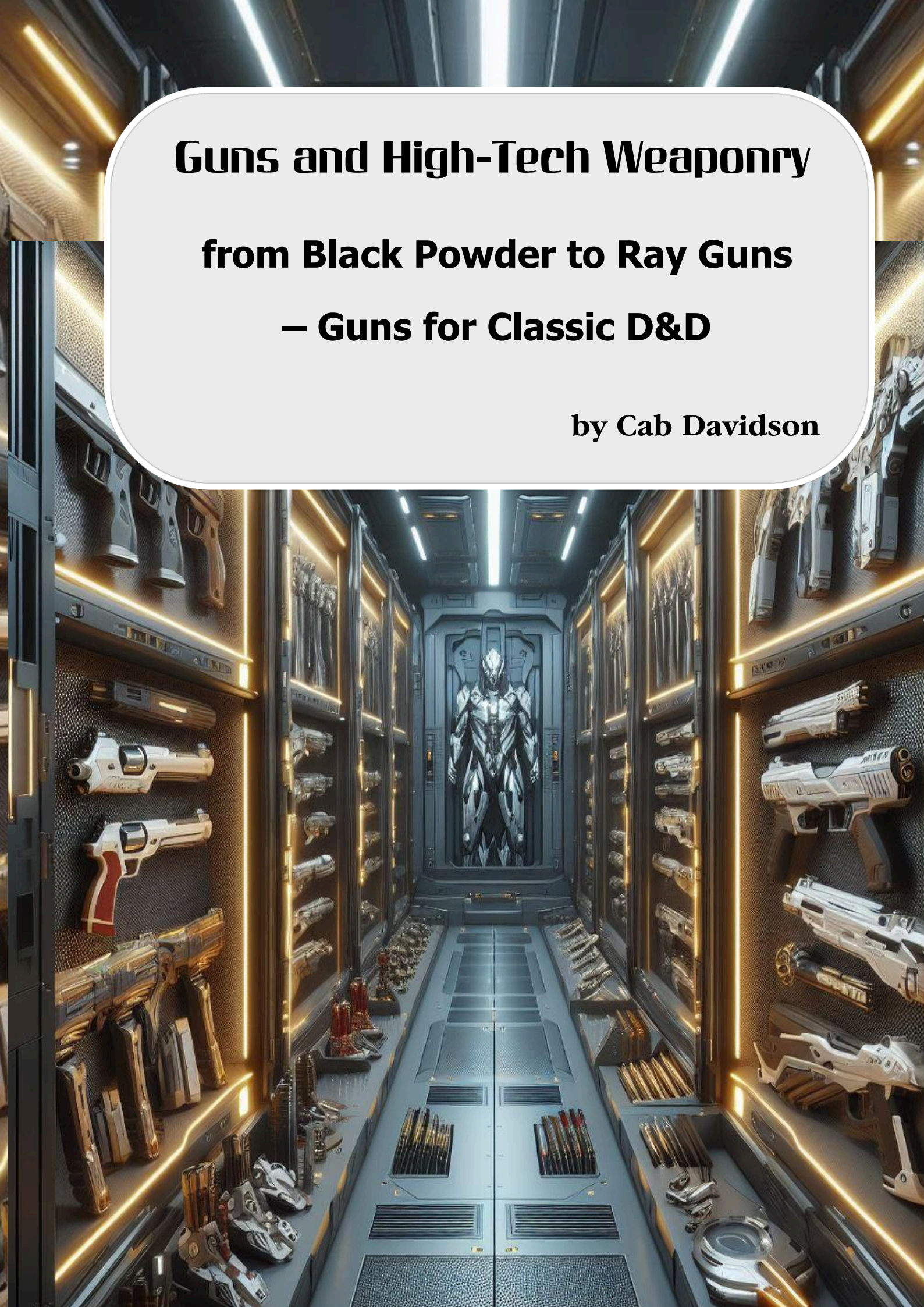
Controlling flying vehicles such as air cars, jet copters, *etc.* This skill is essentially analogous to the driving skill.

### **Robotics (Intelligence)**

A specialised form of mechanical engineering, allowing a character to modify robots (adding limbs, changing functions, *etc.*), and to make best use of the components of a robcom toolkit.

**Guns and High-Tech Weaponry**  
**from Black Powder to Ray Guns**  
**– Guns for Classic D&D**

**by Cab Davidson**



## INTRODUCTION

Surprisingly firearms of various sorts have been part of the classic D&D game for decades. The classic DA series of modules, Dave Arneson's *"Blackmoor"* adventures, published in 1986 and 1987, perhaps most notably DA3: *"City of the Gods"*, presented a range of high-tech weapons, and in IM1: *"The Immortal Storm"* Frank Mentzer presented weapon mastery rules for the kinds of firearms one might unreasonably encounter on the streets of America in that era. Both versions are interesting, but sadly there is little overlap between the two and only a hint of what might have been possible is presented.

In this article I have taken inspiration from both of those sources, as well as the AD&D 2<sup>nd</sup> edition HR4: *"A Mighty Fortress"* to cover firearms from their earliest of forms to the more high-tech weaponry of the *Star Frontiers* game. What follows cannot, of course, be an exhaustive guide to every permutation of firearm or modern weapon, but I hope that this will be enough to satisfy the needs of most players and dungeon masters, whether seeking to add merely a hint of six-guns and sorcery or intending to go full on *Dungeon Frontiers!*

## FIREARMS IN PENTASPACE

Gunpowder is not normally found on Mystara; in fact it is rare on the prime plane, and this is due to the way gunpowder chemistry works in different kinds of spaces.

According to IM1, firearms are found on some outer planes, and are common in trispaces (three dimensional planes), but rare elsewhere. Few forms of gunpowder or other propellants are stable in tetraspaces and pentaspaces (such as the prime plane), thus transporting them to the prime or other inner planes leads to a probability of explosion. Taking a round of ammunition or a powder charge to a tetraspace creates a 50% possibility of explosion, which increases to 75% in a pentaspace. The effect is similar to a small (5' diameter) fireball, inflicting 1d10 damage to every creature within range (save vs. spells for half damage), but also setting off all other rounds within range, thus increasing damage proportionately. The probability should be checked for each round of ammunition, which for convenience can be made with a single roll (see table 1). The exception is in certain confined areas of the prime that don't obey normal dimensional rules; thus, it is possible that in some areas where magical *teleporting* is impossible, guns may also be stable. Proximity to dimension-warping technology (e.g., radiance effects, fusion generators, and starship engines) can also lead to pockets of stability for firearms. This is quite different to high-tech energy weapons, which are typically functional even in pentaspaces, but as civilisations rarely jump from bows and arrows to beam weapons, societies with both wizardry and technology are extremely rare.



*Table 1:  
Percentage chance of ancient  
and modern ammunition  
exploding in tetraspaces and  
pentaspaces.*

Rounds of ammunition	% Chance of Exploding	
	Tetraspace	Pentaspaces
1	50	75
2	75	88
3	88	94
4	94	97
5	97	99
6	99	100
7+	100	100

## Class Restrictions

Characters restricted in weapon choices may not be able to use all guns. Clerics cannot use any guns, and magic-users are restricted to small pistols. Small races struggle with larger weapons used for larger races, thus halfling- and gnome-sized characters can only use small and medium firearms, whereas dwarves, elves and humans may use any. Pistols (and guns of a similar size) can, at a push, be used as blackjacks, and rifles, muskets, and larger guns as clubs (applying normal weapon mastery rules for those weapons).

## Weapon Mastery and Weapon Class

Firearms are divided into multiple classes for mastery purposes. For example, ancient pistol-sized weapons are class A, medium-sized are class B (small muskets etc.), larger firearms class C (rifles and weapons typically requiring a stand), and hand cannons (large, crude firearms) class D. Characters are treated as having one level of mastery lower in a weapon of the same class as they are trained, and two levels lower in a

weapon of an adjacent class. For example, a master with a flintlock musket (class B) is treated as an expert with a matchlock caliver (also class B) and skilled with a flintlock pistol (class A).

A non-skilled character using a gun gains no bonus to attack, and the only applicable beneficial special effect is smoked (on a roll of 20). All deleterious special effects (fouling, jamming, *etc.*) do apply.

## Firearms and Armour

One of the key advantages to using firearms is that at short range ordinary armour confers no protection. Magical bonuses, however, still apply. So, for example, a character wearing *plate mail armour* +2 and wielding a *shield* +2, without a dexterity bonus but wearing a *ring of protection* +2, is an armour class of -4 against normal attacks, but an armour class of 3 if someone is shooting at them using a firearm at short range.

## Cover

Ordinary rules for hard and soft cover apply, although the DM may wish to situationally change the definitions thereof. For example, a thin wooden barrier may ordinarily provide hard cover vs. arrows but may only provide soft cover against firearms.

## Special Effects

Many special effects associated with guns are identical to those described in the Rules Cyclopedia. Novel special effects mentioned in the weapon mastery table (table 2) are shown and variant special effects specific to guns are described below.

**Ammunition:** The number of bullets the weapon can contain, and which can be used, before it must be reloaded. Reloading with a full, pre-prepared magazine takes 1 round, filling an empty magazine takes 1 round per 3 bullets added to it.

**Double Damage/Triple Damage/Quadruple Damage:** Multiply damage inflicted by the stated amount.

**Fouling:** Ancient firearms build up a detritus of burned charge, wadding, etc., in use. For every 3 shots the chance of misfiring increases by 1 and the hit roll to hang fire moves by 1, as described in the entries for misfire for hang fire. Cleaning a fouled weapon is a simpler task than removing the detritus of misfire, and the weapon can be restored to full functionality with one full minute of cleaning.

**Hang Fire:** On a hit roll of 2 the powder in a clean ancient firearm takes extra time to ignite, causing what is known as a hang fire. While not an immediate danger this does

somewhat foul the barrel of the gun which will need to be cleared. Subsequent shots fired have an increased chance of misfiring, such that after 1 hang fire, subsequent hit rolls of 1–2 now misfire, with a roll of 3 causing another hang fire. Each subsequent hang fire increases the range for misfiring by 1 and moves hang fire result by 1. Fully cleaning an ancient firearm such that the chance of hang fire and misfire is reduced to base level takes 1 minute.

**Hit Modifier:** While primitive firearms are difficult to aim and often inaccurate, modern and high-tech firearms may be very much more precise. Thus, hit modifiers given in firearms tables here replace hit modifiers used in standard weapon mastery when these weapons are used, and are shown in the relevant weapon mastery tables for each weapon.

**Incorporeal:** Having no material form, these weapons can neither be used to deflect blows nor can they be deflected by opponent's weapons, meaning that defensive bonuses for weapon mastery and deflect effects cannot be used to block sonic weapons.

**Jam:** Modern firearms are less prone to fouling than ancient, but are still prone to jamming, whereby the mechanism of firing or of moving ammunition to a firing position becomes stuck. If a 1 is rolled on an attack roll, then the user will notice that the gun may not be behaving properly and is now likely to jam.

After this, the weapon must be checked. This is a relatively simple task, taking 3 rounds. If this is not done, then the weapon becomes likely to jam. If another 1 is rolled on an attack, the weapon jams, and cannot be used until a full minute is spent unjamming it, but another 3 rounds are still

needed to return the gun to fully operational condition (i.e., if another 1 is rolled before this, the gun will jam again).

**Min. Range:** Weapons with this special effect will not operate if used on targets closer than a stated minimum range. This is typically only the case for various grenade-launching, high-tech weapons.

**Misfire:** On a hit roll of 1, an ancient firearm misfires, meaning that it cannot be used again until the current charge and shot are removed, and the weapon thoroughly cleaned. This takes 10 rounds to complete.

**Overheat (and cool):** Weapons with this special effect are prone to malfunction when too hot. Each round, keep track of the number of charges used, and add this number to a running total of charges used in previous rounds. Each round the weapon cools by the equivalent of a set number of charges: 1 for pistols, 3 for rifles, and 5 for heavy weapons. The net difference between the increased temperature of the weapon and its total cooling determines the weapon's current temperature. If an unmodified attack roll made with the weapon is lower than the current temperature of the weapon, then it will not work that round. For example, a laser rifle has been used 3 rounds in a row, each time expending 5 charges (15 in total). It has also cooled each round, for the equivalent of 3 charges per round (9 in total). Therefore, on an unadjusted attack roll of 6 or under ( $15-9=6$ ) the weapon has overheated and will not operate for the rest of the round.

**RoF:** Rate of fire. Primitive firearms take multiple rounds to load and fire. For example, a flintlock rifle has a rate of fire of  $1/3$ , so takes 3 rounds to load and fire. A high-level fighter may add extra attacks as usual and use them to reload the gun, so for example a 25<sup>th</sup> level fighter capable of making 3 attacks per round could load and fire the same rifle once per round. Rates of fire above 1 per round are covered under 'burst fire' (see below).

**Slicing:** If the weapon's attack roll meets the stated target counting any magical bonus but no other bonuses, the opponent struck must make a saving throw vs. death ray or be struck dead with one blow. If the saving throw is successful, the victim still takes triple normal damage from the blow. These special damage bonuses do not apply when the weapon is used against undead or incorporeal creatures of any sort, or against any slimes or oozes that do not have identifiable anatomies.

**Smoked:** On a roll of 20 (not including any bonuses), a victim must save vs. death ray or die. If the save is successful, damage is applied normally, and the victim is stunned for 3d6 rounds.

**Sonic:** Ranged sonic weapons do massive damage at short range, but at longer range they are far less effective. Damage given is for short-range targets. Between short and medium range half damage is inflicted, and up to long range quarter damage is caused.

**Stunned:** If a hit roll of 17–20 (for ancient firearms) or 16–20 (for modern firearms) is made, not including any bonuses, the victim must make a save vs. death ray or be stunned. A stunned creature acts last in every round (after a delayed creature), moves at one-third speed, and cannot

attack or cast spells. The victim also suffers a +2 penalty to their Armour Class and a -2 penalty to all saving throws. A saving throw vs. death ray may be made each round to recover from the stun effect.

**Wreck:** Having quite tremendous penetrating power, these weapons can only be blocked by magic, magical weapons, or by other melee weapons with the wreck property – thus if non-magical weapons are used to deflect or block them, this will be successful only once, the weapon being rendered useless thereafter. Likewise, if striking opponents wearing normal armour, that armour is ignored, and each strike reduces the efficacy of that armour by 1 place. For example, chain mail struck by a light sabre for the first time subsequently only provides protection to AC6 rather than AC5. Adamantine, arachnium, powered collapsium, duralloy, and isiidium armour are not thus affected. Mithril armour is unaffected and provides an extra +3 bonus to armour class against weapons with the wreck ability.

## Burst Fire

Modern and futuristic firearms, containing clips or charge packs holding many rounds of ammunition, may come in automatic variants. This means that in a single round each attack can be made up of multiple shots, aimed at a single target or sequentially at multiple targets within 5' of a primary declared target. This must be declared at the beginning of the attack, and for each shot fired a -2 cumulative penalty is applied to the roll. For example, a burst attack is made with an automatic medium rifle, and 6 bullets are expended. Each attack can be made at any characters within 5' of the prime target and are made in order

from one side of the area to the other. Hit rolls against each target are made with a -12 penalty (-2 per bullet,  $6 \times 2 = 12$ ). Normal chances for a gun to jam apply. Note that once a burst has begun, the attacker cannot stop if they believe the gun may be about to jam, i.e., if on the first attack a 1 is rolled the character cannot terminate the burst to prevent the gun from jamming if a subsequent 1 is rolled. High-level fighters who can make multiple attacks may attempt burst fire with each separate attack.

Note there are also higher quality military weapons available to military groups with powered mechanisms for delivering bullets, which may not be as prone to jamming. Details for those weapons are not given here.

## Ancient Weapons

A bewildering array of firearms have been invented over the centuries but for simplicity only a few weapon types are included, weapon mastery for such being found in table 2.

Not all ancient weapons were concurrent. Hand cannons are more primitive than matchlock weapons, which in turn were invented before wheellock weapons, and were subsequently supplanted by more reliable but ultimately simpler flintlock weapons. Thus, it is unlikely that all such weapons will be in use at the same time, in the same society.

All ancient weapons come with tools for use and maintenance, including ramrods (for pushing home charge, wadding, and bullets) and brushes (for cleaning), as part of their purchase cost. Replacements can be bought if necessary, a relevant set costing 2gp.

### **Hand Cannon**

One of the most primitive firearms, also known as a *gonne* or *handgonne*, this is a simple metal tube with a touch hole near the base into which powder is forced, with wadding and a shot (stone or metal), needing to be fired directly by application of embers (typically fuse) to the hole. Relatively inaccurate and necessitating that a source of flame be maintained, the hand cannon is nonetheless a devastatingly lethal weapon in skilled hands.

### **Matchlock Weapons**

With a trigger mechanism that brings a length of slow match (loose twine or cord infused with a slowly flammable material to maintain a slow-burning flame) down onto a firing pan charged with black powder, that in turn ignites a charge of powder behind wadding holding a lead ball, all rammed firmly down into a steel barrel. The match is held back by a lock to facilitate loading, and a trigger mechanism frees the lock and drops the burning match onto the firing pan. Matchlocks are therefore cumbersome, requiring match to be kept burning, making them unreliable in wet conditions.

A matchlock musket is typically an infantry weapon, being 5' to 6' long and typically requiring a forked stick as a rest to fire accurately. A caliver is shorter, being useable without a rest, while an arquebus is only around 3' long.



Loading requires using fine powder for the pan, and more coarse powder for the barrel, while keeping the match burning and not setting fire to any of the powder outside of the barrel. They are thus complex and slow. Slow match itself must be kept burning to use a matchlock weapon, and this can be difficult if not impossible in some conditions (heavy rain or snow, for example). Slow match burns at a rate of around 1' per hour, and typically around 1' is included with each purchase of 20 shots.

### **Wheellock Weapons**

Similar to a matchlock but replacing the slow burning match with a spring mounted steel that spins rapidly when the lock is released by pulling the trigger, striking a piece of pyrite, and sending sparks into the firing pan. Otherwise, they are loaded and used in a similar manner to matchlocks, but not needing a source of flame they can be loaded and prepared more readily in

advance and even hidden, loaded, under a cloak. The belt pistol is a shorter weapon that can be readily concealed thus, while the horse pistol is larger, around 18" long, and a popular weapon among cavalymen. The arquebus is a longer weapon, requiring the use of a stand (usually a forked stick), used by infantry.

Wheellock weapons need to have the pyrite on which the steel wheel creates sparks replaced regularly, but this component is typically very cheap, and provided for free with standard purchases of 20 rounds of shot and powder.

### Flintlock Weapons

In various guises also known as snaplock or snaphaunce weapons, in which a shaped flint is brought down onto a steel by releasing the lock, generating sparks that ignite in the firing pan. They are otherwise like earlier firearms, and they are the pinnacle of primitive firearm design. They are simpler to use and maintain than matchlock and wheel lock weapons.

Flintlock muskets tend to be shorter than earlier firearms and do not require a stand for use. Flintlocks are also the first weapons to be commonly used as rifles, with the barrels having interior grooves to impart spin to the bullet for increased accuracy at range. Such rifles, still muzzle-loaded, trade accuracy for some convenience, being a little slower to load.

The flints for flintlock weapons are cheap and easy to make, and while an individual flint can be used hundreds of times it is usual to expect a fresh flint to be provided with any purchase of 20 bullets and charges.

## Modern Weapons

No attempt is made here to cover the complexity or variety of modern weapons that have emerged and been used since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and a very simplified view of the range available is given here (see table 3). The categories of 'pistol' and 'rifle' will be familiar.

The weapons here are essentially the simple firearms that might be available to civilian operators in places where such are allowed. Many other more powerful weapons, reliably able to fire many more rounds of ammunition, are also likely to exist within the armed forces of any modern era society.

## Tech Weapons

Many varieties of tech weapons exist, and it is impossible to give an overview of every type, on every world, and in every plane. Common weapons can, however, be divided into categories. In addition to standard firearm guns (which are effective and continue to be used well into eras with more exotic weaponry), ranged weapons also include lasers, sonics, blasters, needlers, and gyrojets. Melee weapons include sonic, laser, and electrified variants. High-tech guns for which weapon mastery is appropriate are shown in table 4.

### Power Sources

Ammunition comes in four different forms. Energy clips are roughly palm-sized, rechargeable units weighing 3cn that slot into the handle or stock of the weapon, holding 20 charges that can be expended before charging. Belt packs are around 8" by 4" by 2", weigh 50cn, and hold 50 charges. Multiple devices can be plugged into belt packs, and they can also be recharged. Power

backpacks are larger still and hold 150 charges. They can also be used to simultaneously power multiple devices, but they are heavy, having an encumbrance of 200cn, and they prevent any other backpack being worn. Lastly, for static guns (typically only heavy lasers) static power banks can be used. These may come in capacities from 500 to 2,000 charges, can simultaneously supply power to many devices, but they are essentially immobile.

### **Blaster/Heavy Blaster**

Not a gun in any standard sense, the blaster is merely a handled tube with a slot for a power cartridge and a plug socket for other power supplies, whereas a heavy blaster is the size of a large rifle. Both shoot bolts of plasma up to 240', which explode into a ball of crackling electrical discharge in a 20' radius. Blasters inflict 6d6 damage for the expenditure of 3 charges, while heavy blasters inflict 8d6 damage for the cost of 5 charges (with saving throws vs. spells reducing damage by half). The weapons' built-in targeting system means that a hit roll is not needed, but relative to other high-tech weapons these weapons inflict only limited damage for the energy expended.

### **Hand Grenade**

Thrown grenades are treated as 'tossed objects' for the purpose of attacks, and depending on whether in the modern or high-tech categories can have any of the effects of gyrojet grenades, with the range of a tossed object. Most are made such that pulling a pin out and depressing a button activates the grenade, which subsequently explodes 4 seconds later (the time taken to throw it). Some varieties (high explosive, fragmentation, and smoke) are also available in societies with access to modern firearms. Grenade types are listed in the weapon chart below.

### **Laser Guns**

Laser pistols, rifles and heavy lasers have the great advantage of being truly instantaneous in action, making them reliably accurate.

Lasers can be used in burst fire (as above, see firearms) but more commonly a dial is used to adjust power between 1 and a maximum total (as shown in the weapon mastery table under 'Max Charges'). The number of charges that are used in a shot governs the damage done if an attack hits. For example, if a character with basic skill with a laser rifle expending 3 charges hits a target, they inflict 1d8 damage for each charge.

Laser weapons are fully functional across the multiverse, regardless of available dimensions. They can hit targets immune to magical attacks up to +3. Armour provides normal protection vs. laser weapons.

### **Sonic Guns**

These weapons inflict damage by producing potent bursts of sound, directed towards single targets. They utilise the same standard energy packs as laser weapons, and each use costs a set number of charges (listed in their weapon mastery tables). While sonic weapons inflict huge damage at short range, with increased range they are very much less damaging (see 'sonic', in special effects, above). Armour provides normal protection vs. sonic guns, and they can hit targets normally immune to up to +2 magical weapons. Incorporeal creatures are completely immune to sonic damage.

### **Needler Guns**

Originally designed for law enforcement, needler guns resemble wide-barrelled firearms, and utilise pressurised gas to propel a tight cluster of needles at a target. This causes some damage, but their primary purpose is to poison foes, typically to stun

or incapacitate them. They have relatively short range (although more skilled users learn to arc trajectories for better range), but they are excellent weapons for subduing foes. Creatures immune to poison are unaffected by needler weapons, and any creatures that can only be hit by silver or magical weapons are immune to normal needler guns. Armour provides normal protection against needler guns.

Because of the compressed gas needed to propel the needles, needler cartridges come pre-filled and cannot be reused.

### Gyrojet Guns

Resembling standard firearms, gyrojet weapons fire larger rounds that are powered by a chemical reaction, making them rocket-powered with four vents at their base. This arrangement causes the projectile to spin as it accelerates away from the barrel of the gun. While this means that gyrojets are less damaging at short range, because the projectile is still accelerating, standard gyrojet ammunition is not explosive in pentaspaces, making such weapons a popular choice by technologically capable races when venturing to such places. They are less accurate than lasers, but reliable, less prone to overheating, and deadly. Armour provides normal protection against gyrojets at short range, but no protection at mid or long range (other than magical bonuses to AC).

Gyrojet grenade launchers also exist. Not all types of grenades are stable in tetraspaces and pentaspaces, and none can be used on targets within 30', being designed not to detonate close to the wielder of the weapon. If a grenade launcher misses its target, refer to the grenade launcher scatter table for how far it missed by and in which direction – once shot, a grenade will

explode somewhere. Note that the restriction on grenades not exploding within 30' of the launcher still applies – a character aiming at a target 100' away but so badly that it lands within 30' of themselves is safe from their own grenade.

## MODERN AND High-Tech Melee Weapon

While in most higher technology societies the efficacy of ranged weapons is such that melee is less important, there are times when a warrior may be forced into a close encounter. In such scenarios a range of high- and low-tech options are used. Swords, axes, maces, and a wide range of ancient weaponry are used in modern and high-tech societies, and other weapons otherwise not used in ancient cultures are also found.


Melee weapons all use standard weapon mastery bonuses to hit. Weapon mastery tables for novel high-tech melee weapons are shown in table 5.

**Bayonet:** Popular with many firearm cultures but applicable even with laser rifles, a bayonet is a blade attached to the end of a musket, rifle, or carbine, providing a melee option. Such a weapon is treated as a spon-toon (*Rules Cyclopedia* page 81) for weapon mastery purposes.

Older firearms may also come with a sword bayonet. The wielder of a sword bayonet may instead of attaching it to a firearm wield it as if a short sword.

**Combat Knife:** Such knives exist in many different forms and are treated as daggers.





**Laser Sword/Knife:** Otherwise known as light sabres, these weapons appear as handles of normal swords or knives. When activated a beam of light either 1' or up to 4' emerges from one end, that being a form of semi-solid laser light of almost any colour. They use standard power packs, and each round they expend one charge.

Laser knives and swords can be thrown at higher levels of mastery if they are powered by standard energy clips, but not if powered via wire-using belt packs or larger energy sources.

**Sonic Sword/Knife:** These weapons look like short or long handles such as may be found on ordinary knives or swords. When in use, a vague shimmer may be observed protruding from them, with a length typically like a knife or a sword. They must be powered and use the same standard power packs as laser guns. When in use, each round they utilise one charge. Having no material form, and inflicting damage by vibration, sonic melee weapons can be used by clerics.

**Shock Gloves:** A pair of silver-coloured gloves, powered by standard power packs. Each punch from shock gloves inflicts an extra 1d6 damage and discharges a single unit of power from the power pack, and an opponent must make an extra saving throw vs. death ray or be stunned. Shock gloves use standard unarmed combat weapon mastery and can be used by clerics and mystics.



## ARMOUR

### MODERN

Modern armour falls into two broad categories. Laminate plate armour (usually simply referred to as plate armour) can be made up of metal or ceramic plates incorporated into a vest or even a full-body suit, whereas fibre armour is made of multiple crossed layers of strong fibres, designed to catch and contain bullets. Modern armour obeys the same rules as traditional armour, with modern plate behaving as plate mail armour but with half of the encumbrance, at 4 times the price, while fibre armour behaves as chain mail armour with a third of the encumbrance, at twice the price. Rules for piecemeal armour (see GAZ10) apply. Unlike ancient armour, modern armour provides protection against firearms even at short range.

Modern shields are often made of either light laminates with metal, or toughened polycarbonate. They provide the same protection as ancient shields, but with lower encumbrance.

## High Tech

The array of technologies used in defensive suits across the multiverse is bewilderingly huge, and those given below are intended as examples.

**Federation Battle Armour:** With a simple 'foil spacesuit' appearance battle armour is made from powered foil and acrylic mesh, utilising a standard energy clip, which once connected confers an armour class of 0. Unpowered, the suit is only marginally protective, giving an armour class of 8. This is the standard protective suit employed by Federation staff. Light and unencumbering (only the energy clip counts towards a character's encumbrance, the suit itself being as light as normal clothing), the suit also protects a character from a broad range of environmental conditions and incorporates standard fittings for protective helmets (including space helmets), gas fittings for space and underwater survival, waste removal, and for jet packs. Using the suit merely as armour uses 1 charge per day, whereas controlling the environment (protecting the user from heat, cold or radiation) uses 1 charge per hour.

**Ablative Screen:** Not actually a suit of armour, this is a small (6" by 2" by 4") box that can be clipped to a belt, a leg, an arm, etc., and which generates a protective field around the wearer. It is powered by any of the standard power packs and absorbs incoming damage of any type. It provides a certain element of protection (AC3), this passive protection using only 1 charge per week. It comes into its own when the user would otherwise be damaged: 5 points of damage (rounded down) of any sort are absorbed per charge expended, and up to 5 charges can be expended (protecting

against up to 25 points of damage) per round.

**Holo-suit:** A skin-tight suit, usually green but occasionally blue, with an array of dots in which micro-cameras and light emitters are contained. Its unique mode of operation precludes its use at the same time as battle armour, but it can be used with an ablative screen.

Utilising standard power packs, it has a range of settings. For 1 charge per hour, it can project an invisibility screen, which works like a standard *elven cloak* (the user is only detectable on a 1 on a 1d6) except that the wearer does not become visible if they attack (although muzzle flashes from guns, spells, etc., may give their position away). For 2 charges per hour the appearance of the wearer can be changed to that of anything up to 3' taller or shorter than the wearer that the armour has been able to record in the last 4 weeks (the length of its memory buffer) or to any other object or creature depicted in the memory of any computer network to which the wearer has current access. Up to 12 individual creature or object appearances can also be stored by the armour. The appearance of this façade is faultless except when the wearer is interacting with items or people around them – their arms, legs, etc. are in the same place, and the matchup between the holographic projection and the real location of the wearer can be revealing. Lastly, for 1 charge per turn the wearer may maintain invisibility (as described above) while projecting their own image 4' in any direction. This has the same effect as a *displacer cloak*, giving a -4 bonus to armour class while meaning most missile fire automatically misses the target if the attacker is unaware of the displacement.



**Power Shield:** A wrist-mounted shield, roughly the size of a watch, which can generate a shield (conferring the normal -1 to AC a shield gives) for 1 hour for the expenditure of 1 power charge (from any standard power source). Being a watch, it is essentially encumbrance-free.

The following pages contain tables providing the statistics for the various weaponry putlined in this article.

**Table 2: Primitive Guns, Weapon Mastery**

Weapon	Lvl	Hit Modifier	Range	Damage
Hand Cannon	BS	-8	40/60/200	2d8
P=A, 2H	SK	-6	60/80/200	2d10
RoF: 1/6	EX	-4	80/100/200	2d10+2
Class: D	MS	-2	100/120/200	2d10+4
	GM	0	120/140/200	2d8+8
Musket, Matchlock	BS	-4	60/80/270	2d8
P=A, 2H+stand	SK	-2	80/100/270	2d10
RoF: 1/4	EX	0	100/120/270	2d10+2
Class: C	MS	2	120/140/270	2d10+4
	GM	4	140/160/270	2d8+8
Caliver, Matchlock	BS	-4	50/70/220	2d6
P=A, 2H	SK	-2	70/90/220	2d8
RoF: 1/4	EX	0	90/110/220	2d8+2
Class: B	MS	2	110/130/220	2d8+4
	GM	4	130/150/200	2d6+8
Arquebus, Matchlock	BS	-4	20/40/120	1d8
P=A, 2H	SK	-2	30/50/120	1d10
RoF: 1/4	EX	0	40/60/120	1d10+2
Class: B	MS	2	50/70/120	1d10+4
	GM	4	60/80/120	1d8+8
Belt Pistol, Wheellock	BS	-2	20/40/100	1d4
P=A, 2H	SK	0	30/50/100	1d6
RoF: 1/3	EX	2	40/60/100	1d6+2
Class: A	MS	4	50/70/100	1d6+4
	GM	6	60/80/100	1d4+8
Horse Pistol, Wheellock	BS	-2	20/40/120	1d6
P=A, 2H	SK	0	30/50/120	1d8
RoF: 1/3	EX	2	40/60/120	1d8+2
Class: A	MS	4	50/70/120	1d8+4
	GM	6	60/80/120	1d6+8
Musket, Flintlock	BS	0	60/80/270	2d8
P=A, 2H	SK	2	80/100/270	2d10
RoF: 1/2	EX	4	100/120/270	2d10+2
Class: B	MS	6	120/140/270	2d10+4
	GM	8	140/160/270	2d8+8





All Primitive Guns	
<b>BS</b>	Stun (17–20), Double Damage (20), Smoked (20), Misfire, Hang Fire, Foul
<b>SK</b>	Stun (17–20), Double Damage (19–20), Smoked (20), Misfire, Hang Fire, Foul
<b>EX</b>	Stun (17–20), Triple Damage (19–20), Smoked (20), Misfire, Hang Fire, Foul
<b>MS</b>	Stun (17–20), Triple Damage (18–20), Smoked (20), Misfire, Hang Fire, Foul
<b>GM</b>	Stun (17–20), Quadruple Damage (17–20), Smoked (20), Misfire, Hang Fire, Foul

Modern Firearms Special Effects – All Guns			
Hit Roll Bonus			
	Pistols	Rifles	All Modern Guns
<b>BS</b>	4	6	Jam, Stun (16–20), Smoked, Double Damage (20)
<b>SK</b>	5	7	Jam, Stun (16–20), Double Damage (19–20), Smoked (20)
<b>EX</b>	6	8	Jam, Stun (16–20), Triple Damage (18–20), Smoked (20)
<b>MS</b>	7	9	Jam, Stun (16–20), Triple Damage (17–20), Smoked (20)
<b>GM</b>	8	10	Jam, Stun (16–20), Quadruple Damage (16–20), Smoked (20)



Table 3: Modern Guns, Weapon Mastery

Weapon	Lvl	Range	Damage
<b>Pistol, Small</b>	BS	30/50/150	1d4
P=A, 1H	SK	50/70/150	1d6
RoF: 4	EX	70/90/150	1d6+2
Ammunition: 15	MS	90/110/150	1d6+4
Class: H	GM	110/130/150	1d4+8
<b>Pistol, Medium</b>	BS	40/60/160	1d6
P=A, 1H	SK	60/80/160	1d8
RoF: 3	EX	80/100/160	1d8+2
Ammunition: 12	MS	100/120/160	1d8+4
Class: H	GM	120/140/160	1d6+8
<b>Pistol, Large</b>	BS	50/70/170	1d8
P=A, 1H	SK	70/90/170	1d10
RoF: 2	EX	90/110/170	1d10+2
Ammunition: 8	MS	110/130/170	1d10+4
Class: I	GM	130/150/170	1d8+8
<b>Pistol, Very Large</b>	BS	60/70/180	1d10
P=A, 1H	SK	80/100/180	1d12
RoF: 2	EX	100/120/180	1d12+2
Ammunition: 6	MS	120/140/180	1d12+4
Class: I	GM	140/160/180	1d10+8
<b>Rifle, Small</b>	BS	60/70/200	2d4
P=A, 2H	SK	80/100/200	2d6
RoF: 3	EX	100/120/200	2d6+2
Ammunition: 30	MS	120/140/200	2d6+4
Class: L	GM	140/160/200	2d4+8
<b>Rifle, Medium</b>	BS	70/80/250	2d6
P=A, 2H	SK	90/110/250	2d8
RoF: 2	EX	110/130/250	2d8+2
Ammunition: 20	MS	130/150/250	2d8+4
Class: L	GM	150/170/250	2d6+8
<b>Rifle, Large</b>	BS	80/90/300	2d8
P=A, 2H	SK	100/120/300	2d10
RoF: 1	EX	120/140/300	2d10+2
Ammunition: 20	MS	140/160/300	2d10+4
Class: M	GM	150/170/300	2d8+8
<b>Rifle, Very Large</b>	BS	90/100/400	2d10
P=A, 2H	SK	110/130/400	2d12
RoF: 1	EX	130/150/400	2d12+2
Ammunition: 10	MS	150/170/400	2d12+4
Class: M	GM	160/180/400	2d10+8

Table 4: High-Tech Guns, Weapon Mastery

Lasers					
Weapon	Hit Bonus	Lvl	Range	Damage/ charge	Special
<b>Laser Pistol</b>	5	BS	70/80/250	1d8	Cool (1)
P=A, 1H	6	SK	90/110/250	1d10	Cool (1)
RoF: 4	7	EX	110/130/250	1d10+2	Cool (1)
Max Charges: 3	8	MS	130/150/250	1d10+4	Cool (1)
Class: H	9	GM	150/170/250	1d8+8	Cool (1)
<b>Laser Rifle</b>	6	BS	80/90/300	1d8	Cool (3)
P=A, 2H	8	SK	100/120/300	1d10	Cool (3)
RoF: 3	10	EX	120/140/300	1d10+2	Cool (3)
Max Charges: 5	12	MS	140/160/300	1d10+4	Cool (3)
Class: L	14	GM	150/170/300	1d8+8	Cool (3)
<b>Heavy Laser</b>	6	BS	90/100/400	1d8	Cool (5)
P=A, 2H + Tripod	8	SK	110/130/400	1d10	Cool (5)
RoF: 2	10	EX	130/150/400	1d10+2	Cool (5)
Max Charges: 10	12	MS	150/170/400	1d10+4	Cool (5)
Class: M	14	GM	160/180/400	1d8+8	Cool (5)

Special Effects - All Lasers	
<b>BS</b>	Overheat, Stun (16–20), Smoked, Double Damage (20)
<b>SK</b>	Overheat, Stun (16–20), Double Damage (19–20), Smoked (20)
<b>EX</b>	Overheat, Stun (16–20), Triple Damage (18–20), Smoked (20)
<b>MS</b>	Overheat, Stun (16–20), Triple Damage (17–20), Smoked (20)
<b>GM</b>	Overheat, Stun (16–20), Quadruple Damage (16–20), Smoked (20)



Sonic Weapons					
Weapon	Hit Bonus	Lvl	Range	Damage	Special
<b>Sonic Pistol</b>	2	BS	20/40/60	3d10	Stun (18–20), Sonic
P=A, 1H	3	SK	25/45/60	4d10	Stun (17–20), Sonic
RoF: 1	4	EX	25/45/60	5d10	Stun (16–20), Sonic
Charge Cost: 2	5	MS	30/50/60	6d10	Stun (16–20), Sonic
Class: H	6	GM	30/50/60	7d10	Stun (15–20), Sonic
<b>Sonic Rifle</b>	4	BS	60/120/180	3d10	Stun (18–20), Sonic
P=A, 2H	6	SK	70/130/180	4d10	Stun (17–20), Sonic
RoF: 1	8	EX	90/110/180	5d10	Stun (16–20), Sonic
Charge Cost: 4	10	MS	110/130/180	6d10	Stun (16–20), Sonic
Class: L	12	GM	130/150/180	7d10	Stun (15–20), Sonic

Needler Weapons					
Weapon	Hit Bonus	Lvl	Range	Damage	Special
<b>Needler Pistol</b>	1	BS	10/20/40	1d6	Delay, Stun, Knockout
P=A, 1H	2	SK	15/25/45	1d8	Delay, Stun, Knockout
RoF: 1	3	EX	20/30/50	1d8+2	Delay, Stun, Knockout
Ammo: 12-round cart.	4	MS	25/35/55	1d8+4	Delay, Stun, Knockout
Class: H	5	GM	30/40/60	1d6+8	Delay, Stun, Knockout
<b>Needler Rifle</b>	2	BS	40/60/80	1d8	Delay, Stun, Knockout
P=A, 2H	4	SK	50/70/90	1d10	Delay, Stun, Knockout
RoF: 1	6	EX	60/80/100	1d10+2	Delay, Stun, Knockout
Ammo: 24-round cart.	8	MS	70/90/110	1d10+4	Delay, Stun, Knockout
Class: L	10	GM	80/100/120	1d8+8	Delay, Stun, Knockout





<b>Gyrojet Guns</b>					
<b>Weapon</b>	<b>Hit Bonus</b>	<b>Lvl</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Damage</b>	<b>Special</b>
<b>Gyrojet Pistol</b>	0	BS	-/30/150	1d10	½ Damage (30')
P=A, 1H	2	SK	-/40/150	1d12	½ Damage (30')
RoF: 6	4	EX	-/50/150	1d12+2	½ Damage (30')
Ammo: 6	6	MS	-/60/150	1d12+4	½ Damage (30')
Class: H	8	GM	-/70/150	1d10+8	½ Damage (30')
<b>Gyrojet Carbine</b>	6	BS	-/90/400	2d10	½ Damage (20')
P=A, 2H	8	SK	-/120/400	2d12	½ Damage (20')
RoF: 6	10	EX	-/150/400	2d12+2	½ Damage (20')
Ammo: 12	12	MS	-/180/400	2d12+4	½ Damage (20')
Class: I	14	GM	-/210/400	2d10+8	½ Damage (20')
<b>Gyrojet Grenade Launcher</b>	6	BS	-/100/400	Special	Min. Range (30')
P=A, 2H + Tripod	8	SK	-/130/400	Special	Min. Range (30')
RoF: 1	10	EX	-/150/400	Special	Min. Range (30')
Ammo: 8	12	MS	-/170/400	Special	Min. Range (30')
Class: M	14	GM	-/180/400	Special	Min. Range (30')

### Gyrojets – Pistols and Carbines

<b>Special Effects</b>	
<b>BS</b>	Stun (16–20), Smoked, Double Damage (20)
<b>SK</b>	Stun (16–20), Double Damage (19–20), Smoked (20)
<b>EX</b>	Stun (16–20), Triple Damage (18–20), Smoked (20)
<b>MS</b>	Stun (16–20), Triple Damage (17–20), Smoked (20)
<b>GM</b>	Stun (16–20), Quadruple Damage (16–20), Smoked (20)



Grenade Types (Gyrojet and thrown)			
	AoE	Save	Effect
<b>Doze</b>	30'	Death Ray (avoids)	Sleep (2d4 turns)
<b>Fragmentation*</b>	30'	Wands (half damage)	Shreds of metal (6d6)
<b>Gamma</b>	30'	Death Ray (avoids death)	Save or die. Take 8d6 radiation damage if save is made, only affects organic tissue
<b>Incendiary*</b>	20'	Dragon Breath (half damage)	Fire (6d8)
<b>Neuron</b>	30'	Dragon Breath (avoids)	Contact poison paralysis cloud, 1d4dmg+paralysis 6 turns
<b>Light</b>	60'	Spells (avoids)	60'-diameter <i>continual light</i> , save vs. spells or blinded 1 round
<b>Poison</b>	10'	Poison (avoids)	Death (in 6 rounds)
<b>Smoke</b>	50'	n/a	Obscures vision (4d6 rounds in still air)
<b>Sonic</b>	5'	Paralysis (avoids)	1d4x14 hp + paralysis 12 turns. Full damage to wooden objects
<b>Tangler</b>	20'	Paralysis (avoids)	Entangled/immobile (2d4 turns)

**\* Unstable in pentaspaces (see firearms for explosion risk rules)**

Gyrojet Grenade scatter			
Hit Roll Missed By	Distance from Target	Direction (d8)	
1-2	10'	1	N
3-5	20'	2	NE
6-9	40'	3	E
7-14	60'	4	SE
15-19	80'	5	S
20	100'	6	SW
		7	W
		8	NW



Table 5: High-Tech Melee Weapons, Mastery

Weapon	Lvl	Range	Damage	Defence	Special
Laser Knife	BS	05/10/2015	2d4		Slicing (20), Wreck
P=H, 1H	SK	10/15/20	2d6	H-1AC/1	Slicing (19–20), Wreck
Small	EX	15/20/25	4d4	H:-2AC/2	Slicing (18–20), Wreck
Class: A	MS	20/25/30	P:6d4 S:4d4+2	H:-2AC/2	Slicing (17–20), Wreck
	GM	25/30/35	P:8d4 S:6d4+2	H:-3AC/3	Slicing (16–20), Wreck
Laser Sword	BS		2d8		Slicing (20), Wreck
P=H, 1H	SK		2d12	H-2AC/1	Slicing (19–20), Wreck, Deflect (1), Disarm
Small	EX	05/10/2015	4d8	H:-2AC/2	Slicing (18–20), Wreck, Deflect (2), Disarm
Class: B	MS	10/15/20	P:4d8+4 S:4d6+6	H:-3AC/3	Slicing (17–20), Wreck, Deflect (3), Disarm
	GM	15/20/25	P:4d6+16 S:4d4+16	H:-4AC/4	Slicing (16–20), Wreck, Deflect (4), Disarm
Sonic Knife	BS		2d4		Stun, Incorporeal
P=H, 1H	SK		2d6		Stun (Save-1), Incorporeal
Small	EX		4d4		Stun (Save-2), Incorporeal
Class: A	MS		P:6d4 S:4d4+2		Stun (Save-3), Incorporeal
	GM		P:8d4 S:6d4+2		Stun (Save-4), Incorporeal
Sonic Sword	BS		2d8		Stun, Incorporeal
P=A, 1H	SK		2d12		Stun (Save-2), Incorporeal
Small: B	EX		4d8		Stun (Save-4), Incorporeal
	MS		P:4d8+4 S:4d6+6		Stun (Save-6), Incorporeal
	GM		P:4d6+16 S:4d4+16		Stun (Save-8), Incorporeal



## COST AND ENCUMBRANCE

Note that while costs are given in gold pieces, most modern and high-tech societies do not use a gold standard for currency, and that this is merely an equivalent value.

It must also be noted that most of these weapons are not readily available in a single society. Where matchlocks are known and used, flintlocks have yet to be discovered, for example, and modern weapons cannot be bought in medieval cultures.

**Table 6: Costs and Encumbrance**

Ancient Weapons		
Item	Cost (gp)	Enc (cn)
Hand Cannon	50	250
Musket, matchlock (with stand)	30	200
Caliver, matchlock	6	110
Arquebus, matchlock	10	100
Belt Pistol, wheellock	50	30
Horse Pistol, wheellock	80	40
Musket, flintlock	90	140
Rifle, flintlock	150	140
Pistol, flintlock	50	30

Modern Weapons		
Item	Cost (gp)	Enc (cn)
Pistol, small	100	10
Pistol, medium	150	20
Pistol, large	200	40
Pistol, very large	300	60
Rifle, small	150	50
Rifle, medium	200	80
Rifle, large	400	120
Rifle, very large	600	250

Automatic modern weapons firing up to 10 shots per round are available at triple the price of the standard gun. Automatic weapons are necessary for burst firing.



High-Tech Guns		
Item	Cost (gp)	Enc (cn)
Blaster	800	20
Heavy Blaster	1,000	150
Laser Pistol	400	15
Laser Rifle	600	100
Heavy Laser	1,000	300
Sonic Pistol	400	15
Sonic Rifle	700	120
Needler Pistol	200	20
Needler Rifle	400	100
Gyrojet Pistol	200	10
Gyrojet Carbine	300	70
Gyrojet Grenade Launcher	700	100

Laser weapons capable of automatic mode can be purchased for twice the normal price (see burst fire).

Modern and High-Tech Melee Weapons		
Item	Cost (gp)	Enc (cn)
Laser Knife	400	10
Laser Sword	1,000	10
Shock Gloves	200	5
Sonic Knife	300	15
Sonic Sword	800	120
Needler Pistol	200	20
Bayonet	10	15
Combat Knife	5	15

Ancient Weapons – Ammunition and Accessories		
Item	Cost (gp)	Enc (cn)
Hand Cannon, powder and stone (1)	4	5
Pistol/Caliver, powder and shot (20)	10	20
Musket/Arquebus/Rifle powder and shot (20)	20	30
Slow match, 10'	1	5
Flints for lock (20)	2	7
Pyrite for wheellock (20)	4	7



<b>Modern Weapons – Ammunition</b>		
<b>Item</b>	<b>Cost (gp)</b>	<b>Enc (cn)</b>
Pistol, small (50 rounds)	10	5
Pistol, medium (50 rounds)	15	8
Pistol, large (50 rounds)	20	12
Pistol, very large (50 rounds)	40	18
Rifle, small (20 rounds)	10	5
Rifle, medium (20 rounds)	20	8
Rifle, large (20 rounds)	50	20
Rifle, very large (20 rounds)	100	40
Pistol, small (empty magazine)	10	2
Pistol, medium (empty magazine)	15	3
Pistol, large (empty magazine)	20	6
Pistol, very large (empty magazine)	30	9
Rifle, small (empty magazine)	10	4
Rifle, medium (empty magazine)	20	6
Rifle, large (empty magazine)	30	10
Rifle, very large (empty magazine)	40	15

<b>High-Tech Weapons – Ammunition</b>		
<b>Item</b>	<b>Cost (gp)</b>	<b>Enc (cn)</b>
Power Clip (20ch)	50	3
Power Belt Pack (50ch)	100	50
Power Backpack (150ch)	750	200
Power Bank (500–2,000ch)	1,000–10,000	2,000–8,000
Needler Pistol Cartridge (12)	50	25
Needler Rifle Cartridge (24)	80	50
Gyrojet Pistol Rounds (48)	200	75
Gyrojet Rifle Rounds (48)	400	125
Gyrojet Carbine Magazine	20	5
Gyrojet Rifle Magazine	30	8
Doze Grenade/Round	50	10
Fragmentation Grenade/Round	20	15
Gamma Grenade/Round	500	30
Incendiary Grenade/Round	30	15
Light Grenade/Round	20	10
Neuron Grenade/Round	10	10
Poison Grenade/Round	100	10
Smoke Grenade/Round	10	15
Sonic Grenade/Round	50	10
Tangler Grenade/Round	50	20



**Armour**

**Table 7: Weapon Mastery Class – All Guns**

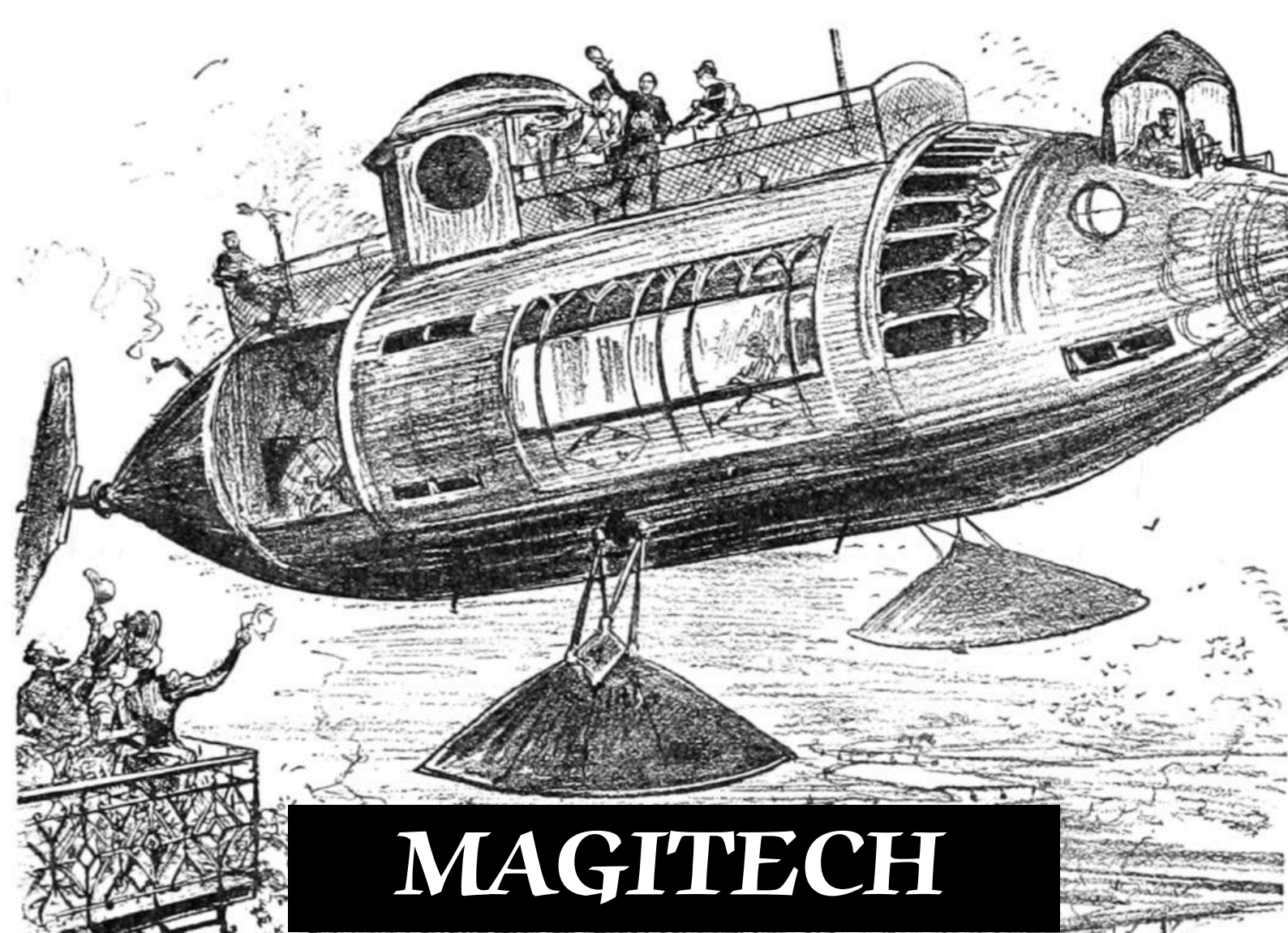
Modern Armour			
Item	AC	Cost (gp)	Enc (cn)
Fibre	5	80	130
Laminate Plate	3	240	250
Riot Shield	(-1)	30	10

All Guns – Weapon Mastery Class List	
Weapon	Class
Belt Pistol, wheellock	A
Pistol, flintlock	A
Arquebus, matchlock	B
Caliver, matchlock	B
Rifle, flintlock	C
Musket, matchlock	C
Hand Cannon	D
Pistol, modern, small	H
Pistol, modern, medium	H
Gyrojet Pistol	H
Laser Pistol	H
Needler Pistol	H
Sonic Pistol	H
Pistol, modern, large	I
Pistol, modern, very large	I
Gyrojet Carbine	I
Rifle, modern, small	L
Rifle, modern, medium	L
Laser Rifle	L
Needler Rifle	L
Sonic Rifle	L
Rifle, modern, large	M
Rifle, modern, very large	M
Gyrojet Grenade Launcher	M
Heavy Laser	M

High-Tech Armour			
Item	AC	Cost (gp)	Enc (cn)
Ablative Screen	3 (9)	5,000	20
Federation Battle Armour	0 (8)	1,000	0
Holo-Suit	-	5,000	0
Power Shield	(-1)	500	0







# MAGITECH

## of Returned Blackmoor

by Doctor Necrotic (Brian Rubinfeld)

At long last, a look at the strange techno-magical items found throughout this strange remnant of Blackmoor! In previous articles, I suggested rebranding existing magic items through a more technical lens. However, this never quite sat with me. And thus here is a short list of various magitech items that may appear within a game in this setting or another highly advanced magical society. In addition to the list provided below, several high-tech items can be flavored as magical technology as well.

But how does this work of techno-sorcery function? Who makes it? Magitech functions much akin to magical items already found within the *Dungeons & Dragons* role-playing game. Some may imitate features and creations seen in various works of science fiction, while others operate on far more fantastical scopes. Those who take on the role of engineers, crafters and tinkers who forge, produce and assemble these magical wonderworks are arcane specialists known under the name of 'artificer.' Within a late age Blackmoor type setting they have moved from single laboratories, to indu-

strial complexes. Whether they operate elaborate machinery or oversee others doing so depends on their own experience and clout. From small studios to sprawling factories, magitech is a powerful enterprise that literally runs much of Blackmoor.

For more references on high technology and how it can be applied to Blackmoor, consult the articles “*Radios and Robots*” and “*Guns and High-Tech Weaponry*” by Cab. Both of these articles are found within this issue. This article will not cover the items found within those articles in depth, but could provide some inspiration on how to convert them into arcane technology. As such, treat them as similarly magical devices as those listed below, should you intend to use them that way.

## GENERAL TERMS AND CONCEPTS

**Economics:** Gold Pieces is the set standard for the *Dungeons & Dragons* game and will be treated as such here, via “Blackmoorian Credit Values” or BV for short. If one was using *Returned Blackmoor* content in their *D&D* game, it’s more than likely that the prices listed below should be at least 10x to 100x or more for price. After all, they would be considered rare wonder works that would prove extremely hard to replicate, even through gnomish tinkering, dwarven artifice, or the many styles of magic. At the very least, this is the case without a deep-rooted understanding of how these machines work.

**Encumbrance:** Rules put in place by the Basic *D&D* Boxed Set shall be the standard for encumbrance here as well. Certain items may weigh less than others, but are

bulky and spacious. Thus, they may cause more hindrance than smaller and easier-to-handle items.

**Power Sources:** Unlike traditional technology, magitech is powered by a diverse assortment of sources. These range from crystals to elemental power tokens to even arcane-infused technological batteries. All of these sources use charges to activate, burning at least one per use. These technological sources have means of replenishing these charges, but these methods range from the quickly cost-prohibitive to the potentially dangerous. Should you decide, the system of charges from Cab’s articles are viable as a power source.

**RESTRICTED:** This term is used in the “Notes” section of the items list. Anything with this label cannot be purchased normally. More than likely, it is conscripted military equipment or illicitly made contraband; thus ill-fit for the wider market. In out-of-game terms, these should be treated as rarer magic items or even artifacts in some cases. Either that or they should not be sold within public venues, but only received for a proper service or gained through seedier means. Worst comes to worst, they could be taken from compounds and dungeons. As such, they have no prescribed market value, save for a contrived value on the black market. Restricted items could cause much havoc if left without restraint, in and out of game.



## TechNO-Magical Items

### Air Filter Fan

A unique form of fan that initially sucks in fouled or sickly air before cleansing it and releasing fresh air; natural scents are optional. Unlike the Micro-Refinery, it can easily be transported. However, civilian models are best placed in a small room. Larger-scale models, while smaller than a micro-refinery, are a challenge to get into a typical house without assembly and disassembly. Larger-scale models have proved useful for space-related programs.

### Auto-Barrel Cart

A predecessor of the arcane automobile. It is thoroughly bulky, hard to utilize, and prone to breaking down. Their original purpose was for shuttling military personnel and equipment. Early versions had treads instead of wheels. Some even had large guns equipped to deal heavy damage.

Its source of fuel can range from ground-up mystical crystals to energy discs to strange tar-like liquid. It is a highly sought-after antique, a reflection of changing technologies and times. Their speed often tops out at 30 miles per hour.

### Badge of Duty

A communications badge that has been altered to resemble that of a constabulary or lawman badge. It grants the user not only the core function of communication, but the ability to cast magical commands through it. As long as another badge user is within 10 miles, both may communicate with each other. The badge itself can be used to cast Command Word at others too, but only two times per day.

### Connector Mage Cord

A device capable of connecting to magical fonts of power, able to siphon bits to another connected item or device. For the most part, these are legal with some minor

failsafes put in. But, overturned? One could leech off another's magical sources with relative ease. This conduit has countless uses, even if used as intended.

### **Crystal Core**

A distinct energy source needed for a wide variety of weaponry, both ranged or melee. For example, these can be used to power classical-inspired beam blades or be used to fire laser-like shots from guns.

### **Dimensional Storage Tub**

A successor to the Bag of Holding, but in a constructed box-like format. It can hold up to 300 lbs. of material. After this, the lid will not shut and anything extra will stick out.

### **Dimensional Storage Tub, Enhanced**

This military-grade container holds up to 1,000 lbs. However, it has a catch. The reinforced shell makes it quite heavy, at 100 lbs. for the box itself. They are more typically used for storage and transport vehicles.

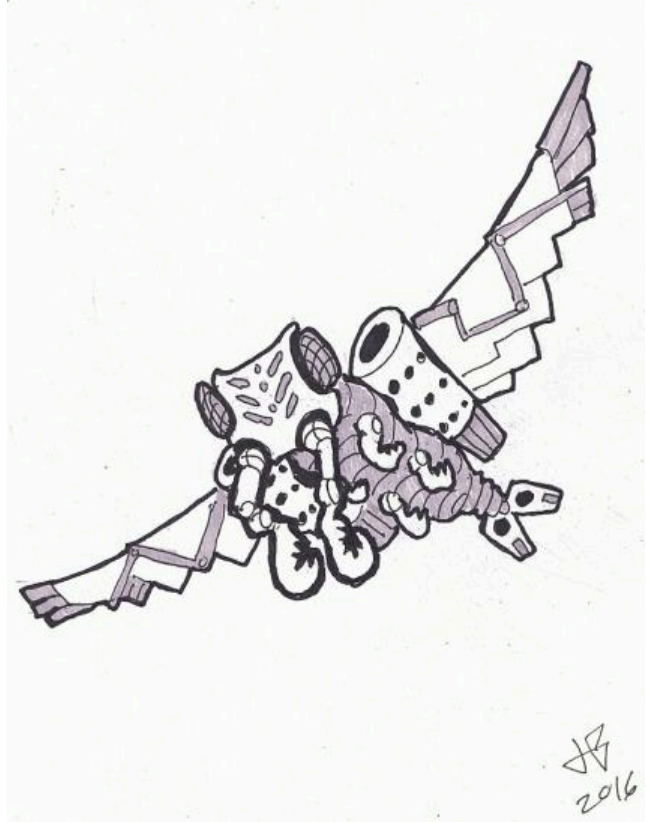
### **Encrypted Pen**

A mastercraft of the spy trade. This pen allows you to write in a magical ink that vanishes, except with specific forms of light. When the light is held up to the ink, it will glow an opposite color. These were available on the market for a while, but have since been moved to military only.

### **Eye Recorder**

An eyeball-shaped device that stores memories of all it witnesses, but only visually. For an additional fee, an antenna can be attached for gathering audio. A switch on the

back of it ends the memory-recording process, and simply staring into it allows all information to be transferred to the user's mind.



### **Flight Cart**

A bird-shaped vehicle. One operates it with a two-pronged steering device while standing or sitting upon a helm-shaped primary control. It's likewise connected to three propeller devices.

### **Fly Cycle**

A lightweight hovering craft. For a short amount of time, one can lift into the air for equally short distances. Trying to pressure it for more is liable to result in falling.

### Holo Cube

A projector-like device that has a number of buttons and switches on the side to sift between recorded images stored in the cube. When an image is selected, it may emit and play back the visuals and sounds previously taken through other machines.

### Hydro-System

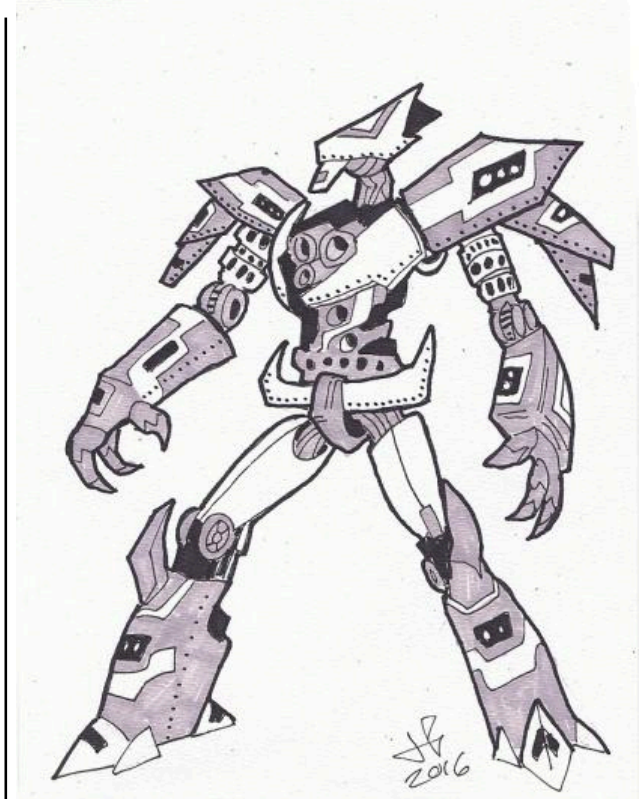
An aqueduct-type piping system that carries water just below power networks. The power from the network lines stimulates and powers the aqueducts as well, applying a force that further moves the water to and from major refinery stations and towards regular water pipes. This ensures water supplies are consistently delivered to those connected to a piping grid.

### Infused Roadway

Traveling paths infused with arcane runes, used to modulate traffic and travel manually. A network of wired and electrically infused runes operate together, studying nearby vehicles and making adjustments rapidly.

### Metal Legion

An unintended relative of the Clockwork Swordsman of the Savage Baronies or the Automaton from the Hollow World. These intelligent automatons are a step above robots, in which they have one organic component that a robot lacks, a soul. As such, they are considered "Living Constructs." It is not known how they came to be, but few are foolish enough to question too deeply.



### Micro-Refinery

Despite its name, this machine is too large and bulky for most civilian use. Its dimensions do not fit within most housing doors, often requiring assembly and dismantling for transport. This small-sized refinery's purpose is to filter large amounts of water or soil, purifying them and granting an option of enhanced nutrients through a mixture of alchemy and enchantment. In places of great calamity and pollution, such as Returned Blackmoor, this device can save countless lives.

### Powder Bug

A cosmetic construct capable of enhancing the looks of its user. When activated, it will maneuver around the subject and apply enchanted cosmetic makeup upon them. This can be used to either enhance their appearance (granting a temporary +2 bonus to Charisma that lasts 1d4+6 hours)

or a disguise, as if they have utilized thieves' tools or a disguise kit. The latter is considered unlawful tampering.

### **Power Torch**

An illumination device in several strengths and styles. It can function and emit beams in different ways, whether as a stick-like device that can shoot a solid light line or a lantern-inspired box that can have light funneled at different angles.

### **Protector Bulb**

An illumination device with an extra property, one of many enchantments meant to aid the user. This can be a means of increased healing, protections against types of magic, or wards against specific powers or foes.

### **Reversion Chamber**

A large tube-shaped device capable of fitting one human-sized creature. It dispels curses, magical effects, and other abilities. It's even effective against Nyela's curse if tackled quickly. However, prohibitive pricing makes supply, use, and location limited.

### **Reversion Chamber, Reanimator**

A tampered contraband alteration. This variant can restore the recently deceased. This has been employed by the wealthy and powerful, but has been properly maintained to prevent disturbing malfunction. However, if defective, it can produce unstable and wicked results often involving the undead.

### **Sanitizer Machine**

A machine that not only cleans garb and items, but searches them for toxins and negative energies before cleansing them.

This device is considered a washing device for the exceedingly wealthy. It is otherwise used by physicians.

### **Scry-Communicator**

A small device that allows you to magically connect to a contact that has registered with a similar device. From there, it projects a small screen and allows you to listen should they consent to communication. Also available as an installable screen for home and business use.

### **Spell-ware**

Capable of everything and nothing, this hardware serves a wide purpose for magic. It is capable of storing and augmenting arcane power sources. This can be used in addition to another device, a means of transferring a magical spell through either physical or digital means, a method of procedural containment or much more. Its generalist nature has kept it outside of potential ban or regulation for the time being. Further claims of abuse will change this, likely resulting in follow-up versions being more complex and limited all the same.

### **Unlimited Purpose Pill**

A dangerous omni-medication that would end numerous markets in an instant. This "miracle pill" can replicate an effect needed by its user. Without control or guidance, it can easily fall to exploitation. It could just as easily throttle an already unstable economy. For now, it is heavily monitored and experimented with the Blackmoorian military as well as close-knit scientific communities.

Table 1: Techno-Magical Items

Item	Cost	Weight	Note
Air Filter Fan, Civilian	500 bv	50 lbs.	
Air Filter Fan, Industrial	2,000 bv	300 lbs.	
Auto-Barrel Cart	2,000 bv	2,000 lbs.	
Badge of Duty	nil	> 1 lb.	<b>RESTRICTED</b>
Connector Mage Cord	100 bv	4 lbs.	
Crystal Core	200 bv	> 1 lb.	
Eye Recorder	900 bv	> 1 lb.	
Encrypted Pen	nil	> 1 lb.	<b>RESTRICTED</b>
Flight Cart	3,500 bv	220 lbs.	
Fly Cycle	500 bv	80 lbs.	
Holo Cube	75 bv	2 lbs.	
Hydro-Systems, Home Scale	3,000 bv		
Hydro-Systems, Grand Scale	nil	varies	<b>RESTRICTED</b>
Infused Roadway	nil	varies	
Metal Legion	nil	300+ lbs.	<b>RESTRICTED</b>
Micro-Refinery	4,000 bv	varies	
Powder Bug, Cosmetic	200 bv	> 1 lb.	
Powder Bug, Disguise	nil	> 1 lb.	<b>RESTRICTED</b>
Power Torch	40 bv	1 lb.	
Protector Bulb	60 bv	> 1 lb.	
Reversion Chamber	10,000 bv	1,200 lbs.	
Reversion Chamber, Reanimator	nil	1,200 lbs.	<b>RESTRICTED</b>
Sanitizer Machine	3,000 bv	80 lbs.	
Scry-Communicator, Mobile	400 bv	5 lbs.	
Scry-Communicator, Screen	1,500 bv	30 lbs.	
Spell-ware	varies	varies	
Unlimited Purpose Pill	nil	> 1 lb.	<b>RESTRICTED</b>

## ARMS AND EQUIPMENT



### Crystal Tech Weaponry & Armor

Similar to depictions of futuristic ray guns and beam blades, these weapons utilize power crystals to create deadly energy weapons. The crystal connects or is slopped into a compartment. When activated, the device acts as a conduit for the magical source and channels it into a variety of attacks such as fired blasts or manifested arms. These need not be simple blades, but also axes and even more blunt weapons as well. Unlike purely technological gear, these circumvent any issues a purely

magical reality might impose. However, they remain just as weak in realities that have little to no magic within them, where such gear risks becoming inert junk.

The majority of these weapons can replicate the list provided by Cab within his own arms and equipment article<sup>1</sup>. It is assumed that these weapons operate on magical crystals if used as magitech. However, your table may wish to incorporate more traditional energy sources/ammunition found within other articles or games instead. Listed below are fantastical expansions to the weapons and armor provided within that article.

#### **Bow Blaster**

Similar to a laser gun, this weapon fires an energy bolt. However, this is delivered through a canister that holds the power source within it. The canister is loaded like a bolt, held by a glowing energized string. Upon being launched into the bow arm, a bolt of energy shoots out much like a traditional crossbow bolt. The canister has its energy drawn from each use, as bolts fly out of it. Once used up, the canister becomes inert. It's perhaps for this reason why canisters are nicknamed "quivers" by the Blackmoorian military.

#### **Energy Polearm**

A revival of archaic reach weapons, with an energized twist. The energy weapon on top of the pole can manifest in different manners, such as a halberd or a glaive. However, the user must wait 24 hours before changing it again. Despite these shifts, the energy weapon functions much the same.

<sup>1</sup> See also: "Guns & High-Tech Weaponry", in this issue (#34) of *THRESHOLD* Magazine





**Laser Axe**

Similar to the laser sword. However, any part that is now the sharp ends of the axe simply act like hardened blunt steel.

**Radiant Cudgel**

Akin to the classic bludgeoning weapon of old. Despite being made of a laser-like energy, the magic fueling it hardens it like stone. Thus, instead of cutting, it deals a devastating pulverizing effect.

**Rad Ray**

Originally conceived as a mobile x-ray device, it ultimately proved to be defective and afflicted victims with damaging radiance. After being banned within medical settings, it was distributed onto the black market as a criminal tool of warfare. It has garnered the nickname “blight gun” due to its harsh poisoning power.

**Runic Powered Armor**

Infused heavy armor that not only protects the wearer, but bolsters their capabilities. All physical stats are treated as if they were 2 points higher while the armor is active. Speed is increased to 1.5x their usual movement rates. Likewise, the weight does not inhibit the user in any way.

**Table 2: Crystal Tech Weaponry & Armor**

Item	Cost	Weight	Note
Bow Blaster	250 bv	8 lbs.	
Energy Polearm	200 bv	6 lbs.	
Laser Axe	200 bv	4 lbs.	
Rad Cudgel	200 bv	3 lbs.	
Rad Ray	nil	1 lbs.	RESTRICTED
Runic Powered Armor	6,000 bv	1,000 lbs.	RESTRICTED





## Weapon Mastery – Blackmoorian Magitech

Weapon	Lvl	Range	Dmg	Defence	Special
<b>Laser Axe</b>	BS	10/20/30	2d6		Striking (20), Wreck
P=M, 1H	SK	15/25/35	2d6+4		Striking (19–20), Wreck
Small	EX	25/35/45	2d6+6		Striking (18–20), Wreck
	MS	30/40/50	S:2d6+8 S:2d6+8		Striking (17–20), Wreck
	GM	40/50/60	P:4d4+14 S:2d6+12		Striking (16–20), Wreck
<b>Radiant Cudgel</b>	BS		2d4		Striking (20), Wreck
P=M, 1H	SK		2d6+2	A:-1AC/2	Striking (19–20), Wreck, Deflect (1) Disarm
Small	EX	05/10/20/15	2d6+6	A:-2AC/2	Striking (18–20), Wreck, Deflect (1) Disarm
	MS	10/15/20	P:2d6+10 S:2d4+10	A:-3AC/3	Striking (17–20), Wreck, Deflect (2) Disarm
	GM	15/20/25	P:2d6+12 S:2d4+12	A:-4AC/4	Striking (16–20), Wreck, Deflect (3)
<b>Energy Polearm</b>	BS		2d10		Hook, Striking (20), Wreck
P=H, 2H	SK		2d10+4	H:-1AC/0	Hook, Striking (19–20), Wreck, Disarm
Large	EX		2d10+5	H:-2AC/1	Hook, Striking (18–20), Wreck, Disarm
	MS		P:2d8+10 S:2d8+9	H:-2AC/2	Hook, Striking (17–20), Wreck, Disarm
	GM		P:2d8+16 S:2d8+12	H:-3AC/2	Hook, Striking (16–20), Wreck, Disarm



Weapon	Hit Bonus	Lvl	Range	Damage	Special
Rad Ray	1	BS	10/20/40	2d6	Stun, Disease
P=A, 1H	2	SK	15/25/45	2d8	Stun, Disease
RoF: 1	3	EX	20/30/50	2d8+4	Stun, Disease
	4	MS	25/35/55	2d8+8	Stun, Disease
	5	GM	30/40/60	2d6+16	Stun, Disease
Bow Blaster	5	BS	80/90/300	1d10	Stun (16–20), double damage (20)
P=A, 2H	6	SK	100/120/300	1d12	Stun (16–20), double damage (19–20)
RoF: 1	7	EX	120/140/300	1d10+3	Stun (16–20), triple damage (18–20)
	8	MS	140/160/300	1d10+6	Stun (16–20), triple damage (17–20)
	9	GM	150/170/300	1d10+9	Stun (16–20), quadruple damage (16–20)

### Weapon Special Effects

Further details of the special effects of tech-weapons, including modified hit-roll bonuses for ranged weapons, can be found in the article “*Guns: From Black Powder to Ray Guns*”, in this issue of *THRESHOLD*. For convenience, special effects that require further explanation are also described below.

**Disease:** If the weapons attack hits, any victim that can suffer radiance damage (undead creatures, constructs, and certain creatures from the plane of energy are known to be immune) must make a saving throw vs. poison or be afflicted by a terrible rotting disease. Until removed either technologically (with anti-radiation pills) or magically (using a *cure disease* spell or similar) no other form of healing is effective, and natural healing is reduced to 10% of its normal rate. Each subsequent hit also requires a saving throw vs. poison, and each

further failure leads to a loss of 1 point of constitution (which is also restored with a *cure disease* spell).

**Slicing:** If the weapon’s attack roll meets the stated target counting any magical bonus but no other bonuses, the opponent struck must make a saving throw vs. death ray or be struck dead with one blow. If the saving throw is successful, the victim still takes triple normal damage from the blow. These special damage bonuses do not apply when the weapon is used against undead or incorporeal creatures of any sort, or against any slimes or oozes that do not have identifiable anatomies.

**Wreck:** Having quite tremendous penetrating power, these weapons can only be blocked by magic, magical weapons or by other melee weapons with the wreck property – thus if non-magical weapons are used to deflect or block them, this will be successful only once, the weapon being



rendered useless thereafter. Likewise, if striking opponents wearing normal armor, that armor is ignored, and each strike reduces the efficacy of that armor by 1 place. For example, chain mail struck by a light-based saber for the first time subsequently only provides protection to AC6 rather than AC5. Adamantine, arachnium, powered collapsium, duralloy and isiidium armor are not thus affected. Mithril armor is unaffected and also provides an extra +3 bonus to armor class against weapons with the wreck ability.

## Arcane Cybernetics

The cybernetics that survived beyond the time jump and revolution are a step down from what the height of Blackmoor had available. Save for only those serving the Ascended Machine or the God-King, advanced cybernetics have not seen mass production again. Currently, most are being built for military programs and those out in the public are either shoddy replicas or were looted by pirates. Poorly recreated substitu-

tes risk worse side-effects. Baseline costs start at 5,000, regardless of the implant. Furthermore, clearance is required for augmentation to occur legally. Shadier methods are possible, should the right market be found.

The following are examples of augmentations one can find within Blackmoor.

### Arcane Compartment

This Implant stores components for spells as well as other essential arcane power sources. Even holy symbols can be added, if the patron deity approves.

### Bodily Repair Network

For when the body faces damage, this series of nanosized arcane filters releases a mixture of natural brain signals and healing magic. As such, healing is increased by x5 regular speed from resting and recuperation.

### Convert Transceiver

A brain and eye implant that allows you to receive, decipher, and create coded messages. This even allows for visualizing code granted through speech or other forms of audio.

### Computer Eye

Allows a user to pull up information based on what they are looking at. This could be from databases, digitized books, or more.

**Data Retainer**

Extra storage of mental memory. It even protects such memories and information when at risk of mind-reading spells and effects.

**Enhancing-Strength Cables**

Cables running through muscles to stimulate them in times of need. When active, your strength is treated 3 points higher per 1 hour of charge used. The cables have 8 charges to themselves. Charges do not return until 48 hours have passed, with 1d4 charges returning each 2-day-rest cycle.

**Metal Arms**

A surrogate arm created from metal. It can be used for melee strikes, but this can ultimately damage the prosthetic.

**Metal Legs**

Artificial legs. They can prove useful to run long distances without great fatigue. Likewise, they can be used for melee strikes for either martial arts or other forms of combat.

**Mind Infiltrator Implant**

A disturbing contraband, capable of thoughts forcefully given to those with implants. It's typically used by slave masters.

**Nightvision**

Infravision out to various lengths, often in tandem with the creatures they're emulating.

**Skeleton Upgrade**

A sort of artificial but natural armor. Whether exo or endo, you are treated as wearing armor equivalent to chain mail by default.

**Stimulation Implant**

This injects an energy-enhancing formula that briefly expands your reflexes and even spatial awareness. You may act twice during your combat phase. This may be used only once per day.

**Surrogate Organs**

Replacements for organs incapable of disease and resistant to direct damage.



### **Telescopic Vision**

This allows the user to extend their vision up to 1d6 miles while vision is clear.

### **Weapon Slot**

An adjustable point in your body where weaponry can be safely and comfortably attached. Some options allow for hidden compartments that reveal upon activation.

### **Aug Burnout**

A process in which the user loses empathy and connection to their lifeforce the more they infuse cybernetics into their body. Every time a patient introduces a cybernetic enhancement to their body, they must roll a saving throw vs Paralysis. Upon failure, they lose 1d4 points of Charisma. For each existing cybernetics installed into them, they take an additional -1 penalty to their save. Should their Charisma reach 0 while cybernetics are installed into them, the character is permanently insane, devoid of any sense of living or feeling, and thus becomes an NPC. This state of psychosis is called Aug Burnout. One example of victims would be the Rats of the Machine-God, all of whom are altered into deranged puppets of the crazed artificial intelligence. Criminals forcefully “reprogrammed” into prison labor throughout Blackmoor are likewise another example. A less extreme example includes a body modding sub-culture in Blackmoor. Those who abuse their augmentations risk burnout, causing them to further fall out of society.

## **UNIQUE CREATIONS**

### **The Cloaking Shield**

This incredible device is responsible for saving Blackmoor. It has the ability to scan an area and clean it to fit a far less damaged version of Skothar. A more recent update also allows it to work within dimensional spaces, wholly copying lands of Skothar proper before cleaning them. It is likely an Immortal-tier artifact, especially with its final upgrade.

### **Gateway Doors**

Computer-operated portal doors that link to various points within Blackmoor. Use is strictly for confidential government or military purposes only. These doors are installed at specific points of several top secret installations. Without proper codes and knowledge of functions, they simply open to various existing corridors.

# The Mystery of Oisar

A Journey through  
Mystara's Past and Future

by Jim RGF

## PART ONE: A STRANGER IN MIRROS

The Karameikan School of Magecraft was unusually empty for Yarthmont. The familiar commotion of student activity was nowhere to be seen. In a quiet corner of the library, Tredzis, a young apprentice at the school, looked up from his book as the sound of a ringing bell echoed throughout the building. He looked around quickly, upset that he had lost track of time. He hastily closed the book he was reading as well as three others that sprawled open on the table. He gathered them up and hurried to the library desk. He knew Maiika would be on time and he didn't want to be late. He dropped his books on the counter and thanked the librarian who was sitting there.

Tredzis left the library and hurried down the stairs that led to the courtyard. He opened the large, oak door to the library and the bright, spring sunlight made him squint. The courtyard stretched before him, ringed by the high towers of the school. His eyes fell on Maiika, who was standing a short distance away. Like him, she was an apprentice at the school. Her brown hair was tied up with a black ribbon and she was wearing a green robe. She was looking up at the sky. Tredzis swallowed nervously and walked up to her. He had only talked to her a handful of times and was still unsure why she had asked him to meet with her today.



“Hi,” he said casually as he brushed his bushy hair from his eyes.

“Hello,” she answered. “Thanks for coming to talk with me.”

“Oh, yeah. Of course. What can I do for you?” he asked.

“Your master is Saphrax, right?”

“Yes. Why?”

“Well, I have Master Choniat,” she began as she started slowly walking into the courtyard. “Now... he’s great and all, but... I’m having trouble with a spell and I was wondering if maybe you learned a different way of casting it?”

“Um... maybe. Which spell is it?”

“*Wizard lock*,” she said as she looked down in embarrassment.

“Sure. I could definitely help you with it.”

“Would you?” she said with relief. “That would be great! My aunt and uncle are merchants. They asked me to go on a journey with them this summer and I just want to master this one so I can lock myself in a wagon in case of trouble.”

“Trouble? What kind of trouble are you expecting?”

“I don’t really know, but I’ve never left Karameikos before. I want to be cautious.”

“You’re leaving the kingdom? Where are you going?”

“To Selenica in Darokin!” she exclaimed with a wide grin. “I’m so excited, but nervous. I

don’t want to be in the way. I want to be useful.”

“Shouldn’t you learn something... I don’t know, more dangerous?”

“Master Choniat hasn’t let me learn anything dangerous. I really need help with *wizard lock* though. Can you help me?”

“Sure,” he answered nervously. “Let me memorize it tomorrow and we can practice on that door over...”

He trailed off in mid-sentence as there was a man standing in front of the door to the school. Maiika looked at the man suspiciously.

“Who is that?” she asked.

“I’ve never seen him before,” Tredzis replied. The man was tall and muscular. He was wearing a dark-red tunic and a brown cloak. He had short brown hair and was clean-shaven. He looked like he was in his late thirties or early forties. The stranger looked around for a quick moment and then started to approach the two teenagers. Tredzis began to say something but stopped himself.

“Excuse me, young Masters,” the man began with a slight bow of his head. He spoke Traladaran with an accent that Tredzis had not heard before. “Are there sages here?”

“Sages?” Tredzis asked. He glanced at Maiika with a confused look.

“This is a mage school, is it not?” the man asked.

“It is,” Maiika responded, “but we don’t really know of any sages.”





“The architecture here,” the man noted as he pointed at the nearby towers, “appears to be Alphatian. Are there any Alphatian nobles here?”

“A few,” Tredzis answered, “Master Terari is Alphatian, but I think he’s gone for the summer.”

“Is there someone here who has knowledge of history?” the man asked.

“Well... all students here learn history,” Tredzis answered cautiously. “What do you need to know?”

“I have some specific questions about Alphatians,” the man replied. The two students looked at each other in silence. The stranger noted their confusion. “It’s quite important to me. Dost thou know someone who may be able to assist me?”

“My master, Master Saphrax, studied in Alphatia. She may know about those things,” Tredzis volunteered. “You could talk to her but she’s gone until Loshdain.”

“Pardon?”

“Loshdain. Three days from now.”

“Ah,” the man acknowledged. “Very well. Can I seek her here?”

“You can ask for her at the guardhouse.”

“Where?”

“The guardhouse. It’s at the entrance to the school. You must have come through there.”

“Yes, of course,” the man agreed. “I thank both of thee. I shall return on Loshdain.” He gave another slight bow of his head and then turned to leave. Tredzis and Maiika watched him go in silence.

“How odd was that?” Maiika asked.

“Quite odd,” Tredzis agreed. “Should we tell someone about him?”

“I’m not sure. I can tell Master Choniat, but I wouldn’t expect him to do anything, honestly.”

“I guess I’ll go see Master Saphrax early on Loshdain and tell her about him.”

“I think that’s a good idea,” Maiika agreed.

“Well, I’ll still meet you here in the morning to practice *wizard lock*.”

“Yes. I’ll see you tomorrow, Tredzis.”

Tredzis was up early the next morning. He ate a small breakfast, left his bedroom and headed down to the courtyard. There were a handful of people crisscrossing its green grass. Among these, Tredzis quickly recognized Maiika. She was talking to an older



woman and to Master Saphrax. Tredzis was stunned to see Saphrax. He hesitated for a moment and then, remembering the stranger from yesterday, he hurried to speak with the three women. His mentor noticed him first.

“Good morning, Tredzis,” she offered. She was wearing her travel clothes: a rugged, heavy robe and sturdy boots. She was holding a short, wooden wand.

“Hello, Master. Hi, Maiika and...”

“This is my Aunt Dukaina,” Maiika said.

“Pleasure,” he continued.

“Likewise,” Dukaina returned. She resembled Maiika but was shorter. She was in her late

thirties, had short, dark hair, and was dressed in a leather and cloth tunic.

“Do you know each other, Master?”

“Yes,” she replied with a chuckle. “We knew each other back in Kelvin.”

“Seems like a lifetime ago,” Dukaina nodded. “Maiika, is this the boy you wanted to come with us this summer?” Tredzis looked surprised. Maiika’s face flushed in embarrassment.

“Um...we haven’t really talked about that,” Maiika admitted.

“Oh. Well, cat’s out of the bag, I guess. I’ll leave you guys alone. I have work to do. Nice to see you again, Saphrax. Farewell, niece.” Dukaina hugged the two of them. “It was nice to meet you, Tredzis.”

“Very nice to meet you,” he responded. Dukaina then went on her way. Several questions went racing through his mind. “You’re home early, Master.”

“Well that’s how things go sometimes. You’ve been practicing, I trust?”

“Yes. Of course. But, um, Master, I wanted to tell you about something that happened yesterday. A man was here asking about sages and about the history of Alphatia...”

“Oh, you mean Oisar?” Saphrax interjected.

“Who?”

“Oisar. A tall man. He is a little older than me. He was wearing reds and browns.”

“Yes,” Tredzis answered in disbelief. He looked at Maiika who also looked surprised.

"I ran into him last night as I was returning to the school. He was looking for information about an ancient Alphatian kingdom."

"Yes, that was him," Maiika confirmed.

"Were you able to answer his questions?" Tredzis asked.

"No," Saprax admitted. "I told him Master Terari would know more. He definitely seemed troubled by something. Polite man, though. Not hard on the eyes either."

"So... we were going to study this morning," Maiika said, in an awkward attempt to change the subject. "By your leave."

"Of course," Saprax consented. "And Tredzis, you have my blessing to go."

"Go where?" Tredzis asked. Saprax didn't answer him and simply walked away. Tredzis watched her leave and turned to Maiika.

"Come on, let's work on that spell," she said as she hurried away across the courtyard.

"What a strange morning," Tredzis said out loud.

For the next several hours, the two apprentices worked on the minutiae of casting spells. Tredzis taught Maiika his particular techniques and she showed him hers. They were both pleased to see how quickly they were able to implement each other's casting mannerisms. *Wizard lock* led to *web* and *web* led to *bold person*. As they bounced ideas off of each other they became more and more excited about helping each other.

"Alright," Tredzis started with a grin, "what is the most dangerous spell you know?"

"Um... *sleep*, I guess," she whispered with embarrassment. "You?"

"Definitely *fireball*. Although I'm trying to learn *polymorph self*."

"*Fireball? Polymorph?* Saprax let you learn those?"

"Not really let me," he admitted.

"You copied them when she wasn't looking?"

"Don't make it sound so devious," he countered.

"Can you cast *polymorph*?" she asked, full of excitement.

"I'm too scared to try. I mean, what if I turn into a horse and can't change myself back?"

"By the Immortals, that would be hilarious!" Maiika laughed.

"Not for me!" he protested.

"Don't worry. I'll copy it too and I can save you if it doesn't work." She laughed again.

"That's not very reassuring," he said. He paused and suddenly recalled the conversation from that morning. "What did your aunt mean about me coming with you?" Maiika smiled.

"I was going to ask you if you wanted to come with us to Selenica. It's going to be an amazing trip."

"Wow. That would be incredible."

"You live with your grandfather, right? Do you need to ask him?" she asked. He scoffed.

"I'm sixteen. I don't need to get his permission. Besides, Master Saphrax gave me her blessing." His stomach growled. "Ooh. Do you want to get some lunch?"

"I could eat some lunch. Sure." The two of them gathered their books and headed back into the school courtyard. They both froze at what they saw there.

Standing near the school's entrance were Saphrax, Dukaina, Master Terari, and Oisar. The two apprentices looked at each other in shock and then looked back across the courtyard. Oisar bowed his head in Terari's direction. Master Terari responded in kind. Oisar turned to Dukaina and flashed a smile that seemed very grateful and genuine. Dukaina smiled back. Oisar gracefully turned and headed towards the gatehouse. Dukaina began to say her farewells also. Maiika suddenly took off and ran towards her. Tredzis ran after Maiika.

"Aunt Dukaina! What was that all about?" Maiika asked.

"Well, it seems as though we'll have a patron on our travels."

"That man? Oisar?"

"Yes. Master Terari was speaking with him and vouched for his integrity." Terari nodded as he reflexively stroked his long, gray beard.

"Do you know him, Master?" Maiika asked. Terari smiled at her.

"I just met him today, but there's something about him that speaks of greatness. Greatness and goodness but... perhaps something melancholy as well. I couldn't quite

put my finger on it. Nonetheless, I detected no lies or ill will in his words."

"Forgive me Master," Tredzis interjected, "but what did he say about himself?"

"Not very much. I suspect he has lived through a lot, though. I know what that is like."

"Are you sure about this?" Maiika asked Dukaina. "We don't know anything about him."

"He offered to fund the entire trip. I couldn't pass that up."

"For what price, though?" Maiika protested.

"He wanted nothing from me. He just wanted to travel with someone."

Three weeks passed. The school officially closed down for summer break and many apprentices left. As the day of their journey drew near, Dukaina and her husband Khosu gathered three wagons, ten horses, five bodyguards, and all the supplies needed for their five-week trek at a spot outside the city walls called Trader's Corridor. Tredzis arrived the night before they were to depart. He approached the assembly feeling like a stranger at a party. He nervously nodded a greeting to men he assumed were hired guards. He headed towards a campfire that seemed to be the center of the gathering. Maiika was sitting next to her aunt and uncle in front of the fire.

"Tredzis!" she shouted when she saw him. He smiled and took a seat next to her. She introduced him to her uncle Khosu and the two exchanged greetings. "I can't believe

we're doing this!" she exclaimed. "We're actually traveling to another nation."

"Yeah," Tredzis agreed. "I've never left Karameikos before. This is weird."

"Ah, the world is a large place," Khosu added. "Karameikos is just one small part of it."

"I never thought of it as small," Tredzis admitted, "but the maps I've seen show otherwise. Where's the farthest you two have traveled?"

"Darokin City," Dukaina answered. "That was twelve or thirteen years ago, near the end of the war. We could've continued from there but it was still very dangerous."

"I've heard Master Choniat talk of the winters in Alphatia, before it was destroyed," Maiika added. "He said there was so much snow that the roads were impassable."

"Really?" Tredzis asked in disbelief. He had only seen snow once in his life.

"The mountains to the north get a lot of snow as well," Khosu confirmed.

"Enough to block a road?" Tredzis asked.

"There are places where the snow never melts," a voice interjected from the shadows. Everyone turned around. Standing just beyond the firelight was Oisar. Tredzis felt a sudden shiver of nervousness run through him. He quickly regained his composure and took a breath.

"Oisar! Welcome!" Khosu offered. It sounded kind of forced to Tredzis. "Will you take a seat and join us?"

"Alas, I can not. I merely wished to let thee know I was here. I unfortunately have to meet with someone tonight. I will join up with thee in the morning on the road."

"As you wish. You are welcome to join us if your plans change."

"I do thank thee, sir, but I don't expect they will." Oisar smiled in gratitude. "We shall have many days together ahead." With that he bowed his head and headed away from the group. Dukaina was the first to speak after he had left.

"Such a serious fellow."

"So he seems," Khosu agreed. "Who knows what his life has been like? He may be a complicated man." Tredzis was going to say something but didn't. Oisar made him uneasy but he didn't want to speak ill of him. He just stared into the fire and hoped the journey would be fun.



The following morning was a beautiful late spring morning in the city of Mirros. The group was up before the sun and made final preparations to depart. By the time the first rays of sunlight illuminated the wagons, they were ready to go. Tredzis climbed into the back of an open wagon with Maiika. Khosu and Dukaina sat together as Khosu drove. With a snap of the reins and a shout from Khosu, the caravan headed for the road. Tredzis turned to look at it. It headed north along the Highreach River and disappeared into the fields beyond. Maiika reached into a sack and took out a parchment. She eagerly opened it. It was a map of the kingdom.

“This is going to be great,” she said as she studied the map. She looked up at Tredzis. “I’m glad you decided to come with us.”

“So am I,” he responded. He turned around in his seat in order to get a better look at the map when he caught a glimpse of a man on a horse trotting towards them. It was Oisar. He quickly came up alongside the wagon and waved hello. The four of them waved back. Tredzis noticed that Oisar was wearing pieces of plate armor and a sword. He seemed to be traveling light, as his horse carried only a single pack of supplies as well as a bow and a quiver of arrows. Tredzis looked at the road and then back at the walls of the city. He suddenly felt worried and wondered what he had gotten himself into.

**To be continued...**



# Against the Wizards: Temperamental Tollbooth of Theradenal Thaumaturge

**AN ADVENTURE FOR  
4 13th-level characters**

**by Not A Decepticon**

In the Great Salt Swamp of Sind lies a horrible prison, the Castle of Dreams, in which several women from Sind are being held. Many heroes tried to save them, but they all fell into the ruthless traps of Theradenal Thaumaturge, whose designs further truly nightmarish ends, threatening to change the Known World forever.

This adventure is set in Alphatia-occupied Sind, in an alternate timeline, described in the works of Glen Welch's "War on All Sides"<sup>1</sup> and videos about his 1030 AC Timeline<sup>2</sup>. It may require adjustments to be used in other locations. The adventure acts best as a sequel to the previous two *Against the Wizards* adventures: level 11 "Moving Mountain Menagerie of Morkbullan Minister" from *THRESHOLD* #33 and level 12 "Undersea Laboratory of Aquan Archmage" from *THRESHOLD* #31. With some adjustment it can also be run as a standalone. The adventure is balanced for four characters of 13th level, who should advance to level 14 by the time they finish it.

<sup>1</sup>This [PDF document](#) available at the Vaults of Pandius

<sup>2</sup>Full timeline video is available here: [https://youtu.be/rMJB1KGJdWY?si=ISqOLE\\_Kns64MbEZ](https://youtu.be/rMJB1KGJdWY?si=ISqOLE_Kns64MbEZ), though only parts concerning Alphatia and Sind are necessary for this adventure.

## Adventure Background

In the War on All Sides timeline, an alternate version of events of *“Wrath of the Immortals”*, the nation of Sind has first been conquered and occupied by the Master of Hule, then later by “liberating” Alphatian forces. After that, however, Alphatia descended into civil war with the death of the Empress Eriadna. While supporters of newly-crowned Emperor Zandor clash with forces of Prince Haldemar, claiming to represent the late Empress’s true heiress, more and more Alphatian troops are pulled from Sind back to the mainland. This creates an opportunity for many resistance fighters to rise against the oppressors and fight for liberation.



*Thaddeus Terion*

Of course, Thaddeus Terion has his own goals. The man had, through various magical and shady dealings, come to believe that Alphatia’s hated rivals, the Principalities of Glantri, had come into possession of means to achieve Immortality. While he does not know what those means are, he considers this an affront to the most fundamental principle that the world revolves around—Alphatian superiority and divine mandate to rule the world. Setting up shop in Sind, he has begun experiments to achieve Immortality through harnessing powers of other dimensions. In particular the Dimension of Nightmares has caught his eye, having found in it something so horrifying and powerful, he believes its power can rival Immortals already. The poor women he’s been kidnapping were selected due to possessing inherent resonance with Nightmare Dimension’s energies. Each one has been forced to undergo a monstrous transformation, becoming a creature of Nightmare. Among them, Therion has found two possessing the greatest potential. One, nicknamed the Forgotten Princess, has been rejected for becoming too connected with the Nightmare Dimension and developing connections with both Negative Energy Plane and Spirit World, to the point of losing her grip on reality. She is now haunting his fortress through her Dream Vestige, plotting revenge for what was done to her. The other, the Ascendant, is his current choice, and he is in the process of harnessing the full power of the thing he found in Nightmare to brute-force her ascension.



## BEGINNING THE ADVENTURE

If the party has completed one of previous two adventures in “*Against the Wizards*” series, either Indrepal Emerald-Eyed or Shivangi Adhira may pass on to them information of a powerful and influential member of the Sindi upper caste, Kaamod Radhak, who seeks the help of skilled adventurers. They can relay to the PCs that Kaamod is an influential man, who was a vital resistance fighter during Hulean occupation, despite being wheelchair-bound. He was assumed to have been killed in one of the uprisings against the Master of Hule, but he reemerged during the Alphantian occupation, managing to gain their respect due to his extensive knowledge of the theory of magic, topic of his scholarly studies. He’s a collaborator, but always prided himself as a nicer



*Kaamod Radhak*

face of the occupation. And, for the most part, he was able to deliver on this claim, as many people will tell of his silver tongue saving them from harsh punishment or especially cruel laws imposed by the occupiers. To prove he believes he is doing the right thing for Sindi people by working with the occupiers, he even refused multiple offers from Alphantians to make him be able to walk again. He considers this a statement to his selflessness. Any freedom-fighting group would love to have someone this well-connected as their “man on the inside.”

If the PCs agree to meet with Kaamod, he invites them, at dead of night, to his palace for a small, quiet meal. He’s clearly a man of incredible fortune and even his definition of a “small, quiet meal” could put many feasts to shame. Yet, despite his riches, his expression is grim. The PCs will immediately notice an empty seat next to him on the feast. Kaamod will explain that he keeps it for his daughter, Pradha, who was the latest victim of kidnapping by the Castle of Dreams, a horrible structure that vanishes as soon as it appears, and whenever it shows up, young women are kidnapped. He does not know more about it, except that it is the work of Sir Thaddeus Terion the Third, the Theradenal Thaumaturge, and he operates with the full approval and blessing of Emperor Zandor. Kaamod will explain that, while he really believed that working with Alphantians will ease things up for people of Sind and that he did all he could to make that happen, he was also trying to protect his daughter and that he never expected her to fall victim to one of the occupier’s schemes. “Like Rajah KulpakhI, I was in favor of letting elephants to trample people, never expecting one to trample me,” will be his exact words, said with utter shame at his own foolishness.

Kaamod will offer the PCs a generous reward of 500 thousand gp and a Golden Key—last of three keys necessary to open a hidden vault in which the last Rajah of Sind hid his vast fortune before being overthrown by the Master of Hule—as well as turning spy for the Sindi resistance within Alphantian structures. In exchange he wants them to venture into the Castle of Dreams and rescue his daughter. He will openly invite the PCs to use spells like *zone of truth* or *decipher thoughts* on him to prove he is not lying. If they do, he will intentionally make it very clear he is not willing to

doublecross them in any way. However, he will also give them a warning : if they kill, maim, or in any other way harm his child, he will use every connection he has to make their lives open season for Alphatian mages, inquisitors, and bounty hunters. If they find his child in a state beyond saving, he expects them to come with Thaddeus Terion's severed head, for which he will reward them with 250 thousand gp instead. If the PCs try to negotiate the latter price, he will cut them off, saying they should be happy he offers as much. If his child is dead, he wants the man responsible to never hurt anyone again, but revenge itself is worthless to him.

If the PCs agree, which this adventure assumes, he will inform them that, according to his divination and spies, there is only one way to enter the castle if you're not part of an "approved personnel" : the Temperamental Tollbooth, hidden in the swamp. As he will explain, it is a construction maintaining its connection to the Nightmare Dimension through invoking dream logic (hence it's a tollbooth in the middle of a swamp). He believes it is situated somewhere between the Domain of the Malakaz and the Kajahali Flowers on Nemkin Ylaka. He offers to use a teleportation circle in his basement to send the party as close to the location as possible, and gives them a magical token to break once they've completed their mission. Breaking the token casts a *sending* spell targeting Kaamod, allowing him as a response to *teleport* the person holding the token and those around them to his teleportation circle. He warns the PCs that he has another such circle deep beneath hundred of miles of solid rock, and if the PCs try to contact him without a convincing claim of completing either of their objectives, he will gladly send them there instead.

## Themes of the Adventure

The adventure aims to explore the following themes:

1. **Tragic Monsters**—Many of the most dangerous creatures in this adventure were innocent women that have been kidnapped, turned into terrifying monstrosities, and then locked away. The PCs may feel inclined to find their fury and schemes at least understandable, if not sympathetic. Some of them may even become potential allies, which the PCs may need, since my method of offsetting 5e's higher-level power creep involves a lot of too strong enemies.
2. **Glorification of Chivalry**—In many areas the Thaumaturge's obsession with "glorious Alphatian history" and ideals of chivalric knight come to light in twisted, often grotesque form. Very often they serve solely to mask his own ego and sense of superiority of Alphatia over the rest of the Known World.
3. **Treating People Like Objects**—This extends not just to the kidnapped women the madman has experimented on, but even the staff and his former allies. Thaddeus Terion treats other people as tools, to be used and then discarded once he has no need for them anymore. Some inclusions of pointlessly gendered treatment of the staff or the fact that his victims are all women can be used to put further emphasis on the creepiness of his attitude.

## MONSTER Substitution

Monsters used in this adventure use either 5e conversions of past edition monsters done by Glen Welch, youtuber Dungeon Dad, ENWorld user Dave 2008, and homebrews by Reddit users BeneloventEvilDM and StoneStrix. In other places I used monsters from 5e SRD as well as *Bigby's Glory of the Giants* (BGG), *Volo's Guide to Monsters*, *Mordekainen's Tome of Foes*, *Princes of the Apocalypse*, and third party books *Tome of Beasts I*, *Tome of Beasts III*, *Legendary Planet Adventure Path*, and *Primeval Thule Campaign Setting*, with CR provided for rough guideline of substitution for those who do not have access to these books.

In the case of the magen, the DM has a free choice whenever to use statistics of magen created by Glen Welch<sup>3</sup> or those provided in *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden* for demos, galvan, and hypnos magen. Any time the text refers to magen DM is encouraged to roll 1d4 and assign them respectively:

- 1: caldron
- 2: demos
- 3: galvan
- 4: hypnos magen

<sup>3</sup> Available [here](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

## THE TEMPERAMENTAL TOLLBOOTH

After teleportation, searching for the Tollbooth will take 24 hours; a successful DC 14 Survival check reduces it by a number of hours equal to the difference between the check result and the DC (e.g. a result of 15 reduces by one hour, while a result of 30 by eleven).

The red Tollbooth stands in the middle of the swamp, striking in contrast to the surrounding area. When the party approaches, a window will open, revealing a nameless sidhe who has been trapped in the Tollbooth as its guardian. The magic prevents them from leaving and forces them to serve as a judge of who should be allowed to enter the castle, as well as where to send them. The sidhe takes an androgynous form that for each person registers as the gender they are most attracted to (characters who would answer "all," "both," or "none" to such a question genuinely cannot tell this NPC's gender). They act friendly when approached peacefully, but will sense if PCs approach with drawn weapons and shift their demeanor to cold, demanding they put their weapons down before approaching.

The entity can only be freed from this prison either by a PC offering to trade places with them or by being slain, in which case they will be reborn in the Good Kingdom as per normal fey rules. They will try to convince the PCs to do the former and defend themselves if attacked, as the magic of Tollbooth forces them to. In combat the sidhe will split into multiple copies, each one fighting one attacking creature and using their exact statistics, including copies of their magic items and spells known. After either defeating the PCs



or being slain, all copies merge again into one being. This aspect of Tollbooth's self-defense is a traumatizing experience for the sidhe, if they're still alive, and they resent the PCs who forced them to undergo it. A PC who trades places with the sidhe can explore the castle but cannot step outside it or the Tollbooth until the castle is destroyed or Thadeuss Terion is slain, but they gain an influential ally in the Good Kingdom, for future adventures.

Depending on each PC's behavior, the entity will open the door in the back of the Tollbooth, sending the PCs to different areas. The door opens even if the sidhe is slain by the PCs. Consult *Table 1* to determine where the PCs will be sent by the sidhe. Upon crossing the door, the PCs will appear in the closest dead end to the right area.



*Table 1:*  
*Destinations*

Action	Area
Trading places with the sidhe	Area 1, Level 1
Killing the sidhe	Area 2, Level 1
Tricking or betraying the sidhe in any way	Area 3, Level 1
Being too indecisive to make a choice of action	Area 4, Level 1
Surrendering or losing the fight with the sidhe	Area 1, Level 2
Killing the sidhe and looting their body	Area 2, Level 2
Killing the sidhe in more than one round	Area 17, Level 2
Failing to trick or betray the sidhe	Area 18, Level 2



## CASTLE OF DREAMS

### General Features of the Area

**Corridors:** While corridors may appear to be 5 feet wide on the map, they appear to slightly bend time and space to allow creatures of sizes larger than medium to pass through. The visual effect accompanying it may cause slight feelings of dizziness and may require a moment to get used to. On Level 1 corridors leading outside the map in the northern and southern end are dimensionally bent to connect with each other, thus a person leaving from one end arrives at the other. In the middle of each corridor there is a potted plant of random type.

**Doors:** Every entrance to a room has ornate wooden doors that are locked and can be opened with a DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools or a DC 15 Strength (athletics) check.

**Walls:** All walls are made of stone bricks. Any dwarf or anyone who studies them for at least fifteen minutes can tell they aren't made from any naturally existing type of rock.

**Light:** Each corridor and room is lightened up by torches with *everburning flame* spells cast on them, unless specified otherwise.

**Stairs:** Stairs above Area 2 of Level 1 connect to stairs left of Area 1 of Level 2, while stairs below Area 3 of Level 1 connect to stairs between Areas 28 and 30 of Level 2, however strange it may seem. Level 2 resides above Level 1.

**Dimensions:** Every hour roll a d6. On a result of 1 or 2 the Castle has shifted to the

Nightmare Dimension, making creatures from the Prime Material Plane suffer a disadvantage on all rolls and creatures native to the Nightmare Dimension gain an advantage on all rolls. On a result of 5 or 6, the Castle shifts to the Prime Material Plane, reversing the advantage and disadvantage for creatures. On a result of 3 to 4 it shifts to the Elemental Plane of Fire, making every creature without immunity or resistance to fire damage have to make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or suffer a level of exhaustion.

**Alarm:** If at any point the text indicates the alarm is raised, a voice spread through hidden *magic mouth* spells begins to demand a personnel immediate intervention in any area where the alarm was raised. Alarm repeats three times; at initiative turn 20 each time roll on a D8+1 and consult a random encounters table; appropriate creatures will appear in the nearest corridor leading to the area. The enemies fight to subdue and capture the heroes and the ones reduced below 50 hit points will retreat to lick their wounds and reappear, fully healed, as additional foes during the next random encounter, or the next time the alarm goes off.

**Eyes:** In any room there's a 50% chance the PCs are being surveyed by a hidden eyeball, similar to a *scry* spell. However, these eyeballs actually belong to an entity in the Nightmare Dimension, a nameless, mutated and completely deranged draerden in the service of Outer Beings. This being is the source of energy that is making the whole castle move, a mighty idiot unaware its own power is being siphoned away. It takes a DC 15 Perception check to notice one of the eyes and a DC 15 Stealth check to avoid its gaze. The thing wishes to be entertained and once it notices the PCs it will have its



eyes follow them around. From that point on keep a tally of all natural one and natural twenty dice rolls made by player characters. At the end of this adventure, if the number of natural 20s, after subtracting the number of natural ones, passes over ten, the draerden takes notice of them and decides they're a threat it needs to eliminate, and will begin plotting against them.

**Diaboli:** Each area marked with a letter on the map contains a **Diaboli**<sup>4</sup> who is hiding from something. It can be found with a DC 15 Perception or Investigation check. Diaboli are non-hostile and will beg to be left alone and to not tell anyone about their presence. However, each time the PCs approach one of those areas, there's a 50% chance that an **Iron Gargoyle**<sup>5</sup> is present, ripping out the hiding spot and kidnapping the diaboli in it. If the PCs won't stop this, the gargoyle will carry the kidnapped creature to Area 1 on Level 2.



<sup>4</sup> See this entry for [Diabolus](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

<sup>5</sup> See this entry for [Iron Gargoyle](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

## Wandering Monsters

On every hour of play, roll a d12. On a result of 1 roll a d12 for random encounter or select one from Table 2 on the following pages.

### Table 2 notes & references

For **Dream Vestige** use this 5e conversion by Dungeon Dad: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1uug6sfOyM2w07IFAAa7gHx6cF-MYp9ue3MHtjpLhuqJI/edit>

For **Malfera**, see these stats available from the Vaults of Pandius: <http://pandius.com/Malfera.png>

For **Death Fiends**, see these stats available from the Vaults of Pandius: [http://pandius.com/Death\\_Fiend.png](http://pandius.com/Death_Fiend.png)



Table 2: Wandering Monsters

Roll	Creature	Notes
1	<b>Dream Vestige</b>	Will attempt to slay a random creature, even other monsters or NPCs. If successful or reduced to half hit points, it will retreat to Area 4 of Level 2, in which it regains 10 hit points per minute, as long as it has at least 1.
2	<b>1d3 Knights, 1d3 Mages and 1d3 Scouts</b>	Patrol of human members of the staff. They fight to subdue; if at least two members are dead the rest retreat to raise an alarm.
3	<b>2d6 Malfera</b>	Malfera fight until half of them are slain, at which point they retreat for reinforcements from Areas 5 and 12 of Level 1.
4	<b>Iron Gargoyle</b>	The gargoyle will ignore the party in search of diaboli, unless there is a diaboli in the group at which point it will attack and fight to capture and deliver that character to Area 1 of Level 2.
5	<b>2d6 Death Fiends</b>	They fight to kill, with little to no regard for any other creature caught in the crossfire, but retreat if reduced below half hit points, going to Area 22, where they heal themselves, replenish their numbers with 2d6 additional death fiends, and begin hunting down the PCs.
6	<b>2d6 Magen</b>	The magen attempt to subdue the PCs; if they're defeated the last surviving one runs off to raise an alarm.
7	<b>Sergeant-Magus Magnus McAgnus with his escort</b>	See Area 18 Level 1 for full description. They fight to capture; PCs reduced to zero hit points will be stabilized, dragged to Area 16 of Level 1, and stripped of their gear, which will be divided between the group. They fight to the death and raise the alarm.



Roll	Creature	Notes
8	2d6 <b>Fire Elementals</b> (CR 5)	The fire elementals are instructed to fight to kill any intruders; if overwhelmed, they will retreat to Area 19 of Level 1, at which point the NPC there will raise an alarm.
9	1d6-1 (minimum 1) <b>Guardian Warriors on Guardian Horses</b>	Upon seeing the PCs, they will charge and try to trample on their horses, then immediately ride to raise an alarm.
10	Gary the Intern ( <b>Kobold</b> )	Gary is running with six coffees from Serraine for Thaddeus Terion. If the PCs don't declare they step out of his way, Gary will crash into the first one who doesn't; that PC must make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or take 24 or 6d6 fire damage, half as much on a successful save, as hot coffee splashes them. Gary has a modified ring of teleportation and plane shift that allows one person to teleport but only between the castle and a coffee shop in Serraine.
11	Echo	Horrible experiments in this place left their mark on the area. All PCs must roll 1d4 and then, depending on the result: 1: Make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or feel the victim's pain, taking 2d8 psychic damage and become stunned for 1 minute 2: Make a DC 15 Intelligence saving throw or get flooded by a jumbled mess of memories, becoming confused (as per <i>confusion</i> spell) for 1 minute 3: Make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for one minute, and overwhelmed with desire to leave this place once and for all 4: Make a DC 15 Charisma saving throw or become overwhelmed by victims' thirst for vengeance and violently attack anyone within their reach for one minute.
12	Johnson's Dine and Song	Johnson, a Dwarf <b>Veteran</b> , is selling food on a stand here. He sells food made out of monster parts. One meal costs 50 gp and grants the benefits of a short rest. Johnson refuses to sell to the same PC more than once within 24 hours.





## Level 1



Level 1 map

## 1 The Bride

This is a beautiful room that looks like a chapel. Next to the altar at the southern end stands a beautiful woman, the Bride (**Commonner**) in a bridal outfit. An Alphatian bridal outfit on a Sindi woman, which looks quite nonsensical. When noticing the PCs, she will initially ask one of them to marry her. She will begin promising all kinds of things to her future husband, enthusiastically agreeing to any demand, no

matter how unreasonable. Any character who will agree to the ceremony, will be initially transported in front of the altar, dressed in traditional Alphatian groom's outfit. A booming voice will then speak words of a wedding ceremony. After the character says "I do," the altar will cast *disintegrate* on them and keep casting it every turn until the character is reduced to dust. At this point the PCs will be teleported in front of, now closed, door to this room and

upon reentering the Bride will not remember ever seeing them before and ask once again for one of them to marry her.

If the PCs question the Bride about herself, she will struggle to say anything and try avoiding the question. Any PC is allowed to use Deception, Intimidation or Persuasion against her Wisdom Saving throw to press her to answer any question, DC is 25. If the PC wins, for a moment her expression will turn into the face of pure terror. She will quickly explain that her name is Phradha Radhak and she is being forced to serve as a bait in this crude trap by Thaddeus Terion, evil wizard and master of this place. She begs the PCs to save her, explaining there are seven “wedding gifts” hidden in rooms of other creations and if they are brought to this place, she will be free and a portal to the material plane will open. Any Insight check will tell she is telling the truth. After sharing this information, she will revert back into the Bride.

Any attempts at removing the Bride from this room or dispelling anything will be interrupted by 1d4+1 **Ghosts** and 1d4+1 **Animated Armors** per party member appearing and violently attacking the PCs. Even when all enemies are killed, the next attempt will cause another batch to appear, no matter how many times the PCs try.

The Wedding Gifts consist of 3 Rare Magic Items hidden in areas 2, 3 and 4 on this level and four Very Rare Magic Items in areas 1, 2, 17 and 18 on level 2. Type of magic items are left up to the DM, as they are considered rewards for the player characters who manage to finish this adventure.

## 2 The Dead and Damned

The room looks like a crypt, a type that the PCs probably have seen hundreds of times at this point. In the center of it is a stone sarcophagus. When the PCs interact with it in any way, the Dead (**Ghost**, CR 4) appears in front of them. She is nice and playful, trying to be friendly. She explains that she died as a result of one of Thaddeus Terion’s first experiments. He buried her here after realizing her spirit is unable to move on as a side-effect of these very experiments. Now she seeks to escape this place and be returned to her family. She asks the PCs to take her corpse and get her out of this place. If they do, she will follow them around, as she cannot stay far away from her corpse (putting the corpse into a bag of holding or similar container will make her stay close to the item). However, every hour the PCs haven’t left, she must make a Wisdom saving throw of DC 10 + number of hours she spent with the PCs, or decide the party has lied to her and attack them. She also attacks if the PCs refuse her request in the first place. When slain, she immediately is resurrected as the Damned (**Unseelie Banshee**, *Legendary Planet Adventure Path*, CR 13) and attacks again, focusing on the creature who dealt her the killing blow.



Wedding Gift: The gift is in the coffin with the Dead’s corpse.

### 3 The Coven

The door to this room looks like a ransacked wooden entrance to an old hut. The room itself looks like a large cave, stretching 30 feet above ground. It smells of a foul mixture of herbs, swamp gas and body odors. The area is full of mismatched furniture, filled with all kinds of magical ingredients. In the middle of the room are three **Crones of Chaos**<sup>6</sup>, cooking in a huge cauldron, from which human screams can be heard. The crones welcome the PCs and offer them the taste of their soup. Any character foolish enough to accept this offer becomes Dominated by them for the next 24 hours. Crones benefit from being treated as a Hag Coven, gaining additional spells they can cast. However, they aren't hostile and will do anything to stall the PCs, offering to free three girls trapped in the cauldron if the PCs offer to take their place. If the PCs try to argue, the crones will negotiate and haggle, while trying to appear cooperative to not discourage the PCs. In reality they have no intention of freeing the girls, but will not let PCs know it. If the PCs waste three rounds (out of combat, consider when the whole group either takes three actions or abstains from taking any action) without either killing the crones or knocking the cauldron and releasing the girls, the crones jump into it. Soon after a **Blood Hag** (*Tome of Beasts*, Kobold Press, CR 12)<sup>7</sup> emerges from the cauldron.

The three kidnapped girls trapped in the cauldron have been exposed to both Nightmare Dimension and Good Kingdom, separating them into their human forms and all

<sup>6</sup> See: [Chrono of Chaos](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

<sup>7</sup> In case you lack access to that book, consider homebrew Death Hag, available here: [https://www.reddit.com/r/monsteraday/comments/nksdth/more\\_horrific\\_hags\\_from\\_cr1\\_to\\_cr11\\_these\\_hags/](https://www.reddit.com/r/monsteraday/comments/nksdth/more_horrific_hags_from_cr1_to_cr11_these_hags/)

their negative emotions turning into crones of chaos. The ritual is supposed to help the crones sacrifice the girls to become whole again. At the end of each round one of the girls will die, but she can return to life if one of the crones is killed. However, there is no way to save them once transformation into a blood hag is complete.

A blood hag still has all spells from the crones' Hag Coven, three legendary actions she can use to cast a spell for one action, and temporary hit points equal to the combined hit points of all crones when they jumped into the cauldron. At Initiative of 20 she can activate one of two lair actions. First she casts a modified version of *vortex warp* without expending a spell slot, teleporting the target into the cauldron. On the next initiative of 20 she knocks the cauldron, releasing her victim.

**Cauldron:** The creature within the cauldron is incapacitated until it's released and at the beginning of every turn takes 5 points of fire damage. If a creature dies from this damage, the blood hag gains temporary hit points equal to all damage the creature took. The cauldron has AC 25, 150 hit points, and resistance to all damage. If at least 15 points of damage has been dealt to it in a single round, while a creature is trapped inside, it spills out, releasing the creature, which appears in the nearest unoccupied space next to it. When this happens, all other creatures within a 15-foot cone starting from the cauldron in the released creature's direction must succeed on a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw, taking 3d8 fire damage on a failed save, half as much on a successful one. The cauldron grants the crones of chaos or the blood hag three quarters cover as long as they remain within five feet from it.

If the girls are saved, the PCs will find jewelry worth 5,000 gp for each girl saved.

Wedding Gift: The gift lies at the bottom of the cauldron.

#### 4 The Flesh that Hates

The floor of the room except right next to the walls contains a pool, 30-foot-deep, currently filled to the brim with a boiling, festering substance that looks like liquid flesh. Parts of skin, bones or organs can be seen slowly dissolving in the pool. Any creature that enters this room must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution Saving Throw or be poisoned until it leaves the room and then for one extra minute. The pool speaks with telepathy and forms appendages, which show multiple female faces fused together. This is what happened to failed experiments, they have been dropped into this pool of acid and dissolved, their minds and magical energies flowing through their body creating this grotesque amalgam. This entity has no name and is in constant agony, but will at all costs try to put a friendly face and act cordial. She understands that the blame for her state lies solely on Thaddeus Terion and will try to help the PCs in any way possible, if they promise to murder him or, even better, drag him here and throw him into the pool so she can consume him. She will truthfully answer any question the PCs ask, but admits her memories are a messy mixture of fragments of her past lives and none of them fully understood the high magic of this place to begin with. As such, her answers will often be on the vague and cryptic side, as she will visibly struggle to find words to describe more fantastical things. She has a general idea of what is in other rooms on this floor and can describe types of enemies the PCs can expect to encounter,

but her knowledge of the other level is even lesser. She cannot leave this room.

In case the PCs attack her (especially remembering a similar, but far less beloved pool in one of the previous *Against the Wizards* adventures) or she is led to believe they're working with Thaddeus Terion, the entity will attack the PCs and fight to the death. She uses statistics of **Shoggoth** (*Primeval Thule Campaign Setting*, CR 17)

Wedding Gift: The Gift floats in an indestructible glass bowl in the center of the pool.

#### 5 MONSTER STEROIDS ROOM

Two **Malfera** are pumping a third one with a number of magical substances provided to them to make it permanently more powerful. The malfera has now grown in size and mutated, using statistics of a **Froghemoth** (*Volo's Guide to Monsters*, CR 10) with the following changes:

- Two of its tentacle attacks are now Tentacle Claws attacks: +10 to hit, 20 ft, on hit 17 (2d10+6 claw damage) and the target is automatically grappled (escape DC 16) and the malfera cannot use this tentacle claw until grapple ends. At the beginning of each of its turn grappled target takes 7 (2d6) acid damage.
- When hit with its Bite attack, the target must also succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or take 22 (4d10) poison damage, in addition to all other effects of the bite.
- The transformation affected the mind of the creature, making it lose its spellcasting abilities. Malfera attack on sight.

## 6 DRAGONNE Exhibition

Two **Dragonnes**<sup>8</sup> are being held behind a permanent *wall of force* that also blocks any sound. There is a pulpit with a magical book of commands in front of the wall. A DC 20 Arcana check will reveal that inscribing the correct command in the made-up cipher of the book is used to create openings in the *wall of force*, allowing the dragonnes to be fed. There is a post-in note attached, saying “Harley, if you keep leaving the key at your bed I will have your bony ass reported to Sergeant – Joe”. Trying to manipulate the book without the key requires decoding the cipher, which is protected from abilities like *comprehend languages* or *eyes of the runekeeper*; when subjected to them it appears as utter gibberish. *Dispel magic* suppresses this effect for 1 minute. Characters trying to decipher the book without the key need to succeed at five DC 20 skill checks of their choice (DM can veto nonsensical choices at their own discretion, but each PC should be allowed to participate) before gaining three failures, which will activate the alarm.

The book, deciphered or with the key, can be used to turn off the *wall of force*. A DC 10 Animal Handling check will convince the dragonnes to leave the PCs alone and go on a rampage across the complex. Otherwise, they attack, but flee if reduced to half their hit points each.

<sup>8</sup>See these [Dragonne stats](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

## 7 MEN’S ROOM

The walls and floor of this room are covered in blue ceramics. Four shower stalls are placed against the eastern wall, and five toilet stalls against the western wall. Three sinks with mirrors are in the southwest corner. Water is distributed to this room through pipes maintained by three **Hydraxes**<sup>9</sup>, who also handle cycling and purification of the water. They remain undetectable while in the pipes. They only emerge and attack if a creature does any damage to this room.

Doors to this room are labeled with a blue symbol of a male stick figure.

## 8 LADIES’ ROOM

This room is identical to Area 7 except placement of stalls and sinks is flipped on the east-west axis, ceramics are pink and the label on the doors is a pink symbol of a female stick figure.

## 9 MALE BEDROOM

Nine bunker beds, each containing three bunks stacked on top of one another, are placed in this room. This is the sleeping area of male staff. Random nine of them are always occupied by sleeping personnel. Sneaking past them requires a successful DC 15 Stealth check. There is a 50% chance a 1d4 of them may be awaked and a 50% chance another 1d4 member of the crew will enter the room while the PCs are there. In that case, roll a dice for each to determine if the NPC is a Knight (odds, CR 3) or a Mage (evens, CR 6).

<sup>9</sup>See these [Hydrax stats](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

Searching this room for at least an hour gives 1d10 x 100 gp in coins, gems and trinkets. Investigation check above 13 also yields 1d4 mundane weapons and above 15 1d2 spellbooks containing all spells from NPC Mage's spell list plus 1d6 randomly selected spells of level 5 or lower.

## 10 WOMEN'S BEDROOM

The room is identical to Area 9 except instead of a Knight, the roll of evens gives NPC statistics of a Scout.

## 11 CONTROL GEM FACTORY

There is a machine in here operated by a three floating skulls — one **Druj**<sup>10</sup> and two **Flameskulls** (CR 4). The machine has two platforms. On one, a flameskull places a gem from the bag next to it. The druj then performs the process of teleporting it on the other platform, during which it turns into a Control Gem. The other flameskull then takes the gem and drops it into a nearby tube, where magical wind sends it to Area 1 on Level 2. Flameskulls fight to death, but the druj is willing to negotiate if reduced to half its hit points, offering the information on the machine and Control Gems, in exchange for its own continuous existence.



<sup>10</sup> See these [Undead Spirit stats](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

The machine has AC of 18 and 60 hit points and immunity to fire, psychic and poison damage. It can be studied for an hour (DC 20 Arcana check halves the duration, DC 30 reduces it to one fourth) to gain advantage on all checks to turn off or to reverse the effect of the gems.

The bag contains 1d20 gems worth 1,000 gp each.

**Control Gem** (wondrous item, uncommon): When placed on the forehead of a creature, the creature is treated as under effects of the *dominate monster* spell, controlled by the owner of the Control Crown. In addition, the creature may also enter a trance during which their body becomes a conduit for energy sources determined by the owner of the Control Crown. The owner of the Control Crown can, at will, reduce a creature under a Control Gem's influence to zero hit points to consume these energies.

Attempts at *dispelling* or suppressing a Control Gem other than *wish* or *anti-magic zone* require, in addition to normal casting of a spell, a DC 30 Arcana check. Group effort that amasses three successful DC 30 Arcana (or other skills of DM or player's choice) checks before 3 failed ones allows to dispel the effect on every Control Gem in the same area. If at least five Control Gems and the Control Crown are present, a successful 5 DC 30 checks, alongside casting of an *enhancement* spell on the Control Crown allow to destroy all but one Control Gem and make the user of the Control Crown be treated as affected by a *dominate monster* spell by whoever holds the last Control Gem.

**Control Crown** (wondrous Item, Rare, requires attunement): Currently in possession of the Ascendant (Level 2, Area 1), see Control Gem for details.

## 12 Elephants in the Room

There is a portal in the west wall of this room. In the center of the room lies a table, on which Glen, a **Sollux**<sup>11</sup>, lies tied up and paralyzed. Once the PCs enter, four **Malfera** step out of the portal to devour the sollux alive. If they spot the PCs, they move to attack, quickly joined by the malfera and their monstrous creation in Area 5. The monsters will try to force the PCs into this Area and Area 5 so they can more easily gang up on and beat to death single characters. They will retreat into their portal if at least half of them are killed, but will return leading a contingent of 12 malfera bent on hunting down and killing the PCs within 1d3 hours, if the portal is not closed. It can be closed with *dispel magic* or similar spell and a successful Arcana check, DC of the check equals 28 minus the level of spell slot used.

If the sollux is saved by the PCs, he reveals himself as the member of the Brotherhood of the Sun and begs the PCs to help him save his brother, who is currently held in Area 16. He will accompany the PCs and, if his brother is successfully freed, transport both of them to the Material Plane. In two weeks' time after completing this adventure, another sollux will contact them, offering them a payment for saving their members in the form of a Legendary Magic Item of DM's choice.

## 13 & 14 ARMORY

These are identical rooms full of weapon stacks. All kinds of weapons of mundane quality can be found here. A magen is stationed in each room, with a list of faces and names of every personnel member author-

<sup>11</sup> See these [Sollux stats](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

ized to take weapons from this area, programmed into its memory. It attacks and tries to restrain anyone who attempts to enter this area without fitting the list. When the magen is reduced to zero hit points, an alarm goes off.

## 15 Kitchen and Pantry

This is a kitchen and the pantry used by the personnel living in Area 10; it contains enough food to provide 3 meals for every person who sleeps in Area 10, of better quality than food from Area 21, but it has to be made manually. The food replenishes itself every 24 through magical enhancements.

A diaboli is hiding in the storage closet built in the southeast wall.

## 16 PRISON CELL

Here are held intruders that tried and failed to sneak into the castle, as well as anyone who just looked at the Sergeant funny. The Sergeant sometimes attempts to torture them for the information using the iron maiden in the southwest corner of the room.

The room currently contains six people, bound and gagged. Four of them are **Commoners** that really did end up here on ridiculous charges. The fifth one ended there for similar reason, but in an extreme case of broken clock being right twice a day, as he is actually a **Baldandar**<sup>12</sup> in disguise, who has infiltrated the castle. He will do anything to get the PCs to free him, except reveal his identity, and will work with them as long as an opportunity to either flee the castle or assume another identity doesn't present itself. The last prisoner is Sven,

<sup>12</sup> See these [Baldandar stats](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

**Sollux** member of the Brotherhood of the Sun, who was captured investigating ties between Alphatians and the efreeti. He will accompany the party, if freed, but lacks any weapons. If he is with the party when they meet Go'Rero (Level 2 Area 22), he will attack on sight and refuse to work with the PCs if they strike a deal with the efreeti. He is unaware of his brother, who went to save him and ended up captured and held in Area 12.

## 17 Sylvester and Archibald's Office

This place is an office of Sylvester the Crime Crocodile (**Gator Man**<sup>13</sup>) and Archibald, the Gangster Goat (**Minotaur**, CR 3, except the charge and gore attacks deal bludgeoning damage, instead of piercing because he is a goat, not a bull). Each one of them is wearing a business suit and has a strange revolver, whose design does not fit with the current firearms of the Savage Coast, even if it still uses cinnabryl-based powder. That pistol uses statistics of modern revolvers as described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*; their bonus to hit with it is +6. If the owner is slain, the gun dissolves into liquid vermilion. The bodies of both slain individuals dissolve into liquid vermilion in 1d3 hours from their death.

Sylvester and Archibald describe themselves as "an old firm" and offer the PCs their services. The PCs can rest here for 200 gp per character or trade items up to rare magic items category, as in a store. In each of these services, one of the two individuals opens a hidden door to a sleeping room or small warehouse not on the map. If any individual wants to check the walls before or after, not only will they not find the

<sup>13</sup> See these [Gator Man stats](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

hidden door, a roll above 20 will tell them with all certainty there is no hidden door in this room.

Sylvester and Archibald can also provide different services, such as assassination, arson, kidnapping, sabotage, or robbery. They will take on any target except in the castle itself, as one of their principles is "Don't shit where we eat." The DM should impose other limitations to what kind of job the two will take, as they see fit for the tone of the story. If the PCs hire them and provide a target as well as a deadline, they will take the request and ask the PCs to leave so they can carry out the request. If the PCs try to return to this place later, there will be a solid wall in place of the door. 1d3 days before the end of the deadline, Sylvester and Archibald will appear before the party out of nowhere, with proof of having carried out the job, and demand a payment. The nature of the payment is up to the DM to decide, but the two do not deal in souls and refuse such payment.

No one in the castle knows or acknowledges that this room exists. If led there, they will sincerely claim this is a dead end and there is no room here.

## 18 SERGEANT'S OFFICE

Sergeant-Magus Magnus McAgnus resides in this room. He uses statistics of **Gnoll Deathknight**<sup>14</sup> with the following changes:

- Instead of gnoll he is a lupin and his alignment is Lawful Evil.

<sup>14</sup> See these [Gnoll Deathknight stats](#) by user StoneStrix at reddit.com



- Instead of Half-Plate he wears the Kilt of Great Honor, which functions identical to Braces of Defense +2.
- He adds his constitution Modifier to his AC.
- He can immediately sense whenever he is within 60 ft of a lycanthrope, including the general direction towards any, their number, but not identity and exact location. He is immune to lycanthropy and can tell someone is a lycanthrope by studying them for at least a minute.
- He uses Flametongue Greatsword +2 adding +2 to attack and damage rolls as well as extra 2d6 fire damage. The sword shines bright light in 40 feet and then dim light in the next 40 feet radius.
- He has trait Paranoid: Any attempt at Deception, Intimidation or Persuasion against him has 50% chance of failing regardless of the roll for no other reason than his paranoid mind conniving completely illogical justification to distrust the person making the roll. If the person appeals to his paranoia to begin with, this chance is reduced to 25%. A DC 10 Insight check reveals this trait to the PCs
- He has the only key to Area 16.

He is at all times accompanied by four lupin **Veterans** (CR 3) that obey his every command.

Magus McAgnus was a disgraced werewolf hunter, whose extremely ruthless methods and paranoia had him chased away both from Glantri and the Heldannic Knights, where he was deemed more trouble than he was worth. He is extremely loyal to Thaddeus Terion for giving him his last chance.

## 19 Fiery Shrine

This is a sanctuary consecrated to Rathanos, the Immortal patron of fire magic. It's run by Thaddeus Terion's personal friend, Father Montgomery (**War Priest**, *Volo's Guide to Monsters*, CR 9) and his three students, who are also his sons (**Eternal Flame Priest**, *Prices of the Apocalypse*, CR 3). In this sanctuary they can change damage of any spells they cast to fire and all fire damage they deal is always maximum. Father Montgomery will recognize the PCs are intruders and attempt to convert them to worship of Rathanos and abandonment of their quest. He will refuse to speak to any women, refusing to recognize their authority of any sort, and striking at any that will insult him, encouraging men in the group to follow his example. If he is reduced to half of his hit point maximum or his sons have been killed, whichever comes first, he will call upon Rathanos's will, summoning two **Fire Elementals** (CR 5) to his side. Any attempts at fighting in this area will raise an alarm.

The shrine presents the likeness of Thaddeus Terion being elevated by Rathanos and turning into fire itself. It has AC of 17, 180 hit points, and immunity to psychic and poison damage. If destroyed it explodes, dealing 8d6 fire damage to all creatures within 20 feet from it, or half as much on a successful DC 17 Dexterity saving throw.



## 20 Helion's Sanctuary

A **Helion**<sup>15</sup> resides in this room. The elemental is officially a guest of Thaddeus Terion, but the Thaumaturge managed to ensure it cannot leave through a combination of loophole exploitation and coercion, to always have its wisdom at his command. The helion is friendly and will gladly discuss any and all topics with PCs who can communicate with it; the PCs can safely rest here. The helion is not aware of the inner workings of the castle, but will gladly engage PCs in a philosophical debate.

## 21 Cafeteria

This is a cafeteria, with a large table in the center and two benches on the sides. Workers come here to eat, food being served by two **Magen** working as cooks in the south corner of the room. The food is nutritious enough that a creature who eats a full serving of it will need twice as long than usual to need to eat again. It is also so horrible that every time a creature consumes some of it they must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until they take a short or long rest.

## 22 The Gate of Hell

In the northern wall of this room is a portal, from which the **Ostegos**, or **Death Fiend**, are coming through. In case of an alarm six death fiends are dispatched from the portal, to hunt down the PCs, pursuing them across the castle.

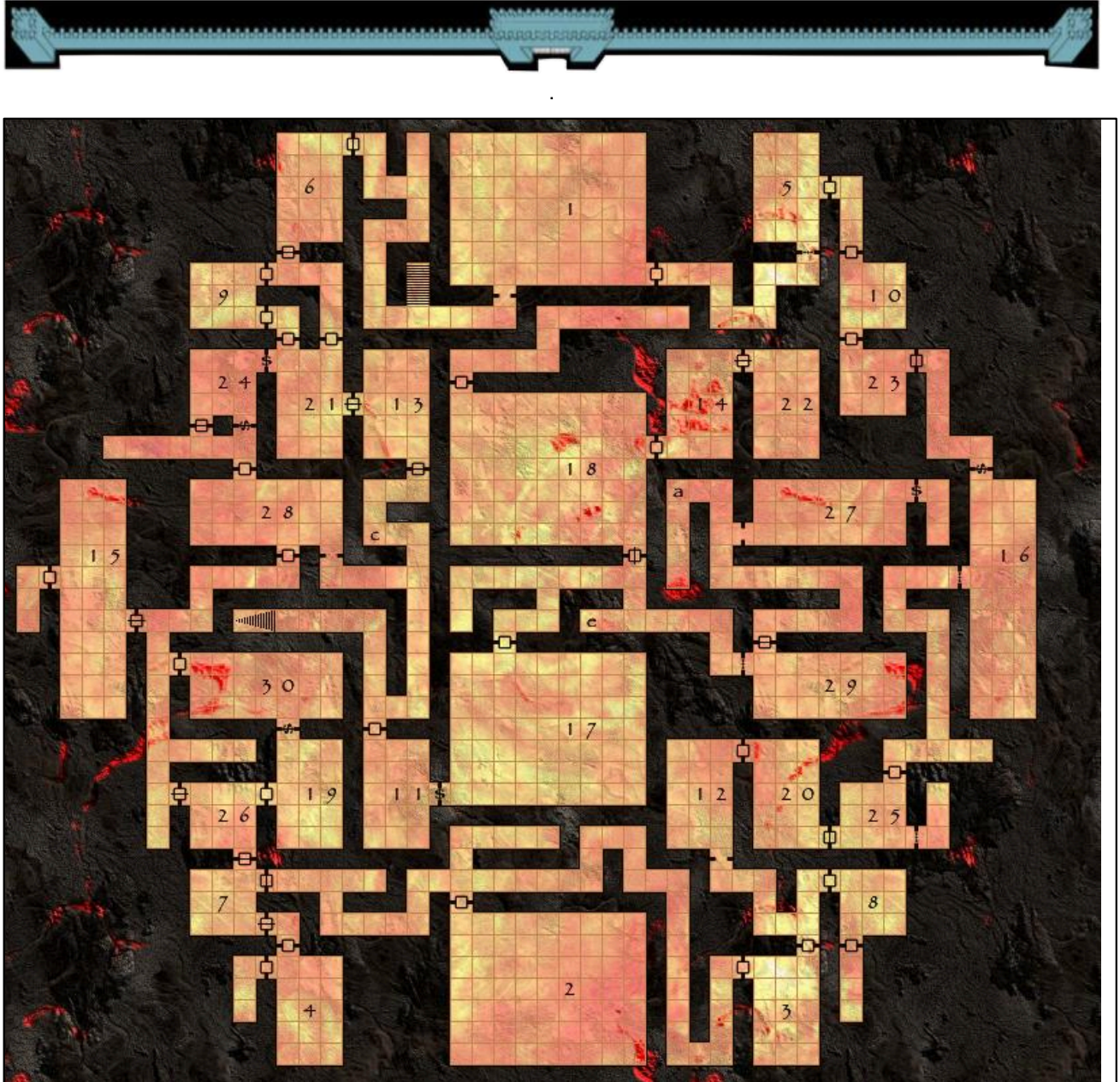
<sup>15</sup> See these [Helion stats](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

## LEVEL 2

### 1 Gaze Upon My Eternal Beauty AND DESPAIR

The diaboli from both levels of the castle are being gathered here by the iron gargoyle. Each one is then restrained by a pair of magen and have another magen install a Control Jewel in their forehead. Each one is forced then to join a ritual praying on the throne, where The Ascendant (**Fire Giant Forgecaller**, *Bigby's Glory of the Giants*, CR 18, with Magic Resistance trait) sits. She is wearing a Control Crown on her head. The Ascendant was once one of kidnapped girls, who was exposed to a huge amount of corruptive energies from both Elemental Plane of Fire and Nightmare Dimension. She has transformed into a giant demonic-looking entity with diabolus traits and power over fire. The process drove her mad with power, as she is now seeing herself as close to perfection, seeking a way to brute-force herself into Immortality through channeling huge amounts of energies from the draerden through Control Jewels. She needs specifically diaboli for this purpose, due to them being more attuned to the Nightmare Dimension.

If all diaboli from all areas marked on the map with letters are collected, the ritual begins and the Ascendant transforms into a cocoon (**Cradle of the Fire Scion**, *Bigby's Glory of the Giants*, CR 25). If not stopped from that point, she begins her ascendancy. Every round one diaboli will burn to cinders, transferring huge amounts of mixed Nightmare and Elemental Fire energy into the cocoon. Once all of them die, she will emerge as the Fiery Perfection—in her deluded mind she achieved the level of Immortal, but in reality turned into



Level 2 map

a new powerful type of Lesser Fiend<sup>16</sup> with the ability to use TPs to cast any spell as a 36th level spellcaster. She begins with access to 100 TP, but it will be rising every sunset by an additional 50 until she reaches 300. If the PCs fail to stop her, she will begin her reign of terror over Sind, quickly gaining the attention of Immortals and likely sparking widespread destruction once they decide to intervene. If the Cradle is

<sup>16</sup> Author's note: I would use [statistics of Klurichir](#) (this is a 5e conversion by youtuber Dungeon Dad)

destroyed beforehand, she emerges in her damaged state, as the Burned Pretender (**Scion of Sutur**, *BGG*, CR 25) and furiously attacks whoever stopped her from attaining immortality. This form is lacking access to the TPs but makes up for it with sheer physical power. Breaking the cocoon before the ritual is complete is the only way to stop it. If all diaboli with Control Jewels are slain before the completion, the Ascendant will begin attacking other living creatures and killing them, adding their power to hers



until she kills one being for each diaboli she did not get to consume.

The diaboli, forced to serve with Control Jewels, will defend the Ascendant against any enemies, aiding her in combat regardless of her form; so will the magen and the iron gargoyle. If the fight breaks in, Thaddeus Terion arrives in 1d4-1 (minimum of 1) rounds.

Wedding Gift: The gift is embedded in the back of the Ascendant's throne.

## 2 Hall of Mirrors

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Walls, floors and ceiling of this room are covered in mirrors. Moreover, every ten minutes a random arrangement of mirrors appears across the whole room, forming a labyrinth. This is home to probably the most unfortunate of kidnapped girls, as her body has been used to summon **Rexxen**<sup>17</sup> from the Nightmare Dimension, who now resides in this room. The rexxen is an ally of Thaddeus Terion and was a source of great amounts of information used in his experiments. However, rexxen are two-faced, fickle creatures, and this one has grown pretty bored. She will use the mirrors to observe the PCs and, if she finds them interesting, will try to offer them a deal. They can hire her for one form of service, but first they must offer something that will entertain her sadistic desires. Rexxen are creatures thriving on violence and bloodshed, so things that will interest her may be among the lines of letting her watch as PCs violently dispose of another powerful creature. Similarly, whatever service is asked of her, she will find a way to make it as bloody as possible. If the PCs refuse or she finds them boring, she will attack, but will retreat from the room after

<sup>17</sup> See [Rexxen stats](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

reduced to 50% hit points, returning into the Nightmare Dimension the moment she leaves the PCs' sight.

Wedding Gift: The gift is attached to the rexxen's belt.

## 3 Plant Spirit

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An **Odic**<sup>18</sup> resides in this area, equipped with a crystal ball it uses to scry in the areas where any of the women transformed by the experiments of Thaddeus Terion reside. The odic has familiarized itself with the women before and after transformation, has locks of hair of each of them, and a ledger with all information about them. If one of the women does not show on scrying, the odic will begin looking for her around the complex, and upon locating her take over the nearest plant and attempt to subdue her. If attacked, the odic makes the alarm go off and fights to knock the PCs out. If reduced to half hit points, the odic flees by possessing the furthest away plant it can think off, usually on the edges of level 1.

## 4 The Evil Spirit

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Doors to this room are locked and can only be opened with a DC 27 check using thieves' tools or a DC 30 Strength check. Inside is a small room that, however, no longer submits to euclidean geometry. While in this room PCs will have a feeling they're actually in a vast void, where the tiles of the floor they stand on are spread far and floating in nothingness; so are the disjointed decorations of this place. Mist floats in the void, imposing disadvantage on all Perception checks. The room feels cold in a way only absence feels. The Forgotten

<sup>18</sup> Use [Undead Spirit stats](#) from the Vaults of Pandius



Princess (**Draugr**<sup>19</sup>) resides in this area. She was an especially terrible experiment of Thaddeus Terion, empowered with powers of the Spirit World, Plane of Shadow and Negative Energy Plane (or Shadowfell in place of the latter two, if you use it in your Mystara), and became something else. In this room she can move at will without provoking attacks of opportunity. She will appear in front of the PCs and move beyond their reach if they act hostile. Outside of combat she can at will move outside the PCs' reach even if it should be impossible within the size of this room on the map. She will offer the PCs to free her, promising her aid in defeating Thaddeus Terion or even, if convinced with a DC 25 Persuasion check, aid against all of Alphatia. Her requirements are simple : the PCs need to break the Spiritual Combustion Engines in areas 27 to 30 and each time call upon her name, summoning the Dream Vestige that will then consume the Spirit released from the engine.

If the PCs fulfill her request, the Forgotten Princess consumes her Dream Vestige and transforms into a **Dream Larva** (use 5e conversion by EN World user Dave2008<sup>20</sup> but give it an ability to Summon Nightcrawler and Nightwing 1 a day each, similar to Summon Nightwalker ability). If this happens, sensory experiences similar to ones in this area spread over both levels of the castle. The Dream Larva can move freely in and out of any room and whenever the PCs enter a room there's a 50% chance it will appear to attack and consume all creatures within. If the Dream Larva appears in the same location as Thaddeus Terion, she will torture him in the most horrible ways for the next twenty-four hours. If

<sup>19</sup> See these [Undead Spirit stats](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

<sup>20</sup> See these [Dream Larva stats](#) from ENWorld.org

the PCs convince her to aid in the fight against Alphatia, after consuming everything in the castle, she will begin attacks on the material world—the castle will begin manifesting in areas of Sind with a large number of Alphatians, at which point the larva will kill everyone in the area. If the whole of Sind is purged from all Alphatians, the castle will begin appearing on the western borders of the Empire of Alphatia within 1d4 weeks. She will continue her killing spree until stopped.

If the PCs attack the Forgotten Princess, she immediately summons the Dream Vestige to her aid—as the two are two parts of the same being, they are immune to all negative effects of each other's abilities. If one is slain while the other is not, it regains 1 hit point within an hour and then regains all hit points an hour later. In her first round of combat she summons two spectres and then, as she cannot leave this room, fights to the death.

## 5 Skull Spirit

A **Druj**<sup>21</sup> resides in this area in the form of a skull, watching for Areas 27–30 using special magical mirrors allowing to permanently scry each of those areas. The room is equipped with a set of tubes that a tiny or smaller creature can use to travel to one of these rooms in a single round. If the druj notices something wrong is going on in one of these areas, such as a fight breaking out, he sends his primary part there and attacks. If all three parts of the druj's body are destroyed, he uses the scroll of *plane shift* (he automatically succeeds at casting it) to leave this area, alongside his treasure. The druj has a treasure chest of magic scrolls, con-

<sup>21</sup> See these [Undead Spirit stats](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

taining one seventh-level spell, two sixth-level spells, three-fifth level spells, four fourth-level spells, 1d4 third-level spells, 1d6 second-level spells, and 1d8 first-level spells, determined randomly. The druj can be convinced to leave if offered a payment in spell scrolls; he is only interested in spell scrolls above third level. He will also trade any duplicate spells in his collection for spell scrolls of different spells of the same level.

If offered a spellbook, the druj attacks with all remaining body parts and fights to the death.

## 6 Thaumaturge's Wardrobe

This room contains a wardrobe, a vanity, and a large mirror for the private use of Thaddeus Terion. Total value of jewelry, perfumes and extravagant clothes in this room amounts to 6 thousand 385 gold and 247 silver. A **Silver Golem**<sup>22</sup> is stationed in this area and attacks anyone who tries to steal these items, unless convinced they have explicit permission of Thaddeus Terion or are the man himself.

There is also a section of this room separated via a partition, where a bathtub is placed. The bathtub is magical and at command can fill with rose-scented hot water, then empty itself by command as well. It's worth 100,000 gp, but only the most extravagant and wasteful elites would consider buying something like this. A rubber ducky in the bathtub is also magical and always says positive affirmations of whoever takes a bath with it. No one would buy this thing.

<sup>22</sup> See these [Golem stats](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

## 7 Rest Is Undeath

Two **Ghost Knight Templars** (*Tome of Beasts* 3, CR 10), named Xyxyx and Garl Deathbringer, have been locked in this room, with a special crystal ball, that allows them to communicate with other incorporeal undead across the material and ethereal planes. The communication is entirely one-sided—they are being heard, but cannot receive any sort of reply. The two have been tormenting random undead across the planes with stories of Alphatian history of chivalry, of which they have an extensive knowledge. Once the PCs enter this room, the two will treat them as expected guests, ask them to sit with them at the table or the sofa (which will appear despite not being present just seconds ago), and ask the PCs to judge their long-standing feud. The feud in itself is long and convoluted and every time the PCs seem to think it is over, some sort of plot twist will cause the whole story to take a near 180 degree shift and keep going. For the PCs to survive the entire, six-hour-long story, they must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or take a level of exhaustion every hour. If they do, they are allowed to determine which of the two ghosts deserves the legendary vorpal sword they are feuding over. The PCs can convince the two that either one of them should have the blade, in which case the ghosts will accept this decision and move on. Or they can convince the ghosts to give the blade to one of them with solid arguments and a DC 25 Persuasion check. In this case the ghosts will move on and the blade will materialize on the chosen PC's lap. The weapon is a vorpal sword, but the exact type depends on what kind of weapons a character is most likely to use. When selling the sword, its value is doubled for Alphatian buyers.

If the PCs choose to attack the ghosts, they summon their **Warhorse Skeletons** (CR ½) and defend themselves. These warhorse skeletons have an ability to neigh extremely loudly, which works exactly like the death wail of a banshee. If the PCs kill both ghost templars, they still gain the sword, but it now bears the following curse: Any creature that attunes to this weapon becomes obsessed with Alphatian military history and memorabilia and needs to succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw whenever talking to other creatures or have to steer conversation towards that topic. In addition, each time the creature falls asleep or unconscious it must make a DC 18 Charisma saving throw or its alignment shifts to lawful evil and it becomes dedicated to both spreading Alphatian dominion over the land and to excusing and defending every crime ever committed by Alphatia. *Remove curse* or similar spells allow to break attunement to the sword.

### 8 There Was a Crooked Man

This appears to be a completely ordinary bedroom, equipped with a working toilet and a shower, except everything in this room looks off, as if slightly crooked. No one ever goes to this room and no random encounter takes place in it. If the PCs rest in this room, each one of them must roll a Charisma saving throw. The PC with the worst roll will begin to see a crack in the wall only they can see, always on the furthest wall in the room from them, at least 20 feet away. The PC will be hearing whispers, telling them to enter the crack; an alluring voice saying this hole was made for them. Every hour the PC must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or become charmed and lured towards the crack. The crack doesn't move when the PC

approaches it. If a PC ends within 15 feet from the crack, they must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or be caught by a pair of slender, crooked hands coming off from the wall and become grappled (Escape DC 15). Then every turn the PC must make a Strength saving throw at the beginning of their turn or be dragged 5 feet towards the wall. If the PC is too close to the wall to be pulled this turn, they are dragged into the crack and killed. They can only be resurrected with a *wish* or *true resurrection*. If a PC escapes the grapple, this effect ends. *Remove curse* or similar spells ends this effect. If a PC is killed this way or the effect ends for other reasons, it begins affecting the PC who made the second worst Charisma saving throw. This process repeats until each of the PCs is either killed or manages to end the effect.

If any PC comments that Area 8 looks ugly, even if such claim is made outside Area 8, a crooked door appears and a Crooked Man (use statistics of **Star Spawn Hulk**, *Mordekainen's Tome of Foes*, CR 10) comes in and attacks that PC, fighting to kill them. If reduced to half their hit points, the crooked man is violently dragged back through the door by an invisible force and the doors slam shut, and disappear. It is impossible to interrupt this or to follow the crooked man.

### 9 Secret Armory

Doors to this room are locked with an *arcane lock* spell and an *alarm* spell that triggers if *dispel magic* is cast on the door or it is opened without a key. The door has been additionally reinforced, giving disadvantage on all checks to pry them open or unlock them with thieves' tools.



Amber Golem (Level 2, location 9)

Original drawing by Jeffrey Kosh (<https://jeffreykosh.wixsite.com/jeffreykoshgraphics/home>)



Next to southern wall of this room stands an **Amber Golem**<sup>23</sup> that will remain immobile unless someone attempts to *identify* or remove other items from this area, in which case it will attack that creature. Golems in areas 6, 13, 21 and 24 come to its aid in one round.

There are three display cases on the northern wall of this room. They represent as follow:

- A spear that appears as if the tip is coming from the mouth of a snake wrapped around the shaft. It is the Serpent's End and Beginning, a Legendary weapon that has all properties of both a Staff of Power and Graz'tchar<sup>24</sup>, except that it speaks with the voice of Immortal Atzanteotl and is a lance, meaning it can be used two-handed on feet and one-handed when mounted.
- Full plate armor +3 that grants wielder immunity against fire damage.
- A shield with heraldry resembling horrible monstrosity of unknown origin on a mirror-like surface. It is Glory of Mab, a shield +3 that absorbs all psychic damage dealt to the wielder. As an action its wielder can remove any number of psychic damage stored in the shield to summon an aberration or fiend with as many or less hit points than damage spent. The creature is a psychic construct and thus its exact form is not limited to those found in Mystara. At every sunset the wielder must make a Wisdom Saving throw of DC equal 1 + number of days it has already made it in a row (it can be failed willingly) or receive all psychic damage stored in the shield, which then disappears from it. The

<sup>23</sup> See these [Golem stats](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

<sup>24</sup> See [Graz'tchar stats](#) at the Critical Role Wiki

counter to determine save DC resets whenever any damage is removed from the shield. The symbol of the shield changes into more horrifying forms the more damage is stored in it.



Each case is enchanted, allowing Thaddeus Terion, the man attuned to these items, to summon them onto his person at will. The same magic also teleports the amber golem, which the man rides in battle.

## 10 DUNGEONS & DRAGONS: The Musical!

When a creature tries to enter this room without a personnel id (carried by every minion patrolling the castle), it must take one of the requisites: a sword, a bow, a staff, or a holy symbol. Once entering the room, the creature cannot leave until all four spots are filled, at which point other creatures may enter freely. Creatures who took the items must perform a musical play, taking roles of fighter, thief, mage, and priest, singing in character as they battle an illusionary amber dragon. Each round at initiative 20 the PCs must make a DC 15 Performance check, while staying in character. The dragon moves after these rolls and in this turn uses statistics of **Ancient Amber Dragon**<sup>25</sup> if no characters succeed the check, **Adult Amber Dragon**<sup>26</sup> if one

<sup>25</sup> See these [Amber Dragon stats](#) from the Vaults

<sup>26</sup> See these [Amber Dragon's Lair stats](#) from the Vaults of Pandius

character does, **Young Amber Dragon** if three do, and **Amber Dragon Wyrmling**<sup>27</sup> if all four do. The damage dealt to the dragon in the previous turn carries over to the next one; it dies if that would reduce it to zero hit points in the current form. Once the dragon is defeated, the door opens and the PCs can leave. All damage dealt by the dragon disappears once the characters leave the room, but any slain character remains dead. The items disappear and the trap resets in 30 minutes.

## 11 Lava Ooze Vending Machine

A large machine has been placed in this room. It has a display case with various magic items, each one either very rare or legendary. Instructions written on the side of the machine explain that each of these great rewards has been granted by Emperor Zandor for continuous hard work. Each item can be borrowed for 24 hours, after which it will return immediately to the machine. Or the item can be purchased permanently with a sum of 10,000 gp per item. If the PCs try to obtain an item from the machine, they will be shown how display moves the item and throws it down to where PCs can reach it... at which point the ceiling will open and 1d6+2 **Lava Oozes**<sup>28</sup> will drop right on the PCs' heads.

<sup>27</sup> See [these stats](#) at the Vaults of Pandius for both young and wyrmling

<sup>28</sup> See these [Lava Ogre stats](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

## 12 Fire Giant Kitchen

A **Fire Giant Dreadnought** (*Volo's Guide to Monsters*, CR 14) in a chef's hat is working in a gigantic kitchen here, pulling dead purple worms from a nearby portal, cutting them, frying them on a pan above a portal to elemental plane of fire, pulling giant buns from the oven (and replacing them with new ones from a bag of holding), spreading butter on them, putting worm meat, adding a slice of gigantic cheese, pouring dragon blood over the newly-made hamburger, and then sending it through a shaft in the northeastern wall to Area 20. If he notices the PCs, he demands they go help him. If the PCs refuse, he attacks but only fights until he reduces a single PC to 0 hit points, concentrating his attacks on a single target. Then he orders the PCs to help again, but even if they still refuse, or if he is reduced to half hit points, he just bitterly goes back to work and tells them to leave. Helping him requires each PC successfully doing one of the tasks described above, using skills, features, or spells of their choice. DC is 25, 20 if the PC has Strength 20 or more or uses magic and has Spellcasting Ability of 20 or more.

If the PCs do help him, he can grant them a small boon. He can either put a single creature under effects of the spell *fire shield* for 8 hours, remove a level of exhaustion, or give a creature the benefits of a short rest via a sip of his special, homemade vodka. He can grant one boon to one creature for each hamburger made; the same creature cannot receive the same boon twice. If asked why he is working this ungrateful job, he explains he needs to make money to have a fitting dowry for his niece, that he is trying to marry off to a powerful storm giant. He's her only family after her parents were killed by adventur-



Obsidian Golem (Level 2, location 13)

Original drawing by Jeffrey Kosh (<https://jeffreykosh.wixsite.com/jeffreykoshgraphics/home>)

ers<sup>29</sup>. He knows theories about what is in Area 20 (see description of that area) and will want the PCs to stay away from it.

### 13 **Thaumaturge Office**

In this room Thaddeus Terion does his paperwork. It has a desk, a library covering the whole eastern wall, heads of regular and magical beasts hanging from the walls, and the light is provided by a series of chandeliers held by the trunks of a taxidermied bodendrucker head. An **Obsidian Golem**<sup>30</sup> stands in each corner, moving in to attack any creature that enters the area, unless accompanied or granted permission by Thaddeus Terion. If a fight breaks out in this room, the alarm goes off and the chandeliers magically disappear, covering the room in darkness. The bodendrucker head then becomes animated, attacking to restrain the intruders with its trunks. Trunk attacks have +13 to hit, reach 30 ft, deal 34 (6d8+7) bludgeoning damage, and restrain the target. A restrained creature takes damage from the trunk at the beginning of each of its turns. Trunks have AC 17 and 50 hit points each; there are 8 of them. The head has AC 18 and 150 hit points, with +0 bonus to Initiative. It makes three trunk attacks in a turn.

The library contains books on any kind of magical subject; research of at least an hour will produce a book allowing advantage on any check related to stated specific topic. The collection as a whole is worth 10,000

<sup>29</sup> *Author's note:* If your players fought fire giants before, I recommend not so subtly alluding to the fact that they were probably the ones who killed them. Dreadnought won't consider this a possibility, but it may be entertaining to watch the PCs get a bit uncomfortable.

<sup>30</sup> See these [Obsidian Golem stats](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

gp, 15,000 gp when sold to the right collector.

The desk contains a secret compartment, which can be found with a DC 28 Investigation check and opened using thieves' tools with a DC 30 Dexterity check. A trap in it can be detected with a DC 24 Perception check and requires a DC 26 Dexterity check using thieves' tools to disarm. If not disarmed, it activates if the compartment is opened without a drop of Thaddeus Terion's blood being first dropped on the lock. It causes the whole desk and all things in it to instantly freeze and explode, dealing all creatures in a 20-foot radius 5d6 cold damage, 5d6 piercing damage, and 5d6 force damage, or half as much on a successful DC 20 Dexterity Saving Throw. The compartment contains his journal, with details of all performed experiments, as well as unwitting evidence of all Alphatian laws broken in them, worth up to 17,500 gp to any Alphatian official. It also contains keys to Areas 9 and 22, the key to the device in Area 19, and a spellbook containing all spells known by Thaddeus Terion. Finally, it has a jeweled-up volume of fairy tales and stories of knightly chivalry, that is worth 10,000 gp to a right collector.

### 14 **Prey Posing as a Predator**

All doors to this room are locked and require either a key or to be opened with a DC 22 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. The walls of the room, as well as the ceiling and floor, are covered in reflective glass distorting all reflections in it. Magical enchantments in this room remove all immunities to frightened condition from creatures in it. If a creature attempts to open the door to Area 22 without a key, all walls begin displaying a series of flashing images of violent

animals, as well as playing a cacophony of animal sounds. At the beginning of every turn spent in this area, all creatures must make a DC 22 Wisdom saving throw or be treated as under the effects of a *fear* spell. The effects end after one minute.

## 15 Military History Exhibition

Five statues are placed here, representing warriors in full military gear, each representing a warrior on a horse, dressed in clothes of the Alphantian military in different time periods. If attacked, they come to life as **Guardian Warriors** on **Guardian Horses**<sup>31</sup> and fight to defend themselves. When even one of the statues is destroyed, the alarm goes off. There is a 50% chance another group of guardian warriors on guardian horses arrives from patrolling the castle, to switch with the ones on display, while the PCs are here.

## 16 Masterpiece!

This room is the workshop of a sculptor. And the sculptor is Sir Thaddeus Terion, the madman behind this place, himself. He uses the statistics of an **Archmage** with the following changes:

- He has Strength and Constitution of 18, including additional hit points.
- As a free reaction he can summon to himself his gear, unless it has been removed from Area 9. He is proficient with all of it.
- If reduced to zero hit points without previously destroying the Fiery Shrine (Level

<sup>31</sup> See [these stats](#) at the Vaults of Pandius for both Guardian Warrior and Guardian Horse

1 Area 19), he will transform into a huge fire elemental that uses statistics of **Imix** (*Princes of the Apocalypse*, CR 19), except instead of a pit fiend he can summon Karal-Dur, commander of death fiends from Area 22, Level 1, who uses the statistics of a **Balor**. This transformation destroys all non-magical items he is carrying instantly and magical items in 1d3 rounds. In this form he cannot use any magical item he is carrying.

- He has a magical connection with the warrior statues in Area 15 of this level. Whenever he fails a saving throw, or is a subject of magical effect, he can succeed on the save or remove the effect, causing one of the statues to crumble. He can do this as many times as there are statues in Area 15.

In this room he, assisted by his four magen, is working on his masterpiece—a giant, multi-armed, multi-headed, snake-tailed statue representing the likeness of every woman he kidnapped combined into one “image of perfection,” but really a twisted mockery of the Sindi culture he claims “inspired” him. If attacked, he brings this statue to life to defend him. It uses the statistics of **Blackstone Gigant**<sup>32</sup> (CR 17). The statue fights until slain and will pursue the PCs across the castle. It has a connection with the horse statues in Area 15, the same as Thaddeus Terion’s connection with the warriors.

<sup>32</sup> Use [statistics of conversion](#) by youtuber Dungeon Dad

## 17 The Deposed Queen's Throne Room

This is a rich throne room, with tapestries hanging from the walls and animal furs forming a makeshift carpet on the floor. The resident of this room is the Deposed Queen (**Goristro** with magic resistance trait, CR 17) and her Four Sisters (**Oni** with Magic Resistance trait, **Hezrou**, **Glabrezu**, and **Bone Devil**, CR 7–10 respectively). Regardless of what statblocks they're using, they all look as increasingly larger, more mutated diaboli. These five were once sisters, kidnapped from the same household. Each one was subjected to a specific kind of experiment by Thaddeus Therion, each time more refined to let them assume more and more monstrous form. Each has been then showered with praise and adoration as one step closer to perfection, only to be discarded when the next girl has been even closer to that unattainable ideal. The Queen herself was as close as Therion believed possible, until he created the Ascendant (Area 1 of this level). Now she schemes how to remove her rival and regain her old position and will try to convince or coerce the party into killing the Ascendant for her. Meanwhile the other sisters scheme against her and each other; each will try to promise the PCs vast riches and privileges if they help her dispose of the others. If attacked they will fight together, but otherwise the sisters no longer have any love for one another.

**Wedding Gift:** The gift is being worn by the Deposed Queen.

## 18 The Predator's Den

This whole area has been turned into a miniature jungle. There is no light in this room. The Predator hunts here. She was once one of the kidnapped girls, but the experiments changed her drastically. She is now a wild, furious animal, seeking to consume those who tormented her. She retains the ability to reason and talk telepathically and can be convinced to ally with the PCs if freed from this room, with a DC 25 Persuasion check. Lower the DC by 5 if the PCs make convincing enough arguments. However, her hunger will keep pushing her; if not fed a creature every hour she is traveling with the PCs, she will need to make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or attack the nearest creature. DC increases by 2 for every hour she goes without feeding.

The Predator uses the statistics of **Marilith**, but have her longsword changed to three claw (+9 to hit, 10 ft, 2d6+4 or 12 slashing damage) and three bite (+9 to hit, 5 ft, 2d8+4 or 14 piercing damage) attacks. She has advantage on all Stealth checks and advantage on all attacks against a creature that didn't yet move in initiative order this turn. Moreover, any creature that took more than 30 damage from claws and bite attack in a single turn loses a limb determined randomly (1d4, 1 – left arm, 2 – right arm, 3 – left leg, 4 – right leg), and any creature reduced to 0 hit points by them is torn to shreds and killed. *Resurrection* or the combination of a weaker spell of similar effect with *regenerate* can bring a creature killed this way back to life.

After slaying a creature, the Predator will grab its body and retreat into her den—a 60-foot-deep cave at the end of a hole in a randomly determined place in the room.

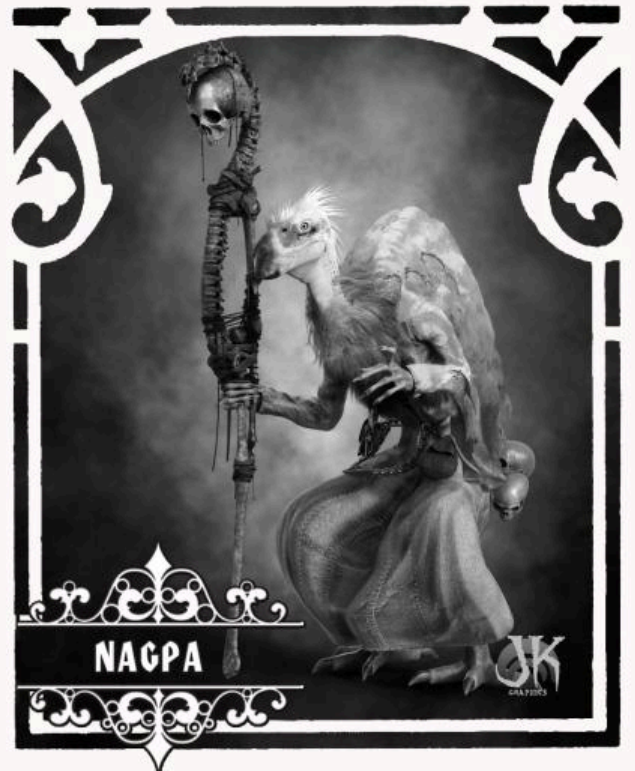
Due to the magical nature of the room, the entrance to the den changes location every time the PCs enter it. The Predator always knows how to find it. Once inside the den, the Predator will consume the body of her victim. Consumed victims no longer can be resurrected, sans a *true resurrection* or *wish* spell. The Predator regains lost hit points equal to the slain creature's hit point maximum, any excess being turned into temporary hit points. She then sleeps for 1d6 hours before getting hungry and running to hunt again. Asleep she is incapacitated. She doesn't heal or goes to sleep if she eats a creature outside the den.

Wedding Gift: The gift is at the bottom of the den.

## 19 Vulture and a Lady

A **Fowryn Oedran**<sup>33</sup> and a **Nagpa** (*Mordekainen's Tome of Foes*, CR 17) are both trapped here, chained to opposite walls. Their knowledge has been vital in the creation of the Thaumaturge's works, but once he didn't need them anymore, he locked them in this room. Each one blames the other and believes to have been somehow betrayed by them. In the center of this room is a mechanism that drains their magical energies, with a control panel anyone can use. Each of the two will do anything to be freed, promising any sort of help. However, neither wants to see the other one free. Each will try to convince the PCs to drain the other to death and redirect all energy drain unto them. If the PCs agree, the creature they choose to side with will be set free, but driven to madness, attacking indiscriminately. The resulting amalgamation has the combined hit points of both creatures, uses whichever Ability Score,

<sup>33</sup> See [Fowryn Oedran stats](#) at the Vaults of Pandius



Armor Class, Skill, Saving Throw, Speed, Spell Save DC, or Attack Bonus is better, has access to all spells and special abilities and attacks of both creatures.

It is impossible to free one creature without killing the other without using a key, which can be discerned with a DC 15 Investigation or Arcana check. If freed together, both prisoners attempt to tear each other's throat before turning on the PCs, rage at freeing their hated enemy outweighing gratitude for their own freedom. If just one of them is free, they will honor whatever deal they made with the PCs to the letter.

It is possible for a PC or multiple ones to try to drain energies of one or two creatures for themselves; discerning how to do it requires a DC 20 Arcana check and then another one to perform the draining. Doing so the PC must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be reduced to 0 hit points. If the saving throw is successful, the PC can

gain as many of these benefits as the difference between save DC and result of the roll, plus one:

- Gain one trait, action, language, or skill proficiency of the creature
- Replace an Ability score or Saving throw with that of the creature

The PC's alignment then shifts to Neutral Evil and they must make a Wisdom saving throw of DC equal 15 + number of benefits gained or roll three times on indefinite madness table.

## 20 JUNIOR WANTS A HAMBURGER

The floor of this room is covered in oil (as effects of *grease* spell) and made into a slope towards the center, where there's a hole in the floor. The hole leads to a demi-plane on which sleeps a **Gargantua** (*Bigby's Glory of the Giants*, CR 23) named Junior. Writing on the walls in Giantish translates to "In appreciation of your efforts", "For my BIGGEST fan", "Take care of my little boy" and "Remember, he loves hamburgers!". Each one is signed "Gargantua". This connects the abomination in the hole to the legendary mage of the same name, hence why everyone calls it Junior. What exactly is the nature of this connection, however, is not known. Theories vary from it being the result of Gargantua using his trademark magic on a giant, through a bastard child he had with some sort of giantess, to that he stole it from another world to study and then didn't feel like putting it back.

Any creature that is knocked prone in this room begins to slide towards the hole 5 feet per turn. Standing up requires a DC 15 Ath-

letics or Acrobatics check. If the PCs make too much noise (impose Stealth checks when it feels appropriate), Junior will reach through the hole and try to grab them with his hand, making Slam attacks with disadvantage, but instead of being dealt damage, the creature is grappled and Junior will begin dragging it to the hole to consume. To escape the grapple a creature must beat an opposed Athletic check.

If a creature gets dragged to the hole, Junior makes a Swallow attack (+15 to hit, 5 ft, 24 (3d10+8) piercing damage, and the target lands in his stomach, taking 1d10 acid damage at the beginning of each of its turns.

## 21 THAUMATURGE'S BEDROOM

A giant, lavish bed is laid in the center of this room, with various luxuries placed around. The walls are covered in tapestries and paintings of knightly adventures; they are worth a total of 20,000 gp. A **Clay Golem** is placed in this area, obscuring and protecting a mirror hidden under a bedsheet. It will attack anyone who tries to see the mirror, quickly joined by the golems in Area 13.

Any creature who looks into the mirror must succeed on a DC 20 Charisma saving throw, or suffer complete amnesia, forgetting their identity. Failing the save by ten or more will also reduce a character back to first level. *Greater restoration*, or a similar spell, removes these effects. Thaddeus Terion uses the mirror to disarm his enemies and would-be assassins, then lying to them and convincing them they're his loyal servants. Entire human personnel of the castle are victims of this mirror. Destroying the mirror will release all the memories;



every knight, scout or mage in the facility goes mad through an influx of mixed, contradicting memories, fighting to kill any living creature they see. All creatures within 60 feet of the mirror when it is destroyed must succeed on a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw, rolling on indefinite madness table on a failed save, or temporary madness on a successful one. Immediately after destroying the mirror, the bronze golem from Area 24 enters the room to kill everyone in it.

## 22 Most Honored Guest's Quarters

This room is full of riches and luxuries of all sorts. It is currently occupied by Go'Rero, **Efreet Amir**<sup>34</sup> who maintains the portals to the Elemental Plane of Fire in the southern wall of this room and in Area 16. He uses two portals to move between his room and the rest of the castle. He has no interest in fighting the PCs unless attacked, in which case he will defend himself, and retreat through his portal back to his palace in the Plane of Fire, if reduced below half of his hit points. If he is attacked, two **Efreeti** (CR 11) immediately emerge from the portal to aid him. An army of two hundred efreet awaits on the other side of the portal, ready to defend their amir to the death, should the PCs try to pursue him through it.

Go'Rero is interested in a deal. He will clue the party about his cooperation with Thaddeus Terion, admitting he is helping him power the castle and also provided him with much information about the nature of his research. In the eyes of the efreet, none of Terion's discoveries could be possible without him and thus he deserves fair reward. However, when he demanded

<sup>34</sup> See stats for [Genie, Efreet Amir](#) at the Vaults of Pandius



one—to give him the Ascendant (Area 1 of Level 2) as a bride—the thaumaturge refused. Now the Amir offers the PCs his original payment—one million gold or assortment of magic items matching that sum in worth—in exchange for delivering to him the still-alive Ascendant, so that he can take her to the Plane of Fire and marry her.

If the PCs agree to the deal, he will inform them how to turn Control Jewels off or against their master, as well as about the four pieces of Dark Spirit trapped in Areas 27 to 30 and its role in the Ascendant's transformation. If the PCs agree to his deal, he will call off an efreet that guards each of these areas, but warns them of the dangers of freeing the spirit, even if it is necessary.

If the PCs deliver the Ascendant, in any of her forms, to him, Go'Rero will retreat into the Plane of Fire and turn off both portals. Within a year, with his new bride, he will overthrow the current Sultan and sit on the throne. Within two years he will assemble for an invasion on the material plane, launching coordinated assaults on Sind, Hule, and the Emirates of Ylaruam at the same time. Even if stopped in one place, he

will establish a foothold in another of the three, becoming a constant threat to the Known World from that point on.

If the PCs kill the Ascendant, Go'Rero becomes their sworn enemy for the rest of their days. If the PCs refuse his deal, Go'Rero will say it is regrettable but he holds no hard feelings, and retreats behind his portal. Four **Efreeti** will then emerge to slay the PCs, who now know too much to be allowed to live.

### 23 Debate Club

A **Beholder** (*Monster Manual*, CR 13) named Ambrose Maschluck resides in this room, surrounded by various books; he is reading one when the PCs enter. He will request they entertain him with a debate, if they wish to pass without fighting him. One of the PCs must volunteer and select a topic and state their position on it. Ambrose will then take the most asinine opposite position and will argue with passion for it. He is even willing to advocate for death of his own kind in the name of a good debate. The PC must succeed on six Charisma-based skill checks of their choice, with the beholder using his eyes to prevent any aid from other party members, such as *Guidance* or *Flash of Genius*. The DC for the first check is 20 and it increases with each roll by one up to 26. Every time the PC fails, they must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw of DC equal to DC of failed skill check, or suffer a level of exhaustion. Regardless whether they win or lose, after six rounds Ambrose will let them pass and give the PC who debated him a book giving advantage to all knowledge checks related to the debate topic. Upon leaving the PC loses all levels of exhaustion but for each

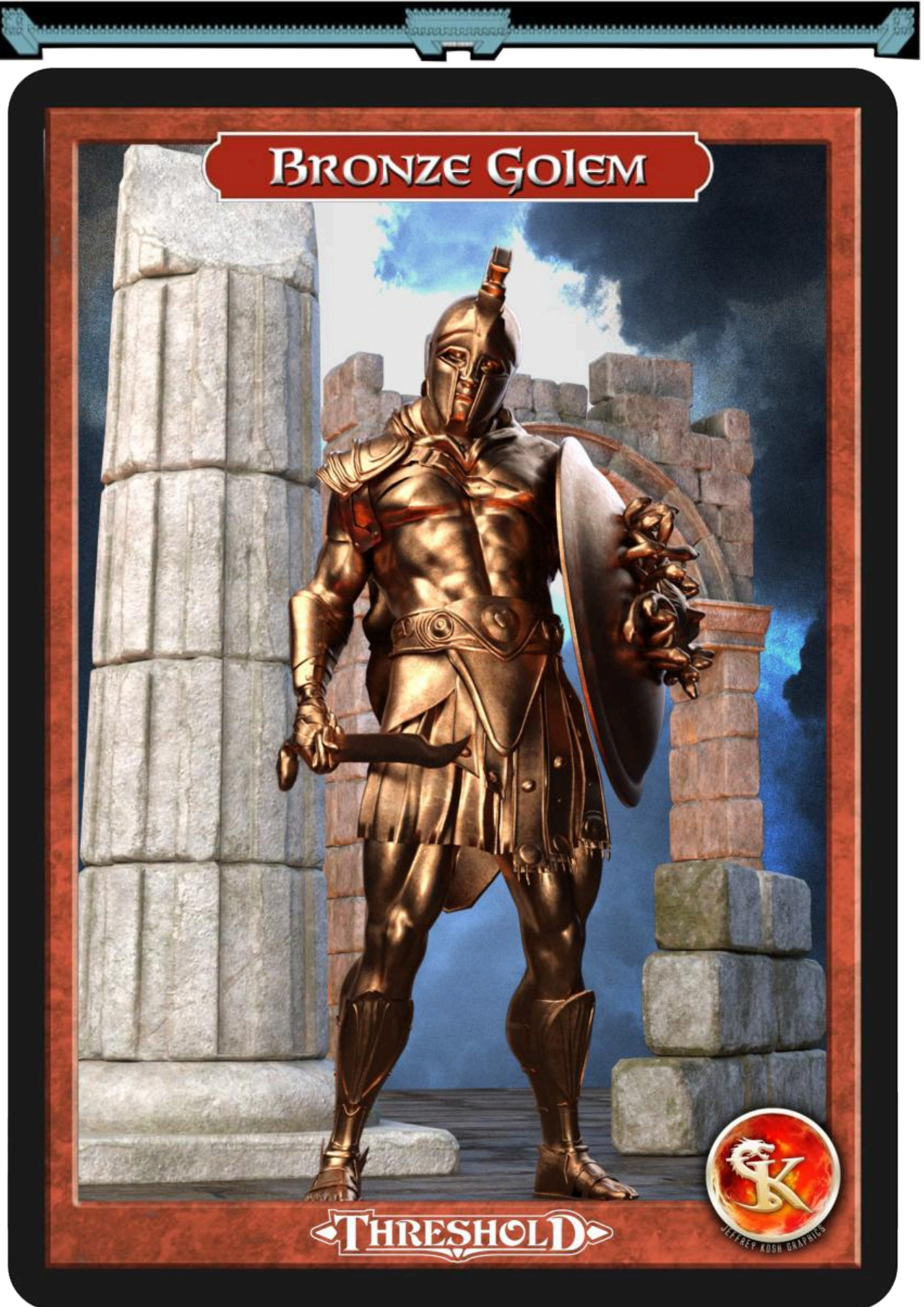
must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or gain an indefinite madness.

Every time the PCs want to pass through this room, they need to select a different character to debate with Ambrose, until every member of the group has done it at least once.

### 24 Double Surprise

Entrances to this room are hidden and can only be found with a DC 17 Investigation check. A **Bronze Golem**<sup>35</sup> is stationed here, attacking anyone but Thaddeus Terion and leaving only if conditions in Area 9 or Area 21 are met. There is a chest in this room, locked with an *arcane lock* spell, requiring a DC 20 Dexterity check using thieves' tools to open and with a trap that requires a DC 15 Perception or Investigation check to open and DC 20 Dexterity check using thieves' tools to disarm. If not disarmed, it releases a freezing ray, dealing the creature opening it 8d6 cold damage. Inside lies Thaddeus Terion's greatest treasure—a *Legendary Orb of Planes*, allowing travel and establishing connection to planes and dimensions of Mystara once a day. By performing a special ritual inscribed in the *Thaumaturge's spellbook*, one can use this to gain control of the *Castle of Dreams* itself, deciding when it will appear, as well as gaining control over all portals within the castle and being able to free the sidhe trapped at the *Tollbooth*.

<sup>35</sup> See these [Bronze Golem stats](#) at the *Vaults of Pandius*



Bronze Golem (Level 2, location 24)

Original drawing by Jeffrey Kosh (<https://jeffreykosh.wixsite.com/jeffreykoshgraphics/home>)

## 25 The Butler's Quarters

A giant coffin sits in the center of this room, surrounded by several potted banana palm trees. If opened, it reveals Count Julius, an Awakened Gorilla **Vampire** (CR 13 ), who was created to serve as eternal servant for many generations of the Terion family and now loyally serves Thaddeus Terion. There's a 50% chance he will awake to perform his duties when the PCs enter this room. If the PCs meet him while awake, Julius will pretend to be a victim of his master and offer his help in slaying the Thaumaturge. If the PCs buy his lie, he will lead them either to Area 16 or 20 and then betray them, aiding enemies there against the party. If possible he will try to *charm* a PC or allied NPC on the way.

## 26 Edge of the World

The doors to this room are actually portals, leading to a demiplane designed to create an illusion of the gigantic edge of the world. The floor is covered in water rushing towards the edge, where it falls into a void. It requires a DC 15 Strength saving throw to not be swept as well. Flailing through the void results in being transported to the opposite door than the one a creature came through, but the creature must then make a DC 30 Charisma saving throw or become convinced the world of Mystara is flat as an indefinite madness. As long as a creature is affected by this madness, every time they would take an action they must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or they do not take that action, crushed under the meaninglessness of a small, finite world, with no new frontiers to explore.

## 27—30 Spiritual Combustion Engines



Thaddeus Terion has captured and split into four pieces a powerful spirit lord, then put them in four combustion engines, where their constant torture and pain is used to power the castle, allowing it to function, and to maintain mechanisms draining the draerden of its power through Control Jewels for the Ascendant's ritual. Each engine possesses AC of 22, 100 hit points, immunity to fire and poison damage and, due to its connection to Control Gems, vulnerability to psychic damage. It can also be overloaded to the point of explosion, with a successful DC 20 check using tinker's tools. If destroyed, an engine releases a **Greater Evil Spirit**<sup>36</sup> that in rage attacks everything on sight. If the PCs manage to restrain the spirit, it can be convinced to aid them against the Alphatians, merging with one of the PCs and granting one of the following bonuses of DM's choice (without choosing the same boon twice) or determined with a d4 roll (reroll repeated results) as shown in the Table 3 on the next page.

<sup>36</sup> See [these stats](#) at the Vaults of Pandius for both Greater Evil Spirit and Evil Spirit Lord

Table 3

Roll Result	+2 Bonus	Boon
1	Wisdom	You have advantage on all Perception checks
2	Dexterity	Double your walking speed
3	Constitution	A pair of wings sprouts off your back; you gain flying speed equal to your walking speed
4	Strength	Your limbs extend, increasing the range of all your melee attacks by 5 ft.

If 3 of the greater evil spirits have not been slain or freed and let to their own devices and not merged with anyone, the final engine upon destruction releases an **Evil Spirit Lord** instead. It furiously attacks any other creature on sight and cannot be reasoned with.

If all four engines are destroyed, all Control Gems cease to function and the Ascendant's plan of ascension is immediately foiled.

Each engine is guarded by an **Efreeti**, a **Mage** and 2 **Knights**. They fight to kill anyone trying to mess with or attack the engine, defending it at all costs. They immediately raise the alarm upon attack.

## CONCLUDING AND CONTINUING THE ADVENTURE

If the PCs manage to save Phradha, her father will reward them as promised and support whichever resistance group they request him to. The PCs who completed all three *Against the Wizards* adventures should have the location and keys to the Last Rajah's vault, its vast riches waiting for them. The Empire of Alphatia will also take notice of their activities, sending wanted letters and offers of huge reward after them, especially if they did not deliver any incriminating evidence against the magic-users they fought and, likely, killed. Finally, if the draerden awaiting in the Nightmare Dimension has noticed them and all of Mystara, it will soon begin moving against them and the Material Plane, becoming a new, dangerous enemy of the Known World.



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# The Known World of Dracopolis: Faith in Ylaruam

by Lance Duncan

## INTRODUCTION

In my campaign, The Known World of Dracopolis, Ylaruam deviates significantly from the established canon. Instead of Arabic and Middle Eastern influences, Ylaruam is modeled on the Libyans and Berbers of the ancient world, more specifically the ancient kingdom of Numidia. This requires a complete reworking of the people, culture, laws, and government as presented in GAZ2: *"The Emirates of Ylaruam"*, except insofar as a general depiction of nomadic desert life. This article details the native religious beliefs of the people of Ylaruam, and is meant to be a replacement of the section on the Eternal Truth as presented in the gazetteer on pages 14–19.

### *A Note Concerning Names:*

I am using the term "Iasuli" to refer to the people of Ylaruam in this article; this name comes from the Original Known World Campaign of Lawrence Schick and Tom Moldvay. Diegetically I am using this name in the same sense as the term "Libyan" used by the ancient Greeks. Iasuli was the first, or most well known, tribe encountered by the Doulakki (the M-Greeks) and henceforward they called any native of the region of Ylaruam by that name. However, the native people of course have names for themselves in their own tongue. The indigenous populations of North Africa in the real world, upon whom the Iasuli are modeled, prefer the terms Imazighen when referring to the people as a whole, Tamazgha when referring to the land, and Tamazight when referring to the language.

In addition I have had to rename many of the place names from the gazetteer so as to keep internal consistency, replacing overt Arabic names with Tamazight names, Egyptian with Punic (Nithian), and Persian with Turkic (the Makistani are M-Turkic in the Known World of Dracopolis). Hence the city of Tel Akbir becomes Berenike, and the province of Tel Akbir becomes Barka, Tel Abdallah becomes Tukra to the Iasuli or Toukhira to the Thyatians, Jaboor becomes Zuwarah to the Iasuli or Casas to the Thyatians, Abbashan becomes Kirthan to the Iasuli or Cirta to the Thyatians, Tel

al Kebir becomes Jalo, Deraan becomes Lalut, Dar-el Tamyā becomes Fess'a'tu, Hedjazi becomes Ghat, Cinsa-men-noo becomes Ykosm to the Iasuli or Icosium to the Thyatians, Surra-man-raa becomes Tunis, Ctesiphon becomes Caesarea, Parsa becomes Bursa to the Makistani or Prussa to the Thyatians, Uruk becomes Meric to the Makistani or Mora to the Thyatians, Warqa becomes Ozhan to the Makistani or Asomatos to the Thyatians, and Kirkuk becomes Kerkuk.

*A Note Concerning the Nithians:*

In the Known World of Dracopolis the Immortals did not create a magical forgetting of the Nithian Empire (M-Carthage in The Known World of Dracopolis). Yes they had a hand in its downfall, but only indirectly by directing the Thang Republic (the precursor to Thyatis, similar to Rome, also from the OKW) and its Doulaki allies in the mortal plane. Nithia itself is largely forgotten (1,500 years of history will do that) yet there are still remnants of it scattered across its old territories and there are sages who have studied the old Nithian Empire. The Nithians referred to the people and the land of Ylaruam as the Temehu.

## IASULI FAITH

The Iasuli are an extremely religious people. Their beliefs are many and varied, often incorporating gods and rituals from foreign lands. They are generally respectful of others' beliefs and expect the same in return. The Dulesmir tribes of the desert observe the ancient practices, a mixture of animism, ancestor veneration, and the worship of various gods, while many in the settled tribes of the oases and highlands have forgotten the old ways and follow the new faith of The Holy Church.

## ANIMISM

The traditions of the Iasuli embody all things with a spirit. These spirits do not all have names, it is more a matter of seeing all things as alive and having an impersonal spiritual force. This includes objects which are often not considered to be living by other people such as trees, clouds, windstorms, rocks, hills and mountains, caves, wells and springs. All natural phenomena and natural things in general are the focus of their worship. Certain herd animals such as the ram, bull, and antelope are especially sacred, and are often found in art; these animals can be seen depicted in the oldest petroglyphs found in Ylaruam. Additionally the 'spirit' of the West Wind is held to be especially powerful and greatly feared by the Iasuli; there are tales of the West Wind drying up wells and rivers, and of entire armies being lost in storms brought by the West Wind.

*Author's Note:*

In Tamazight culture, this is the South Wind, but I changed it to West as that reflects the idea of the wind coming out of the desert.



## The Sun and Moon

The Sun and the Moon are worshiped as supreme beings by the Iasuli. The Sun is called *Tafukt* which means Lord or God, and the Moon is called *Ayyur*. An interesting point to note is that in Iasuli myth the sun is feminine, and the moon is masculine, the reverse of many other cultures in the world, and possibly having to do with the matriarchal nature of Iasuli culture. It is common to find the sun in ancient rock art represented as a cross of dashed lines with a dot in the center, and the Iasuli will still to this day tattoo themselves with her symbol.

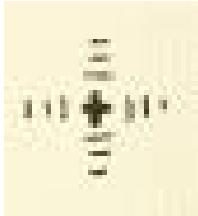


Figure 1: The Symbol of the Sun

## Megaliths

In general, rocks, caves and mountains are held sacred by the Iasuli and are considered to have their own 'souls.' The sacred nature of these places is often associated with the veneration of the dead or the stars in the heavens. The Sun and Moon are worshiped at Megaliths. Often this worship is also connected with the dead. These great rocks are

themselves worshiped as representations of the sun, moon, and stars in the heavens. They are often placed near or around tombs of great kings.

## Ancestor Worship

The Iasuli take great care in burying their dead. The dead are mummified and painted with a red ochre, then buried in a fetal position or sometimes a sitting position, sometimes with jewelry, weapons, and shells of ostrich eggs. The Iasuli in the Barka region will bury their dead similarly to the Doulakki, laying flat in an east to west line. Still others living near the sea in the north and around Zuwarah will cast their dead into the sea; it is believed this practice comes from the ancient Nithians. The most revered are buried in great tombs. Many different styles of tombs have been employed over the centuries. They range from rock-cut tombs to pyramids to towers to tumuli (circular pyramids) or bazinas (artificial hills). Only the most honored of a community are placed in such tombs. Funerary altars are often contained in these great tombs where the living may give offerings to the dead.



Figure 2: Tumulus



Figure 3: The Monument of Mzoura, a Tumulus surrounded by a circle of Megaliths, said to be the tomb of Anti

Women are leaders in the ancestor worship of the Iasuli. They will regularly visit tombs and perform various rituals to venerate the dead. They so revere their ancestors that it is common practice to enter an ancestors' tomb and make requests of them. Some will even go so far as to sleep in the tomb in the hopes that their request will be answered in their dreams. Sacred prophecies can be obtained in this manner, which can guide the conduct of a tribe for years. There have been a few cases of well-known prophecies foretelling the reincarnation of an important figure; for example, Alexander, the last King of the lost city of Cynidicea, is supposed to return to guide his people back into a second golden age.

The Iasuli relationship with the graves of their ancestors is somewhat similar to that of totem worship in other societies. There is a strong belief that the dead have a tangible presence and ability to influence and protect the lives of the living. The most solemn oath an Iasuli can swear is on the names of their ancestors. A sacred vow protected by the ancestors must be fulfilled.

Some tribes will still go to the graves of persons who were reputed for their justice in order to swear binding oaths.

### The Afterlife

The Iasuli have a detailed conception of the Afterlife and the Underworld; they view the soul as eternal and much of their worship revolves around preparation for the journey into the underworld and the next life. The preparation and burial of the body is essential in a person's journey to the underworld. The choosing of a gravesite and the building of a tomb are often undertaken while someone is still living. Once someone has passed funeral preparations begin; first by the preservation of the body through mummification, following which the living kin gather together to join in the funeral procession. The body is then interred in a casket or sarcophagus if their station demands it, and the gathered mourners proceed to carry the body to the prepared tomb, all the while singing songs of mourning. Once they reach the tomb, the body is placed inside with grave goods, which may include any number of items they may need in the afterlife; these grave goods are smashed in a ritual death. In the case of the greatest kings servants are also ritually killed to serve the king in the afterlife. Only after the tomb is sealed with the body of the dead and the grave goods inside, over which the proper songs and rituals have been performed, may the dead begin their journey into the afterlife. The funeral procession is the last stage of their mortal life and allows the spirit of the deceased to move on.

The journey through the underworld is represented by a pattern of motifs. After death there is complete and utter darkness. Only after a proper burial does this change; the light of the sun appears and the dead follow



Figure 4: Necropolis of the kings

the light until they reach the underworld. This is why the funeral is so important, without it the soul is consigned to eternal darkness with no hope of moving on. Once the dead have reached the underworld they must wait by a gloomy underground river. A boat will approach them piloted by a figure in a black hood who will ferry them across the river. Once across the river they must follow a path to a great abyss, over which there is a narrow bridge which they must cross. Once on the other side of the abyss the dead must pass under the judgment of first Tarua, followed by Gorm, and finally Usamigaras. Once judged by the great gods, the dead arrive at a pool of fire beside which kneels a woman in white robes. The white-robed woman will bathe the dead in the pool of fire. Those judged as evil, wicked or unworthy immediately shrivel up into a black husk and are condemned to the darkness for eternity, while those deemed good begin glowing with an inner golden light. A winged boat glowing with a golden light then arrives to take the good souls to paradise.

## The Gods

The Iasuli worship a number of gods associated with the natural world in addition to a syncretic collection of gods they have encountered from other peoples. They view all the gods as worthy of veneration and will accept the gods of another nation, readily incorporating the worship of the new gods into their ancient traditions. This polytheistic worship extends to their ancestors; both dead and living kings are often worshiped as gods. Often the conquerors of the Iasuli tried to impose their gods on the people, by associating the invaders' gods with the gods of the Iasuli, and the people would continue worshipping in the same way as they always have, whatever the name of the god was. The places of worship venerated by the Iasuli have always been built by the people of the tribes and villages, and not by the rich or the government. The upper class might worship at the palatial temples built by the reigning king or governor, but the common people continue to worship at the local shrines.

The Dii Makkri were what the ancient Thang called the gods and spirits worshiped by the

Iasuli people. There were 52 official Dii Makkri, with a ruling pantheon of seven deities (*Gorm* the sky god, *Tarua* the earth goddess, *Usamigaras* the god of prophecy and magic, *Tafukt* the sun goddess, *Ayyur* the moon god, *Ifri* the goddess of the underworld, and *Awessu* the sea god) worshiped in Cynidicea. The concept of the Dii Makkri was likely a construct created by the Thang who lumped all the Iasuli together into one people, while the Iasuli have always been divided by tribes and each tribe may revere different gods, while only a few were worshiped by most tribes. The Dii Makkri were invoked by the magistrates, governors, and military captains from the Thang Empire who operated in Ylaruam who wished to appease the local gods as a whole without leaving out any minor god they may not be aware of.



Figure 5: Altar with candles in tomb

*Author's Note:*

The term Dii Makkri is used in place of the historical Dii Mauri; I am using the Makkres region as an analog for the Maghreb and using the term Makkri to refer to the natives as opposed to Mauretians or Mauri. Also regarding the list below, I have replaced a few key deities with the Cynidicean Pantheon from module B4: *The Lost City*; Gorm is an amalgam of Anzar and Ammon; Madarua, or Tarua as I have dubbed her, replaces Tannit or Neith; and Usamigaras is used to replace the oracle aspect of Ammon at Siwa oasis. And finally Poseidon has been subsumed into Awessu to avoid having two gods of the sea. There are also a number of gods derived from the pre-dynastic or early dynastic Egyptian delta. This list is far from exhaustive and contains only the major gods that are well known.

*Acephali*

The Acephali are not really worshiped as gods, but are known as an ancient, cursed people. They are said to have once been ordinary humans who angered the gods and as punishment their heads were severed, and their faces were placed in the center of their chests. This legend seems not to originate from the local Iasuli, but from the Doulakki immigrants. The first recordings of this story come from the early migration of Doulakki settlers from Thyatis and Kerendas into the ruined areas of the destroyed Nithian Empire.

*Anezti*

a.k.a. Asar (Nithian), Osiris (Doulakki)

An ancient pre-Nithian god associated with the Nithus Delta. Most likely rooted in the worship of a great shepherd king of some sort. His worship became co-opted by the Nithians and at this point what is known of him comes through them. There are various tellings of the myth, but they all have similar core elements. Anezti is said to have taught the people the arts of civilization, and agriculture. He then departed to distant lands with his sister and wife Rusat and returned many years later. Upon his return to Nithia, his brother Sutekh ruled the land and, fearing a coup, Sutekh killed Anezti, cutting him into pieces and casting them into the river. Rusat went in search of the remains of her husband, and upon finding them she reassembled him by wrapping his body in linen, whereupon she cast a spell to revive him and bore him a son. With the aid of Anezti's son, Rusat avenged the death of her brother by killing Sutekh, and setting up her son as king, ushering in a new golden age. Anezti is a god of the underworld and judge of the dead; the practice of mummification is supposed to have begun with him, associating him with the cycles of life and death in nature. He is depicted with green skin, holding a crook and flail, crowned with a white crown, wrapped in white linen.

*Anket*

A water goddess of the ancient river Nithus. She made her home among the Falls of Nithus below the mountains of Rockhome. She is worshiped as a giver of water and thus life. Some say the Nithians angered her, and she stopped the flow of water, creating the desert known today. Her symbol is a cowrie shell, and she is depicted as a four-armed woman with a plumed crown.

*Anti*

a.k.a. Antaeus (Doulakki)

Said to be a giant, a son of Gorm and husband of Tinjis. He draws his strength from the earth itself and was only defeated when the hero Herakles lifted him off the ground, depriving him of his life energy. He died when he was separated from the earth. Many have seen this story as a metaphor for the Iasuli people: the Iasuli have repeatedly been invaded and subjugated by other peoples and so lost contact with their sacred land, and only when they reclaim the land will they regain their strength as a people.



Figure 6: Antaeus wrestling with Herakles. Depicted with typical Iasuli sharp profile as opposed to the soft profile of the Doulakki Herakles

*Aptuchus*

Said to be the son of Kura, a prominent god worshiped in the Barka region.

*Ash*

a.k.a. As (Nithian)

An early fertility deity, considered a benign patron of oases and other fertile areas of the desert. Of some prominence during the old Nithian empire and possibly earlier but has since declined in favor. Sometimes depicted with one or multiple animal heads such as the lion, vulture, hawk, or snake.

*Atlantides*

a.k.a. Hesperides (Doulakki)

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The daughters of Shu (Atlas) and Hesperis (a Doulakki goddess, the daughter of the evening star Hesperus), also called the “Nymphs of the West” or the “Daughters of the Evening.” They are traditionally seven in number – Aegle, Erythea, Arethusa, Hestia, Hespera, Hesperusa, and Hesperia. They live on a mythical isle bearing their name, Hesperides, in the western Isles, supposedly near Ierendi. On this isle a garden was planted by the Doulakki goddess Hera where a magical tree produced golden apples. The Atlantides nymphs were given the task of tending to and guarding this garden. In addition Hera placed a great 100-headed hydra by the name of Ladon as an additional guard on the isle. The nymphs are said to be in possession of sweet song which will soothe even the most dangerous beast, and the great serpent Ladon sleeps an eternal slumber to this song.

*Auliswa*

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Worshiped at Tlemcen, a small village in the Makkres foothills. A fertility god who watched over the harvest, the Thang associated him with their god Consus.

*Awessu*

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Kerothar (Alphatian), Poseidon (Doulakki) – The god of the sea, also called “the Earth-shaker.” The Doulakki learned of this god from the Iasuli, and some old Iasuli folktales associate this god with the faraway land of Alphatia, though most sages discount these stories. In ancient times he was especially worshiped by the Iasuli around Lake Nithus and the Delta, but his worship has waned in the intervening centuries, though he is still widely worshiped by the Doulakki.

There is a ceremony dedicated to this god in Zuwarah, during a full moon at the end of Felmont and the beginning of Fyrmont. The rite is meant to attract the good and banish the bad. The locals go into the sea before sunrise, often with their animals, and thus purify themselves and their garments and blankets to obtain the blessing of the sea and release their accumulated sins over the year into the salt of the sea. Then they leave the sea and feast all day on the beach, waiting for the full moon to rise. This day is called the Awessu day and is said to be a magical day when the sea takes the shape of a black mirror and reflects the stars.

*Ayyur*

a.k.a. Ieru (Thang)

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The god of the moon. The word for month, “Yur,” is derived from this god. Ayyur is a god of life associated with flowing waters and natural beauty. There are many tales of the jealousy of this god concerning beautiful maidens who are compared to his beauty.

*Bast*

a.k.a. Ailuros (Doulakki)

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A goddess who appears either as a lioness or a woman with the head of a lioness who is revered throughout Ylaruam. Legend tells of an ancient city named Perbast (literally meaning house of Bast), or Boubastis to the Doulakki, that existed during Nithian times in the great delta, but the city was abandoned after the fall of Nithia. Bast is a protection goddess, guarding against contagious diseases and evil spirits, and a traditional protector of the king. She is also invoked to ensure healthy pregnancy and safe childbirth. She is honored once a year with a great feast of drunkenness.

*Froarangan*

A god of masculinity worshiped in Minrothad.

*Gorm*

a.k.a. Ba'al-Ghorm (Nithian),  
Zeus-Gorm (Doulakki)

The great sky god. Among the most ancient gods worshiped by the Iasuli. The Iasuli believe the sky is roof over the earth and the sky is "leaking" when it rains, hence Gorm is the god of storms and rain. He is also seen as a patron of agriculture and flocks and herds, promoting fertility with his rain. In worship he is offered the first fruits of the harvest such as dates, grapes, oil, wine, and pinecones, and the firstborn of bulls, oxen, and sheep are also sacrificed to him. These offerings are most commonly made in the spring and autumn festivals which are seen as part of the cycle of death and rebirth of the god. Tarua is his queen and partner.

When the Nithians arrived in the region they worshiped him as Ba'al Ghorm (literally 'Lord of Storms') and was held to be their supreme god. After the destruction of Nithia, many Doulakki people began interacting with the Iasuli, and they (the Doulakki) associated *Gorm* with their chief god Zeus. The new arrivals began worshipping Gorm instead of Zeus, but with their own practices of worship. In their great city of Cynidicea they built a new temple dedicated to Zeus-Gorm. This new god took on aspects of both Gorm and Zeus. He was depicted as a strong, long-haired, bearded man with a stern gaze, holding a lightning bolt in his right hand and a balance in his left hand. He became more than just a god of storms and fertility but also a god of justice and war. All laws were seen as having their origin in him and the kings of Cyn-

idicea claimed descent from him. His face was on the coins of the kingdom of Alasiya. During the dominion of the Thang Empire, Zeus-Gorm was often worshiped as Jupiter. Under the rule of the Kingdom of Alasiya in Cynidicea there was a brotherhood of fighting men who dedicated themselves to his service and the execution of his justice; they marked themselves with his symbol, the lightning bolt, and swore never to show their face to another, always wearing a mask bearing the face of Gorm. Since the fall of Cynidicea the brotherhood of Gorm and the worship of him as Zeus-Gorm has become unpopular among the Doulakki as many see him as failing to protect that great city. Zeus-Gorm is still worshiped on the fourth day of each week, but popularity has been waning in recent decades with the growth of the Holy Church.

The ancient aspect of Gorm as a rain god persists to this day, and many Iasuli petition him for rain by singing a common song which has several variations among the differing tribes. There is a tradition, the "Tilsit n Gorm" among the Iasuli to offer a 'bride' to Gorm, hoping that this would increase his pleasure with the people, and he would let the rains flow as a consequence. These ancient rites thankfully have been moderated over the years, and an actual bride need not be sacrificed, instead being symbolically practiced. There is folktale which is told in accompaniment during the "Tislit n Gorm" (literally the bride of Gorm) which basically is this:

Gorm often visited the mortal realms as an eagle until a young girl, Tarenza, bathing in a river one night caught his attention. Enraptured by her beauty he asks her to wed, she being shocked by his presence refused and fled from him. Upon this rejection Gorm became angry and withheld his

rains from the fields, causing a great famine. He threatened to never let it rain again unless Tarenza gave in to his desires, and yet she still refused him. He became angrier and sought the help of the West Wind, causing the river near her village which she bathed in to dry up. Fearing for her people Tarenza went to the dry fields and rent her garments pleading to the rain god to take her if it would satisfy him to let the rains flow again. He came and embraced her, and the rains poured down, the waters flowed, and the earth was green again. It is said that since being taken by Gorm, Tarenza (a rainbow) will appear in the sky after a rainstorm to view the flowing of the water on the land.

The common ritual of “Tislit n Gorm” is clearly derived from this mythical story. The ritual consists of five steps: 1) select the most beautiful virgin in the village and prepare her with the most luxurious jewels and clothes 2) the women of the village escort her to the local shrine or temple dedicated to Gorm, who then spray the “bride” with water 3) ritual sacrifices of food and candles and other goods are offered to Gorm 4) the “bride” is undressed and must circle the shrine seven times while praising Gorm and begging him for rain, meanwhile the women of the village dance and sing in praise of Gorm and the young girls play a game with a ball called “Zerzari” where the ball must enter a hole in the ground before nightfall 5) a sumptuous meal is prepared and shared by the entire village. Within a few days Gorm will bless the village with rain. In some villages where the Church has a stronger presence the ritual has evolved to include a ladle, called the Tarenza, which is wrapped in cloth in imitation of a bride and carried around in parade, to prevent the unseemliness of exposing a young girl.

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### *Gurzil*

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An Iasuli Sun-God and also their main god of war. He is said to be the son of Gorm and a cow; some speculate the cow is a metaphor for Tarua as the fertility goddess of the earth, but the legends are unclear. He is most popular among the Dulesmir tribes who personify him as a magical bull, which is let loose in battle. Many tribesmen fought in the name of this god when the Iasuli drove out all foreigners under the great Masinissa. During the wars with Thyatis a high priest of Gurzil, Iarna, took the sacred image into battle; the Thyatians won that day and Iarna fled with the image into the desert; he was later caught and killed, and the image has been lost to the sands. In this same battle, the town of Ennaej, housing the temple of Gurzil, was destroyed and left in ruins. He is also worshiped as a protector of herds and cattle. The Doulakki often draw parallels between him and their god Apollo.

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### *Ha*

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A guardian god of oases and a god of fertility. He is described by ancient Nithian sources as warding off enemies from the west (most likely Iasuli tribes from the desert). Depicted as a hybrid of man and animal crowned with the symbol of desert dunes. Practically unknown today.

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### *Idir*

a.k.a. Ba'al Adir (Nithian)

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A god of harvests, and specifically the threshing floor, worshiped by the northern Iasuli.



*Ifri*

a.k.a. Africa (Thang)

A goddess of fortune and fertility, death, birth, and the changing of seasons. Ifri is also often associated with caves and the underworld, so much so that her name has become the word for cave in the Iasuli tongue. She is also given the title of queen of the Jnoun and is feared for her dark or mysterious nature. Before engaging in a dangerous task the Iasuli offer a quick invocation to Ifri first as a way to ensure her blessing if they enter the underworld. Considered a protector of her people, she can appear as a haunting figure which strikes fear into the hearts of her enemies.

*Jalut*

A great giant, legend has it that he was the father of the Iasuli people.

*Jnoun*

The Berber term for the air elementals also known as djinn, worshiped as benevolent spirits by the Iasuli.

*Kandisha*

a.k.a. Kadesh or Qetesh (Nithian)

A minor goddess of sexual attraction and fertility. Said to appear as a beautiful woman with creamy milk-white skin adorned with traditional Iasuli tattoos, dark silky hair, and black almond-shaped eyes which shine like the stars. She often haunts deserted watering holes, hot springs, or wells. She is said to hunt for lonely men at night, calling them by name and knowing all their secrets, seducing them with a mere glance. Men cannot help but fall under a thrall at the sight of her. The only hope these men have is to notice her inhuman elements; she always

appears with at least one cloven hoof instead of a foot, which she disguises behind long dark veils and robes. Upon noticing her true nature a man may chance to escape her thrall if he runs and is able to rejoin the company of others, yet if she catches him before this she will drown him in nearby water for refusing her. A more potent charm against her is to thrust a silver knife or arrow into the ground between her and the intended victim; this will cause her to flee into the night. Her victims will have one night of sheer ecstasy and most, not being able to satisfy her, will then be drowned anyway. Those rare few who will be able to satisfy her are given gifts and offered her protection until the end of their lives. These rare few go through life without any satisfaction, often looking for another encounter with Kandisha; they in fact are the ones who are most fervent in worshipping her, while others only offer sacrifices to her out of fear. She has many shrines throughout Ylaruam where people will offer amber, honey, pearls, shells, bread, figs, and olives. She is said to be able to heal many illnesses, especially those in children and women (particularly those to do with menstruation or infertility). When her blessings are being sought out it is common for people to tie silk ribbons to a fig tree, adorn themselves in henna, light candles, and offer perfumes as an especial offering.

*Libica*

a.k.a. Sibyl (Thang), Libya (Doulakki)

This goddess is represented as tall and overbearing, reflecting the power of women in Iasuli society. Women are her chief representatives, both in the temple, as oracles, queens, and as warriors defending the people in her name. Said to be the daughter of Gurzil, Libya had three sons with Awessu, god of the sea: Belus, Agenor, and Lelex.

They each ruled different kingdoms and their descendants have birthed nations. She was especially revered by the Thang who sought out the Sibyl for guidance; the most well-known prophecy uttered by her was, “coming of the day when that which is hidden shall be revealed.”

### *Kura*

a.k.a. Kyrene (Doulakki)

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A local goddess worshiped in the Barka region. Kyrene was a legendary Iasuli woman, who according to legend was the guardian of a local spring and a great huntress who rode lions into battle. When Apollo, one of the Doulakki gods, witnessed her bravery he fell in love with her, and abducted her and founded a new city with her as his wife and she bore him many children. She was revered as protector of the Doulakki immigrants settling in the new city of Apollo. That ancient city has since sunk beneath the waves, though its legacy lives on in the mixed Doulakki and Iasuli culture of Berenike and the Barka region.

### *Mastinam*

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The god associated with planet Jupiter by the Iasuli magi. A war god with an obscure nature. God of borders between Fabia (the northernmost Thyatian colony) and Zuwarah.

### *Medusa*

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The first medusa is said to be of Iasuli origin, a great warrior maiden of Tarua from Lake Nithus. Her visage was so fierce that her enemies froze in fear at the sight of her.

### *Nithus*

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The ancient goddess of the now dry Lake Nithus. Since the fall of the Nithian Empire her worship has faded into obscurity. Some say she still dwells with her husband Wadjwer in his golden palace.

### *Psaphon*

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An Iasuli of great renown named Psaphon was known to collect songbirds. Upon his mysterious death (though some tales say he left on a great journey and never came back), his birds were set free and wherever they went throughout the land they sang “the great god Psaphon” to any who would listen. Heeding the miraculous words of these songbirds, the Iasuli began offering sacrifices to Psaphon. This tale is apocryphal and considered a fable by modern sages, yet some few still offer sacrifice to him.

### *Rusat*

a.k.a. Isis (Doulakki)

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A goddess of the underworld who guides the dead in the afterlife. She is also seen as having great magical powers of healing which she uses to help the common people. She is said to have been the companion of her brother Anezti in life and after his death at the hands of his brother Sutekh she reassembled the discarded remains of his body and brought him back to life, after which she bore him a son with whom she exacted revenge on her brother Sutekh. She is usually portrayed in association with the throne, as the mother of the kings, or the source of kingship, and she often holds sistrum (a type of percussive instrument). She was widely worshiped by the Doulakki of the Kingdom of Alasiya, where the cult of Isis became most popular.

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*Sekbmet*

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Sister of Bast, she is a goddess of vengeance. She was said to be able to breathe fire and the hot dry West Wind is compared to her breath, and she brings plagues upon humanity. She is also said to like strong drink; there is a festival at the beginning of the year where the people imbibe as much drink as they can to imitate the drunkenness of the goddess and in offering to her in the hopes of staying her hand from destroying humanity.

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*Settut*

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a.k.a. Shaheded (Nithian)

The first witch, and some even say first woman. She is called “Yemma n Durnit” (the Mother of the World). There are many, often conflicting, tales about her. One thing is for sure, she is possessed of powerful magic. It is said she resides in a palace of human bones in the center of which is her magical mirror of perfectly still water; this “water mirror” is the source of her greatest magic. She is regarded as an evil hag but was not always this way. In her youth she was considered a beautiful maiden of great wisdom and knowledge. With her magic water mirror it is said she created the moon and the sun and the stars and the clouds. However as she grew older she learned that she was barren and would never have children. With this knowledge she became bitter and spiteful toward the fruitful and growing world; she began to use her magic not for the good of others but to punish or work evilness in the lives of others. Many of the animals are said to bear her mark as a cruel punishment for some slight. She creates eclipses and other calamities giving darkness rule upon the earth. It is said she sowed the seeds of the first disagreements among men, causing an unintelligible

discord resulting in the creation of the first seven languages. There was one mistake she made however when she attempted to curse the god Yennayer; in his anger at her he caused all the land to freeze, and she became petrified in ice; it is for this reason that witches are at their weakest in winter. Settut’s name has become diluted to the point that any old hag or evil witch is called a Settut. The Doulakki compare her to the goddess Hecate.

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*Shshid’an*

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The Iasuli name for the great evil one, i.e., the Devil.

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*Shu*

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a.k.a. Atlas (Doulakki)

An ancient god, a god of peace, lions, air and the wind. He is the dry, calm air separating the sky from the earth. He is said to dwell at the mountain Atlas in the southern Makkres range. Sometimes called the king of the Makkres. It is said that he supports the sky above the earth. He is always depicted wearing one or more feathers (usually ostrich) on his head. His wife is Tefnut, and together they are said to have created the sky and the earth. Also said to be the first Astrologer, teaching the Iasuli of divination by watching the heavens. He is also said to have given them the first calendar from which all others are derived.

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*Sinifere*

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a.k.a. Canapphare (Thang)

A war god worshiped by the Iasuli of the Barka province. Sages often compare him to the Thang Mars or the Doulakki Ares. The ancient legions of Berineke made dedications to “Mars Canapphare” before entering battle.

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*Sufax*

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The son of Tinjis and Herakles. After Herakles defeated Anti, he took Tinjis as his wife and fathered Sufax. Sufax founded the city of Tingi, which he named in honor of his mother, as guard against the border of Iasuli lands. Many Iasuli kings have claimed to be descended from Sufax; Juba II was one of the more recent kings to make this claim.

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*Suggan*

a.k.a. Seggen (Nithian)

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The god of a mountain, called Sugganem, in the eastern Altan Tepes. The mountain is composed of a striking black rock, hence the name Suggan, meaning “to be black.”

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*Sutekh*

a.k.a. Seth (Doulakki)

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The Lord of the Desert and brother of Anezti and Rusat. He usurped his brother and cut him into pieces, throwing the remains into the river. He was later overthrown by his brother and sister’s son. Sutekh is often represented as a type of hunting dog, and when

in human form he is represented with the head of the dog.

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*Tala*

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A goddess of a well-known spring. Sometimes known by the title “Nana Tala.” Offerings are commonly given to her around the base of Nafusa Mountain in the Hardanger range.

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*Tafukt*

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She is the Sun god, the source of heat and light, and gives life to the world. She is prideful because of the power she holds, and can cause disaster if angered, having the power to dry up the waters and destroy crops.

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*Tarenza*

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Goddess of the rainbow, and a consort of Gorm. To avoid Gorm’s wrath and for the sake of her people she consented to let Gorm have her if he would let the rains flow.

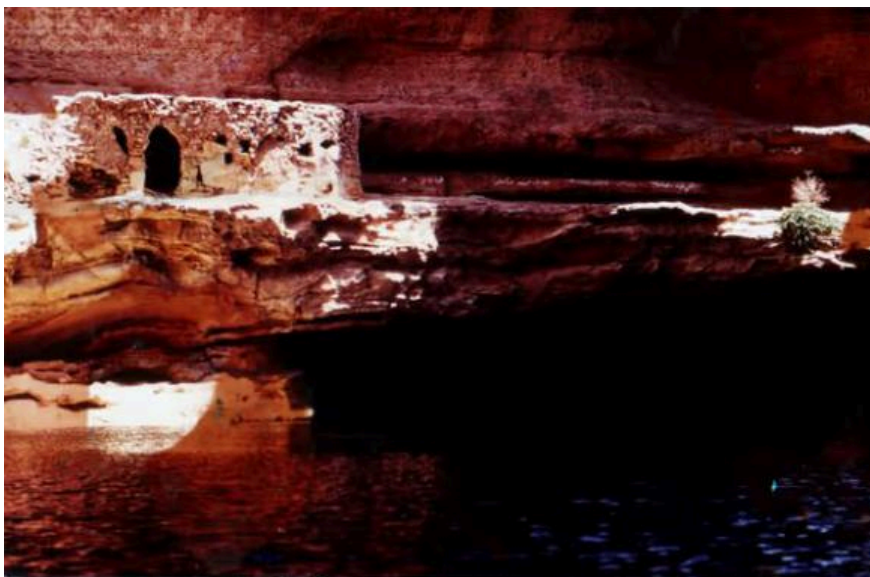


Figure 7: Sacred spring of Nana Tala

*Tarua*

a.k.a. Madarua (Nithian),  
Moneiba (Minrothad)

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The goddess of the earth. Most likely the oldest deity worshiped by the Iasuli, she is often mistaken as a Nithian goddess, but her worship is much older; the Nithians simply adopted her as the supreme goddess of the land when they arrived on the shores of Lake Nithus, calling her Madarua, by which she is commonly known today. Her ancient city and center of worship was on the shores of the now dried-up Lake Nithus. She is the wife of Gorm and considered the mother of the gods. Many different aspects fall under her dominion including fertility, birth, death, and rebirth, and the changing of the seasons. She has always been a protector of the Iasuli people, leading young women into battle. Her ancient symbol is a triangle, representing the body, beneath a circle, representing the head, separated by a horizontal line, representing the hands.

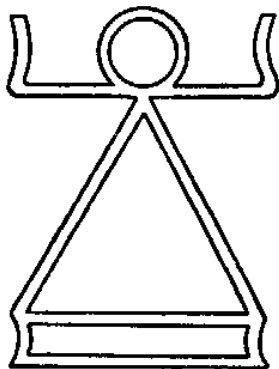


Figure 8: Symbol of  
Madarua

She has a dual nature, that of a matronly mother, and a young virgin warrior. As a mother goddess she is commonly called “the weaving goddess” and is sometimes shown with a weaving shuttle. The Matron is honored in a great festival on the autumn equinox.

As the virgin warrior she is depicted as a beautiful woman holding a sword in her right hand, and a sheaf of wheat in her left. The Maidens of Tarua are a fighting order of young maidens dedicated to her worship and the protection of the Iasuli. They wear the symbol of a sickle in battle, often as a tattoo or brand. The Maidens celebrate a feast in honor of Tarua on the spring equinox. Before the feast begins the most beautiful maiden is dressed in the finest armor and is led around the “lake” in a chariot (this lake is often symbolic as Lake Nithus is long gone). After the procession, the maidens resort to a contest of arms; they divide into two groups and fight with wooden clubs. Any maidens who perform well are considered “true” and those who fall in battle are considered “false maidens,” and it is by this method that the ranks of the maidens are renewed each year.

Tarua is often compared to the Doulakki goddess Athena in her warrior aspect, and Demeter in her matron aspect. The Thang often ascribed to her the title of Dea Caelestis or Dea Nutrix.

*Taziri*

The goddess of Moonlight and the daughter of Yennayer. In some folktales, she takes the place of Tarenza as the bride of Gorm.

*Tefnut*

Tefnut is the Iasuli goddess of rainwater. She is a fertility goddess associated with agriculture and has the power to give life. She is given praise and thanks whenever the Iasuli water their crops and herds or when quenching their thirst. She is the sister and consort of Shu and is depicted with the head of a lioness.

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*Teryel*

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The mother of the Waghzen (ogres) and the most hideous and powerful ogress of them all, she is also known by the title “Tarir” (The Limitless) or “Tirira” (The Unstoppable). Folktales about her are often used to scare little boys. She is said to roam the wilds and shelter in caves with her following of Waghzen at night. It is said she craves the flesh of young boys, and upon finding one will put him in her sack and tie the sack to her staff and carry him off to her den where she will devour him. The only means of escape for the young boy from the great ogress is to suckle on her breasts; she will then mistake the child as her own. She never attacks young girls and will help them if they are in trouble. Any woman who suffers abuse from men and invokes her name will witness their husbands, fathers, brothers, or whoever is the abuser (and sometimes those who are not abusive) devoured by Teryel. Teryel then adopts these women as her own, teaching them magic and to live a happy life without men. These women and girls are called the “Teryalin” (the daughters of Teryel).

Teryel gained many of her magic powers by traveling to the realm of Attala where she ate a golden leaf of the divine Tree of Life and Destiny. This gave her the power to shape-shift and to see and have power over the invisible world and its inhabitants such as the Jnoun.

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*Tiliwa*

a.k.a. Lileo (Doulakki)

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A goddess of cleanliness and purity. This must be one of the oldest goddesses; a form of her name “lilu” is used in the Iasuli tongue to signify something bright and clean and another derivative “ilil” means “to

rinse.” She is most worshiped by the Dulesmir Tribes and may be related to Tefnut.

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*Tin Hinan*

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The legendary ancestress of the Dulesmir tribes. Renowned for her wisdom and her role as matriarch.

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*Tinjis*

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Wife of Anti, mother of Sufax, and namesake of the city of Tingi.

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*Usamigaras*

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This is an ancient god; his worship is said to go back to the first men. Usamigaras is the personification of the ancestors of the Iasuli, thus having power over death, fate and visions or prophecies of both the future and past. With the association of prophecy he became the patron of magic and the Magi in Ylaruam. His worship is most popular in the oasis of Ylaruam where stands his ancient temple, which is said to have always been there and stood through the many calamities of the world. Over the centuries many rulers and potentates from foreign lands have traveled to his oracle to seek guidance and his blessing. He is known as “The Invisible God,” or “The Unseen One.” His idol is in the shape of a wrapped body in the sitting position (in imitation of the buried dead) atop a large, bejeweled platform. When someone of significance wishes to gain the counsel of Usamigaras, this figure is paraded through the palm groves by 80 attendants who follow him singing his praises and asking him to give good counsel. This parade does not follow a set path but follows where the god wills them to go. The high priest at the end of this parade interprets the answers of the god for those seeking guidance. More common folk

question the god directly in his temple by sleeping in quarters provided for the faithful, and they must look for an answer in their dreams. Usamigaras accepts both male and female priests of any age; many children are dedicated to the service of the god of fate, and those who are not children wear a mask of a smiling child to hide their age. The high priest or priestess is always the youngest child, as they are regarded as being closest to the ancestors and unclouded by the worries of mortality. The ram is sacred to Usamigaras, and there are many apocryphal tales regarding the foundation of the temple at Ylaruam, but most Iasuli believe that a woman lost in the desert followed a ram to the oases of Ylaruam and received a vision from Usamigaras there. There are many other tales of Usamigaras appearing to people lost in the desert and guiding them to water or civilization. The Nithians decorated their ships with the figurehead of a ram in the hopes that Usamigaras would guide the ships to safe waters. The Thang considered the temple of Usamigaras to be an Oracle of their god Saturn.

### *Wadj-wer*

a.k.a. Triton (Doulakki)

This sea god is the son of Awessu and took the goddess Nithus as his bride. He acts as the herald of Awessu, and with his magic conch shell has the power to command the waves. He is said to dwell in a golden palace beneath the sea. He is usually represented as half man half fish and is said to be the father of all tritons and merrow.

### *Wibinam*

A goddess of childbirth. Represented as a woman wearing a covering of feathers, she holds scissors with a child at her feet.

### *Yennayer*

The god of time, he is known by various titles, "Lord of Time and Light," "First-born Son of the Twelve Months," "Lord of Time and New Beginnings." His name literally translates to "First Moon," meaning he is the first month of the year. There is a great celebration on "Id Suggas" (New Year's Eve or literally "night of the year") where a great feast is shared among the community.

There is a common tradition and story associated with Id Suggas. On that night, an old witch, Yemma Meru (Mother Meru), also called Id Suggas, visits the home of every family. She judges whether children have been good or bad. If the children finished their meals the night before then they are rewarded by the old lady with treats in the morning, but if they did not finish their meals the children are rewarded with stomachs full of hay and rocks. Some traditions require leaving a traditional meal of milk and wheat grains at the door for the old witch, while others require leaving salt at the door to turn her away. In some tales she offers no reward and is simply said to devour wicked children. Also sometimes the admonition is specifically for children to eat their green vegetables.

### *Yusb*

a.k.a. Yakush (Nithian),  
Iguc (Thang)

A god of rain and fertility worshiped by the Berghwata tribe in the Makkres foothills. This god has many similar characteristics to Gorm, and many sages believe it is an earlier form of the same god. The word must be of truly ancient origin as it is used to refer to any god generally and among the Church it is the word used as the name of He Who Watches.

## Tawargit (The Dream)

Throughout his time in guiding the Iasuli people Masinissa composed the Tawargit (literally meaning Dream), a work showing his dreams for the future of the Iasuli tribes and what he thought was the right and proper way for Iasuli to act toward each other. The Tawargit is divided into 3 main sections each addressing a different aspect of his dream.

The first part of the Tawargit is about Masinissa's dream of Justice among the Iasuli. He dreamt that all Iasuli, both high and low, and rich and poor alike, could expect equal justice. Those with more should give to those with less, so none stands in need of want. The common justice of the tribes, internal feuding over the slightest insult, was to be a thing of the past; kin should not raise arms against kin, and instead kin should be able to depend on kin for aid. Justice must be sought by nonviolent means where possible, yet if there can be no recourse the people united must mete out their judgment in full and take responsibility for the consequences.

The Tawargit secondly describes proper ways of upholding an individual's Honor. This follows on the principles of justice; many past kin feuds began as a way to answer insults to honor and Masinissa sought to quell the common infighting of the tribes. The Tawargit focuses on the act of being honorable as opposed to taking insult to one's honor. Instead of seeking to improve one's honor in the eyes of others, one should seek to be honorable in one's own eyes. Then there are listed many specific examples of how to act honorably and contrasts of how others may see these acts vs. how the self might perceive the acts, and the virtue of looking inward instead of

outward. The ways to be honorable essentially boil down to keeping one's word, having integrity and being honest and truthful at all times, and sharing your hospitality to all who are in need (an important aspect of nomadic culture).

Before the Tawargit was composed Masinissa shared these ideas of Justice and Honor with those around him and it was these principles combined with his force of personality that united the tribes behind him, allowing him to forge a new independent Iasuli kingdom.

When Masinissa released the manuscript of the Tawargit to the sages of the Iasuli, his Dream of the Desert Garden was revolutionary. The majority of the Tawargit is in fact detailed plans of the Desert Garden. First he explains his reasoning, about the history of the Iasuli and how the lands they inhabit were not always a barren landscape. He then describes the dream, a flowering desert brought to life through the efficient use of public works bringing water from the high mountains and from deep underground to transform the land. To any familiar with the Alasiyan Desert, this idea sounds far-fetched; and it is all the more miraculous that it seems possible when reading the Tawargit. Then he exhorts the leaders of the people, the magi, the clerics, the Imaharen highborn to work together to bring about this change. He then exhorts the common people, the nomads, and the town dwellers to support their leaders in the actions necessary to fulfill and maintain his dream. The remainder of the work is full of concrete specific plans of exactly how to achieve the transformation of the Desert Garden: where to dig canals and wells, how much water should be expected where and when the installation of pumps will be necessary, where dams should be built and their size



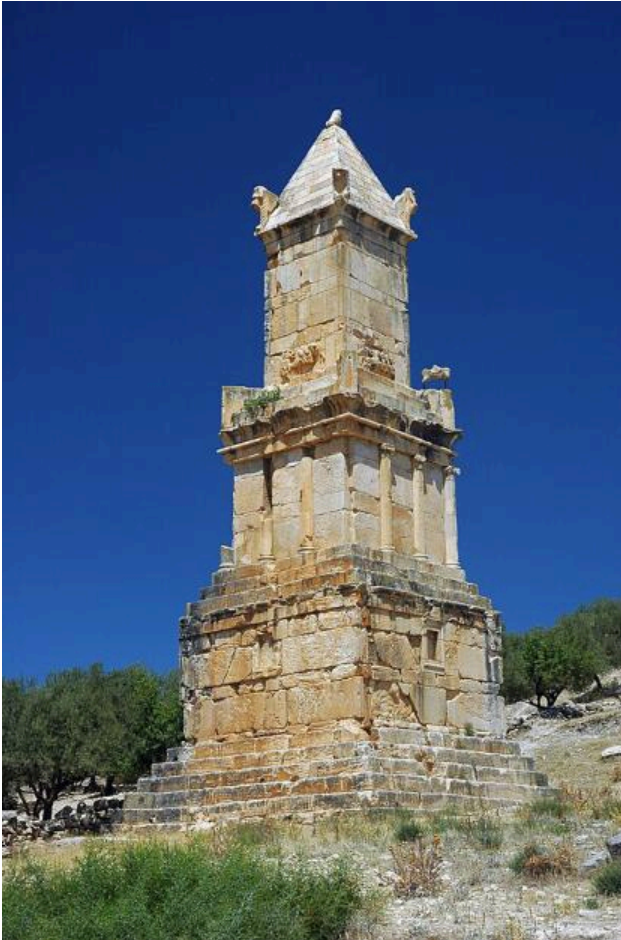


Figure 9: Tomb of Masinissa

and construction, and also how the clerics and magi can uniquely contribute a supernatural element to overcome the harshness of reality.

The Dreams of Masinissa have been followed haphazardly in fits and starts by his descendants. His teachings and plans were vigorously followed during his reign and that of his son Micipsa, as evidenced by the extensive lands of paradise surrounding Ylaruam and Kirthan. But these times of prosperity were interrupted first by the Jugurthine wars and the infighting that followed due to the political meddling of Thyatis. Then the Imperial wars seemed to have no end. During these troublesome years many lost faith in Masinissa as a uniting figure and in

his far-reaching Dream. Though the wars did end and the latest rulers of Ylaruam have sought to follow the Dream first set forth by Masinissa, and the fruits of their labor can be evidenced by the many small villages that have seemingly sprouted out of the ground in recent years.

## The Magi

The Iasuli have always practiced witchcraft, fortune-telling, soothsaying, divination and astrology. So when the magi of the west arrived in the region, they quickly adopted their practices and magi soon held a place of prominence in Iasuli society. Most villages and tribes will be home to a magus of some experience. The magus of a tribe holds the same respect and status as the greatest Imaharen (noble). It is rare for the chief of a tribe to not have the approval of his magus. The magi act as a sort of priesthood in Iasuli life; they often officiate at local festivals and ceremonies.

The Imuaalim Taqbilt (literally meaning 'teacher tribe'), a council of magi, was established by Masinissa Amzizrt to advise the king and act as a supreme court of the land. The Imuaalim Taqbilt take a key role in deciding who is worthy to be king, having a relationship similar to the tribal magus and chief. They especially govern the many magi in Ylaruam, ensuring they perform their many duties to their tribes, and also punishing those that act against the interests of the people or perform forbidden magic.

## Cult of the Magian Fire Worshippers

In the dying days of the Nithian Empire, many turned away from the gods of their ancestors to worship fire demons in a search for power. Thanatos was the chief of

these demons who promised the Nithians salvation from their enemies. In the end these fire demons, being true to their treacherous nature, betrayed the Nithians, and their civilization was destroyed by the Thang and their Doulakki allies. The Magian Fire cult, also known as the Magian Fire Worshipers, are a group of evil clerics and magi who maintain the worship of these fire demons and practice the dark arts of necromancy. They ultimately seek to restore the Nithian Empire as the preeminent power of the known world.

The Magian Fire cult and the dark rituals it practices are banned by the Imuaalim Taqbilt. However, they still operate openly among a few sympathetic villages in the northern highlands, the heart of old Nithia. Unknown to most, the cult has cells which continue their dark work in secret throughout the rest of Ylaruam and beyond. These cells constantly search for artifacts of the old Nithian Empire and a network of gates built by the Nithians which have the ability to summon the fire demons into the mortal realm.

For more Information on the Magian Fire Worshipers refer to MD02: *“The Magian Fire Worshipers Compilation”* by Irving Galvez<sup>1</sup>. Though for the Known World of Dracopolis replace the sections on Rathanos and Corona as other high ranking demons (preferably with a penchant for fire), the Plane of Fire with Hell (or an equivalent fire-and-brimstone-themed plane), and fire elementals with lesser demons.

<sup>1</sup> Available as a [PDF](#) from the *Vaults of Pandius*

## The Church of Ylaruam

There has been a Karganite presence in Ylaruam since the times of the Nithian Empire; the Karganites prospered in the villages and towns in Ylaruam both under Nithian and Thang rule as the Iasuli have always been multicultural, accepting Doulakki, Nithian, and Thang alike. However after the Galanese revolt the Thang Empire began to persecute the Karganites still within its borders, and many Karganites flocked to Ylaruam where they could shelter among the sympathetic Iasuli people.

Many Iasuli townsfolk and even entire tribes converted to the Karganite faith and established a Church of Law in Ylaruam, which was in fact the first church in the known world. Hence when the Church of Law was recognized by the Emperor in Thyatis there were bound to be some disagreements.

### Unorthodoxies of the Church of Ylaruam

The converted populace worships the saints and martyrs of the Church in much the same manner as they used to worship the old gods and spirits of the land. Some Iasuli even maintain their worship of the old gods while also being members of the Church. The ancient funerary traditions of the Iasuli have also been incorporated in the practices of the Church of Ylaruam. In addition to this, the Church of Ylaruam tolerates the magical practices of the magi in contrast to the ban on all magic by the Church outside of Ylaruam.

The distinguishing controversy between the Church of Ylaruam and the Church of Thyatis is known as the *Guraya Heresy*,



Figure 10: Temple of Berenike

known as such due to the preaching of Saint Guraya, a priest of northern Iasuli stock. When the Empire embraced the Church, many former members who had denounced the faith to avoid persecution, returned to the fold and some were even reinstated to their previous status within the priesthood. By decree of the Emperor these persons were pardoned for any sins while apart from the Church and all were expected to accept their penance. Guraya, who had weathered the persecution, did not accept this decree from the Emperor; in fact he refused to accept the holy position of the Emperor as the new head of the Church. Guraya taught that any who had renounced the faith after receiving baptism could not be allowed to enter the priesthood, and any blessing or other rituals which they performed were invalid and must be performed again by a cleric who is considered properly 'holy' before the body of the church.

The preaching of Guraya of course upset the Emperor, so he sent an envoy to the village of Saldae, where Guraya was priest, with the goal of overcoming these theological differences peaceably. Unfortunately when the envoy reached Saldae there was a misunderstanding, the cause of which will be forever only known by the dead, which led to the martyrdom of Guraya and the death of most

of the inhabitants of the village, even those who were not members of the Church. This event came to be known as the Saldae massacre, and then from this event the teachings of Guraya spread like wildfire among the converted Iasuli.

To this day the Church of Ylaruam maintains itself apart from the Church of Thyatis and reveres Guraya as a Saint and considers his writings as scripture. In the century following the death of Guraya, there arose one of the most prominent theologians of the Church, Saint Augustine. Augustine was born in Berenike and rose to be the bishop there, which at the time followed the Church of Ylaruam in the schism against the Church of Thyatis. Saint Augustine argued against the Guraya Heresy, and taught that the rituals performed by a priest were not dependent on the 'holiness' of a priest, because all men are sinners, even priests, and thus the rituals were sanctified by the great creator and none else. This led to the Council of Berenike in which the leaders of both churches gathered to unify the church, and most of the churches in Ylaruam rejected unity, but the churches in Berenike, Biazzan, Nicostenia, and Dythestia, which had previously followed the Church of Ylaruam, forbade the heresy and joined with the church of Thyatis.

## APPENDIX

Additional material and websites are provided below if you are interested in learning more about traditional Tamazight religion and myths.

*The Eastern Libyans, an Essay* by Oric Bates

*Dictionnaire critique de mythologie*  
by Jean-Loïc Le Quellec, Bernard Sergent

*Contes de femmes et d'ogresses en Kabylie*  
by Camille Lacoste Dujardin

*Recueil de Contes Populaires de la Kabylie  
du Djurjura Recueillis et Traduits*  
by J. Rivière

*Le grain magique* by Taos Amrouche

*Souviens-toi ramier : Contes d'amour  
kabyles* by Tassadit Yacine-Titouh

*Libyan Heritage House: Amazigh Religion*  
[https://libyanheritagehouse.org/religion/  
amazigh-religion-in-libya](https://libyanheritagehouse.org/religion/amazigh-religion-in-libya)

*Temehu Tourism Services*  
<https://www.temehu.com/>

*Berbers: Their Language, Religion, Society  
and Groups*  
[https://africame.factsanddetails.com/article/  
entry-348.html](https://africame.factsanddetails.com/article/entry-348.html)

*Berber Culture, Life and Weddings*  
[https://africame.factsanddetails.com/article/  
entry-349.html](https://africame.factsanddetails.com/article/entry-349.html)

*Berbers (from wikipedia)*  
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Berbers>  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Traditional  
Berber\\_religion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Traditional_Berber_religion)  
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guanches>

*Anzar, Morocco's god of rain and his  
human fiancée*  
[https://en.yabiladi.com/articles/details/  
70976/anzar-morocco-s-rain-human-fiancee.  
html](https://en.yabiladi.com/articles/details/70976/anzar-morocco-s-rain-human-fiancee.html)

*Berber mythology ... the three gods that  
marked ancient Moroccans*  
[https://en.yabiladi.com/articles/details/  
83309/berber-mythology-three-gods-that.  
html](https://en.yabiladi.com/articles/details/83309/berber-mythology-three-gods-that.html)

*Amazigh Myths and their Symbolism*  
[https://amazighworldnews.com/amazigh-  
myths-and-their-symbolism/](https://amazighworldnews.com/amazigh-myths-and-their-symbolism/)

*Anzar and Tiziri*  
[https://www.webtoons.com/en/canvas/anzar-  
and-tiziri/list?title\\_no=498100&page=1](https://www.webtoons.com/en/canvas/anzar-and-tiziri/list?title_no=498100&page=1)

*Encyclopédie Berbère*  
[https://journals.openedition.org/encyclo-  
pedieberbere/](https://journals.openedition.org/encyclopedieberbere/)

*Lunja and the Ogress : A wonderful Amazigh folktale from the depths of Rif Heritage*

<https://moroccoenglish.com/lunja-and-the-ogress-a-wonderful-amazigh-folktale-from-the-depths-of-rif-heritage/>

*Algeria*

<https://www.conte-moi.net/contes/algerie>

*Elements of Kabyle mythology*

[http://tadukli.free.fr/pages/culture/histoire\\_01\\_elements\\_de\\_mythologie\\_kabyle.htm](http://tadukli.free.fr/pages/culture/histoire_01_elements_de_mythologie_kabyle.htm)

*Berber Gods*

<https://mythlok.com/gods/african-gods/north-african-gods/berber-gods/>

*Yakuc, Akuc, Yuc, and Ayuc are names that mean "God" in Berber*

<https://www.hespress.com/yakuc-%d9%88-akuc-%d9%88-yuc-%d9%88-ayuc-%d8%a3%d8%b3%d9%85%d8%a7%d8%a1-%d8%aa%d8%b9%d9%86%d9%8a-%d8%a7%d9%84%d9%84%d9%87-%d8%a8%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%a3%d9%85-%d8%a7%d8%b2%d9%8a%d8%ba%d9%8a%d8%a9-290150.html>

*Amazigh Mythology: Exploring Ancient Berber Beliefs*

<https://barlamantoday.com/2023/07/05/amazigh-mythology-exploring-ancient-berber-beliefs/>

*Exploring Berber Mythology: Gods and Goddesses of North Africa*

<https://oldworldgods.com/other/berber-mythology-gods-and-goddesses/>



For **Spelljammer** fans...

The Wildspace Magazine is a free 66 page PDF created by fans and available from:

[https://www.thepiazza.org.uk/bookhouse/doku.php/wsm1\\_rock\\_of\\_bral](https://www.thepiazza.org.uk/bookhouse/doku.php/wsm1_rock_of_bral)



# Races of the Galactic Federation

## ***Playable alien species for BECMI games***

by Cab Davidson

System Log, Federation vessel *FSS Endeavour*

Information provided to entity known as Averyx, patron Immortal of Alphantian Expansionist Movement, in return for safe passage through the Mystaran system as part of a mutual cooperation and information sharing treaty between the great library of Sagittarius Alpha and the Immortal Council of Exploration. Secure information exchange protocol Alpha Zeta employed. Data link established.

Subject: The Galactic Frontier, common sentient species. Subsections 1 (Core Federation Races) including humans, dralasites, vrusk and yaarians, and 2 (Frontier Races) including humma, ifshnit and osakar. At the request of Averyx, files to be downloaded to domestic Mystaran machine intelligence 1001, "Ninny", Mek device of unknown origin, stationed in orbit around satellite Mystara II. Information dump commences.

## THE FEDERATION

The Federation of worlds referred to in the classic DA (*Blackmoor*) modules of the 1980s is barely detailed, with but a few individuals and some examples of their technology being discussed therein. It has been established since the very earliest days of *Dungeons & Dragons* that some other beings exist elsewhere in the Universe of Blackmoor (which from its earliest days was considered to be concurrent with *Greyhawk*, later being included in the deep history of Mystara). All we know about this from official sources is that there is a science-fiction style civilisation called The Federation, from which events at the Temple of the Frog, the City of the Gods, and the rise and untimely fall of Blackmoor arise. Indeed, the events thereof resonate through both the Blackmoor and Mystara settings, having relevance from the very earliest days to the end of the Mystara product line, leading directly to the Great War in "*Wrath of the Immortals*".

For such an influential faction to have so little published information seems more than an oversight, and it is the goal of this article to fill that gap.

This is not the only Federation of early TSR products. Another setting, the Frontier of the Galactic Federation of *Star Frontiers*<sup>1</sup>, is an obvious parallel for the classic D&D because although it is mechanically a very different game its packaging and marketing was geared towards presenting it as akin to *Dungeons & Dragons* in space. In the interests of filling in the gaps and defining a greater setting in a way that can add interest to any campaign, this article presents the

<sup>1</sup> Star Frontiers products are available as pdf in the Drivethrurpg.com store: <https://legacy.drivethrurpg.com/product/226710/Star-Frontiers-Alpha-Dawn>

core (*Alpha Dawn*) and expanded (*Zebulon's Guide*) races of Star Frontiers adapted to classic D&D and provides a context for The Federation that works within the wider Mystaran cosmology. These races may be employed either as PCs or NPCs in a campaign, used either as allies or (more likely in the case of the sathar) enemies within your game.

## The Galaxy

Mystara's galaxy resembles our own Milky Way in most ways, being around 100,000 light years across, spiral-shaped, and containing something in the region of 100 billion stars. The Federation is mostly located within the Galactic Core, a region of space surrounding the centre of the galaxy to a distance of around 15,000 light years. This highly civilised, advanced region is well organised and ordered, with the strong law enforcement capabilities of the Federation maintaining good order and allowing for stability and prosperity. Beyond this densely packed region of stars and the planets that surround them lies the region known as the Frontier, extending for another 10,000 light years beyond the Core. Most populated worlds of the Frontier are part of the Federation, but with populated worlds being further apart this is a zone where criminals (pirates, smugglers, even slavers) can operate more freely, and where rulership of worlds may be contested by local rulers, corporations, and the sinister, invasive sathar.

Mystara is found outside of this region, around 27,000 light years from the Galactic Core. This region (from 25,000 to 100,000 light years from the centre of the galaxy) is known as the Rim, and in this zone populated worlds are few and far between, with



vast distances between stars mostly preventing contact between developing civilisations.

These regions are not merely conceptual: there is a huge practical difference in the laws of physics and metaphysics between worlds. In the Core, the usual rules of magic do not apply, this being a three-dimensional space in which most magic simply cannot operate. Thus, as races progress they tend to move towards technological solutions for all of their problems. Conversely, on the Rim space is four dimensional (see the original *Immortals* rules for how dimensions operate within space), facilitating magic but preventing the use of gunpowder and most explosives (see accompanying article on guns in BECMI), leading most Rim worlds to develop along magical and fantastic lines.

There is no clear dividing line between regions of space where magic predominates and where technology is dominant, and areas of the Frontier dominated by one or the other, or in which both are functional and contests between magic and technology are common, are known.



System Log, Federation vessel *FSS Endeavour*

Data Supplied: Occupations within the Federation

On myriad worlds, every occupation imaginable is taken by the member races of the federation. While in the galactic core most menial work is conducted by robots, allowing individuals to pursue esoteric professions in art, science, design, and personal expression, in the wider frontier region specialists in agriculture, exploration, construction, mining and even adventure and combat are known. Outside of the frontier, in the Galactic Rim regions where complex magical civilisations are known, members of federation races are understood to be able to pursue professions more commonly known as 'classes' in those regions, and clerics, fighters, thieves, magic-users and other roles familiar to inhabitants there are taken up by individuals.

**Federation Races**

While within their own spacecraft and on their own worlds these races have many complex and powerful technological items at their disposal, when restricted to what is available on magical worlds they may take on any character classes (other than sathar, who cannot have a divine class) and use magical items and equipment as usual. They may learn skills and weapon mastery as appropriate to their class.

All citizens of the Galactic Federation speak their own racial language and Pan-Galactic, a simplified language of words and hand gestures. Note that sathar are not considered a playable race except in the most exceptional circumstances, but like other races they are believed to study both their own tongue and Pan-Galactic.

When generating non-human characters, modify their initial statistics as defined in table 1. Armour, if worn, is only useful when it provides an armour class better than the base AC of that race – so, for example, a vrusk gains no benefit from wearing leather armour. Due to having excellent racial abilities, most alien races require more XP to

Table 1

Race	Str	Int	Wis	Dex	Con	Chr	HP	Base AC	Save As	XP
Dralasite	1	-1	-1	0	1	0	1	7	Dwarf	15%
Humma	2	0	-2	0	2	-2	1	7	Lupin	15%
Ifshnit	-1	1	0	0	-1	1	0	8	Dwarf	0
Osakar	1	0	0	1	1	-3	0	6	Elf	10%
Vrusk	-1	1	1	0	-1	0	1	5	Elf	10%
Yazarian	-2	1	1	1	-1	0	0	9	Human	15%
Sathar	0	0	-1	-1	0	2	0	9	Dwarf	25%

advance in level, the amount also being shown in table 1. For example, vrusk requires 10% more XP per level to advance. Likewise, while most characters gain hit points as human characters of the same class, some use

different dice. Where +1 is shown for HP in table 1, the next larger dice is used, e.g., a humma fighter gains 1d10 (plus or minus any constitution modifier) HP per level, rather than 1d8.

## Core Federation Races

### System Log, Federation vessel *FSS Endeavour*

Data Supplied: Occupations within the Federation

Many hundreds of populated worlds make up the core of the Galactic Federation, mostly residing in the central part of the galaxy. Civilisations spread among those worlds thousands of years ago, with close proximity of star systems therein creating opportunities for both trade and conflict. Many empires emerged, and fell, before the four core species of what would become the Federation (dralasites, humans, yazarians and vrusk) agreed to form a political alliance for the mutual advantage of all.

Today, billions of individuals ply peaceful lives near the Galactic Core Region, either on one of the worlds therein or on countless routes between worlds, on any of thousands of ships or space stations that connect worlds together. Core worlds are found within 15,000 light years of the Galactic Centre, a supermassive black hole about which the galaxy slowly rotates. This region is physically different to the outlying regions of space (both the Frontier and the Rim) in that the tremendous forces of the black hole restrict this space to four dimensions, facilitating the full efficacy of all technological advances, meaning that as races develop they typically pass through black powder, steam, and petroleum eras before developing fission, fusion, and finally the quantum technologies necessary for inter-stellar transport and true artificial intelligences. Conversely, four-dimensional space is theorised to make the development of the paranormal more complex, hence there are few practitioners of what primitive peoples of the Rim refer to as 'magic' within the core.

The most numerous races of the core are dralasites, a plasmodial life form capable of taking on a number of shapes, humans and yazarians, both being bipedal, and vrusk, an arthropod species. It is through the cooperation and political union of these species that the Federation has grown to become the dominant civilisation of the Galactic Core.

## Dralasite

*FSS Endeavour*  
 Data File: **Dralasite**

Average Height: 1.5m  
 Typical Mass: 65kg  
 Lifespan: 250 standard years  
 Reproduction:  
     Hermaphroditic, budding  
 Body Temperature: 30°C  
 Average Width: 1m



Dralasites are a spacefaring race of invertebrates, one of the core races of the Galactic Federation. They are rubbery, elastic creatures able to change their shape at will, earning the nickname of 'blobs' around other races. They are short, rarely taller than 4'6", and completely lacking in any hard body parts other than an outer skin which is somewhat rough and scratchy. A network of thin veins seems to cover their whole surface, and these come together to make two dark eye spots on the part of the body where their head may be assumed to be. Their internal structure is almost like a single sac in which there is a central brain, and other organs float within the liquid space. There are no identifiable lungs; dralasites breathe directly through their

skins, and possess an excellent sense of smell (enabling them to identify creatures by scent alone).

Dralasites may form limbs based on their dexterity scores according to the following table:

Dexterity Score	Number of Limbs
3	3
4-5	4
6-15	5
16-17	6
18	7

They may freely choose as many or as few arms, legs, or flippers as they choose, and may use items in arms as they see fit, with no modifiers. With a single leg they may only move at a speed of 30' per turn, with two they may move at 90' per turn, and with 4 or more they can move at 120'. They may use arms to handle weapons as they see fit, and suffer no 'off-hand' penalties, so for example a dralasite with three arms can handle a two-handed weapon and a one-handed weapon with no penalties to either.

Dralasites are renowned for having an abiding interest in philosophy, and care little for treasures or trinkets, judging themselves by the quality of their thoughts and ideas rather than the value of their goods. They often carry many strange and exotic tools that can have use to others but have little intrinsic worth as such. They are also well known for having a terrible sense of humour, loving puns and word games. Their enjoyment of philosophical argument makes them excellent at detecting whether they are being lied to (thus all possess the detect deception skill in addition to any other general skills).

Dralasites are hermaphrodites, passing through male and female periods in their

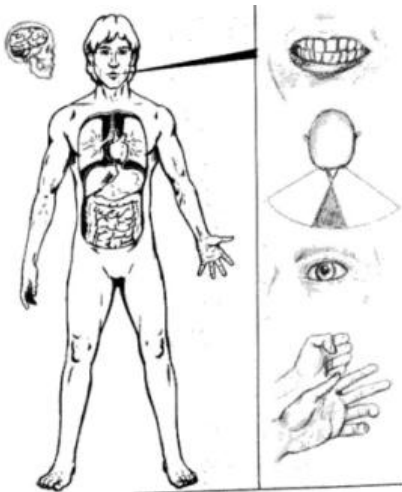
lives. The males exude spores, and when the females choose to become mothers they accept a spore and bud off a new young dralasite in around 4 months.

Dralasites may be of any character class, but most often choose to be thieves. On some worlds, they are known as plasmoids.

## HUMAN

### *FSS Endeavour* Data File: **HUMAN**

Average Height: 1.9m  
 Typical Mass: 85kg (male),  
   65kg (female)  
 Lifespan: 200 standard years  
 Reproduction:  
   Sexual (male and female),  
   viviparous  
 Body Temperature: 37°C



It is unknown whether the humans of the galactic core originated on Mystara, or whether the humans of Mystara somehow found their way to the core millennia before individual groups there developed space flight, but it is clear that they are of the same

species. Federation humans are found that approximate every colour and racial variation found on Mystara, and in many forms that are not known thereupon, with lineages having blue, green, purple, orange, yellow and bright red skin being known. Over thousands of years and despite many wars between different groups of humans (a trait that Federation humans have proven to be as susceptible to as those on Mystara) no significant differences in the capabilities or potential of different lineages of humans have been demonstrated.

Humans were the first Federation species to visit Mystara in the modern era, having discovered this world during the Blackmoorian era. However, the propulsion technology used by *FSS Beagle* was incompatible with the five-dimensional space in which Mystara was found, and after crashing thereupon no attempt to escape was successful.

Federation humans may pursue any character class.

## Vrusk

Vrusk are a large (5' tall, around 5' long), spacefaring insect-like race. Eight legs grow from their abdomen, four on each side. Their torso is upright in front of the abdomen and vaguely humanoid, with two arms connected at the shoulders, and a head at the top of the abdomen. Vrusk hands are circular pads with five fingers spaced evenly around the edge. A vrusk's shoulders are double-jointed, so they can rotate their arms in a full circle without straining any muscles. They can reach any point on their abdomen or behind their backs easily.

*FSS Endeavour*  
Data File: **Vrusk**

Average Height: 1.5m  
Average Length: 1.5m  
Typical Mass: 85kg  
Lifespan: 175 standard years  
Reproduction:  
    Sexual (male and female),  
    ovoviviparous  
Body Temperature: 38°C



A vrusk body is covered by a carapace (hard shell). This shell is jointed at the elbows, hips, knees, *etc.* The carapace protects the vrusk from bruises, cuts, scratches, and other minor injuries. Unlike insects, vrusk have an internal skeleton to support their bodies. Young vrusk have a blue carapace with bright orange near the joints. As the vrusk get older, their carapace changes to dull green with yellow joints. Their broad spread legs and strong exoskeletons allow them to carry greater burdens than mere humanoids, allowing them twice the carrying capacity of humans and demi-humans. Vrusk have large, compound eyes that are protected by a hard, clear covering. Their mouths are surrounded by four eating mandibles. The two larger mandibles hold food while the small ones tear it apart and

place it in the mouth. They are omnivores. Vrusk have lungs and breathe through many small openings under their abdomens. This arrangement makes it difficult for Vrusk to swim (effectively having to hold their breath when in water or trying to swim).

Vrusk are diligent and hard-working. It is customary for a young vrusk to take employment at a business, conglomerate or trading house and devote their life thereto, their loyalty being akin to a form of patriotism.

Vrusk are, at heart, lovers of order, law, and organisation. The laws drafted to govern the rules of business between corporations are so labyrinthine that no other species comes close to understanding them, and their tastes tend towards higher arts, music, and theatre. All vrusk are lawful, whether they are good or not.

It is a rare vrusk that seeks adventure, and typically such creatures are seeking business opportunities to do the most daring thing of all – start their own businesses. They may be any character class, and those who have settled on magical worlds make excellent merchants, magic-users, and thieves. On some worlds, an older race of vrusk with a lifestyle more akin to a social insect is still known. These primitives are known as rastipedes.

## Yazarian

*FSS Endeavour*  
Data File: **Yazarian**

Average Height: 2.1m  
Typical Mass: 50kg (male),  
60kg (female)  
Lifespan: 140 standard years  
Reproduction:  
Sexual (male and female),  
viviparous  
Body Temperature: 39°C



Yazarians are a spacefaring race of roughly man-sized creatures resembling short-furred simians, with tan to brown fur across most of the body and a thicker mane of fur around the shoulders and head. A flap of skin stretches between their arms and legs, allowing them to glide, at an angle of 30° downwards or less, at a rate of 180' (60'). They are the most intelligent of the core races of the Galactic Federation, a fact often masked by their tendency to be pushy, aggressive, and on occasion simply hostile. They train themselves to enter a rage in melee combat, giving them a bonus of +4 to hit and damage.

Yazarians have excellent infravision (90'), having evolved in near dark primal forests, and can suffer in bright light – they invariably wear darkened goggles in such conditions (if deprived of such goggles, in sunlight they gain no bonus to hit or damage in melee combat). They favour light, open, loose clothing, and rarely wear shoes (their feet being almost as dextrous as their hands). An interesting aspect of yazarian culture is the concept of 'life enemy' chosen at any time in a yazarian's life. This may be a competing clan, an enemy race, or even a specific disease (if the yazarian is a doctor) or company (if the yazarian is in business). The more potent the selected enemy, the more honour there is in that choice, and it is seen as fitting and noble to try to defeat that enemy. If that enemy is defeated (a cure is found for the disease, the company folds, the enemy killed, etc.) that is considered a worthy achievement in yazarian society, and the yazarian might or might not choose a subsequent foe. Yazarians may progress in any character class, frequently preferring to be fighters or mystics. On some primitive worlds they are known as hadozee.

## Frontier Races

System Log, Federation vessel *FSS Endeavour*

Data Log: Frontier Races.

In theory humma, ifshnit and osakar share all of the rights and responsibilities of all frontier citizens, being recognised as full members now for decades. In practice, while most individuals who have transferred to Core worlds are now fully integrated therein, populations of these three species found on Frontier and Rim worlds do not always identify as Federation citizens, preferring their own forms of local governance and rejecting the notions of free movement and collective defence. The recent Sathar Wars changed this somewhat, with most Frontier worlds now being at least nominally affiliated to the Federation, and only those worlds on the Galactic Rim tending to favour independence.

All three species are now commonly found alongside the four core federation races on missions across the galaxy, bringing their own unique capabilities and perspectives. However, their recency within the Federation still leads to some difficulties for some gaining acceptance, with the problem of prejudice being a persistent problem among organic species.

All three frontier races are most commonly found on frontier worlds, with worlds dominated by each of the three being found across the region.

## HUMMA

*FSS Endeavour*  
Data File: **Humma**

Average Height: 2.5m  
Typical Mass: 90kg  
Lifespan: 210 standard years  
Reproduction: Hermaphroditic,  
viviparous  
Body Temperature: 38°C



Humma have roughly pear-shaped bodies with long and powerful tails, short arms, and snouted heads that have qualities that seem both canine and feline at the same time. They have fine, usually matted hair in dull brown, with hairless hands and large, powerful feet. They roughly resemble 8'-tall humanoid kangaroos, walking rather more upright. They can handle missile weapons like crossbows and tech weapons, but their short arms make the manual use of melee weapons impractical, although they can wield a weapon with their tail.

They have an unusual life cycle, starting out as females but becoming male after around 60–100 years. Around 160 they become essentially genderless and live to an age of around 210.



The tail of a humma is 6' long and has a grip equivalent in strength to a human hand. They can stand on their tail alone for up to 10 rounds before tiring and do so to get a better view of the world around them. When wielding a melee weapon with their tail they cannot accomplish complex tasks (such as loading a missile weapon) with their hands, but they can instead use their tail as a club for 1d4 damage per round without losing concentration on objects in their hands.

Humma are boorish, aggressive, and violent, and rarely welcomed by other civilised peoples, but their presence in the Frontier is tolerated because they can also be inventive and fearsome enemies of the sathar (who they colloquially refer to as 'meat'). Societally, they expect to live short and violent lives, being willing to throw themselves into battles against dangerous foes for the honour of their people. And in their free time they act with a devil-may-care attitude that might thus be expected, denying themselves no pleasure.

Humma may leap up to 60' to attack a foe in melee every round and for up to 10 rounds in a single combat before tiring and being unable to do so again without 3 turns of rest. Unless a foe is expecting this (and has gained initiative and stated that they are waiting for this attack) then they cannot return the blow, and if the humma gains initiative in the next round they may leap out again, up to 60', out of combat or to attack another target. The 'battle wheel' is a method of attack used by groups of humma who use this tactic cooperatively to surprise and isolate foes.

They have sight and hearing roughly equivalent to humans and speak a crude-sounding but complex language of their own. Their senses of smell and taste are

muted, but they can digest nearly anything, being effectively immune to all non-magical poisons.

Humma may pursue any character class, but even on magical worlds few have the patience to become magic-users

## Ifshnit

*FSS Endeavour*

Data File: **Ifshnit**

Average Height: 1m

Typical Mass: 30kg

Lifespan: 150 standard years

Reproduction:

Sexual (male and female),  
viviparous

Body Temperature: 32°C



Being roughly the size of gnomes, ifshnit are small, pinkish humanoids around 3' tall, covered in braided body hair (each clan having their own style). Men have long beards, usually a different shade to that of the hair on the rest of their body (which can be of nearly any colour); females have bald faces. Both sexes have bald heads. They have hairy 4-fingered feet and hands, with which they are only able to handle small weapons.

They live around 150 years. The ifshnit are strict vegetarians, finding the thought of eating flesh disgusting. They tend to carry small sticks of vegetable matter with them wherever they go, from which (of necessity) they are constantly snacking.

Ifshnit have no sense of smell, but their sight, hearing, touch, and taste are equivalent to those of humans. Their eyes have an extra eyelid, which reflexively closes if challenged by bright light, venom, etc., allowing them to be immune to most forms of blindness.

Ifshnit are usually mild-mannered and friendly, with a language that is to others light and lilting. Most other races find them pleasant to be around, but they themselves tend to prefer their own company. They are typically a peaceful and highly mercantile people, but they hate the sathar and will usually attack them on sight. Their mercantile background allows any ifshnit to start with the appraisal and bargaining skills for free, in addition to any other skills, at character generation.

Philosophically ifshnit believe that they are living their final corporeal existence before becoming part of a continuum of pure energy in an afterlife. This leads to a reflective and generally peaceful way of seeing things, which can often be found in their favourite activities (trading, playing games, and storytelling).

Ifshnit may pursue any class, but no clerics (or paladins, avengers, or adherents of any other divine class) have been encountered.

## Osakar

### *FSS Endeavour* Data File: **Osakar**

Average Height: 3m  
Typical Mass: 225kg  
Lifespan: 100 standard years  
Reproduction: Parthenogenesis  
Body Temperature: 42°C



Standing on four long, spindly legs that spread evenly from their barrel-shaped bodies (and making up 65% of their height), osakar are 9' tall (although they can fold their legs downward and stand at 6'), with two similarly long arms ending in 5 digits, each with 5 knuckles, on each hand (the outer two digits forming a pair of opposable thumbs). Their legs have two opposing knees, allowing them to effectively fold to bend down.

The head is held on a powerful, muscular neck that can turn 180 degrees, meaning an osakar can as easily look backwards as forwards. Their large eyes are pure black, beneath which is a nose made of complex, baffled vertical openings. With this and their deceptively simple mouth containing two opposing tongues, otherwise constructed of hard, ridged plates for chewing, the osakar

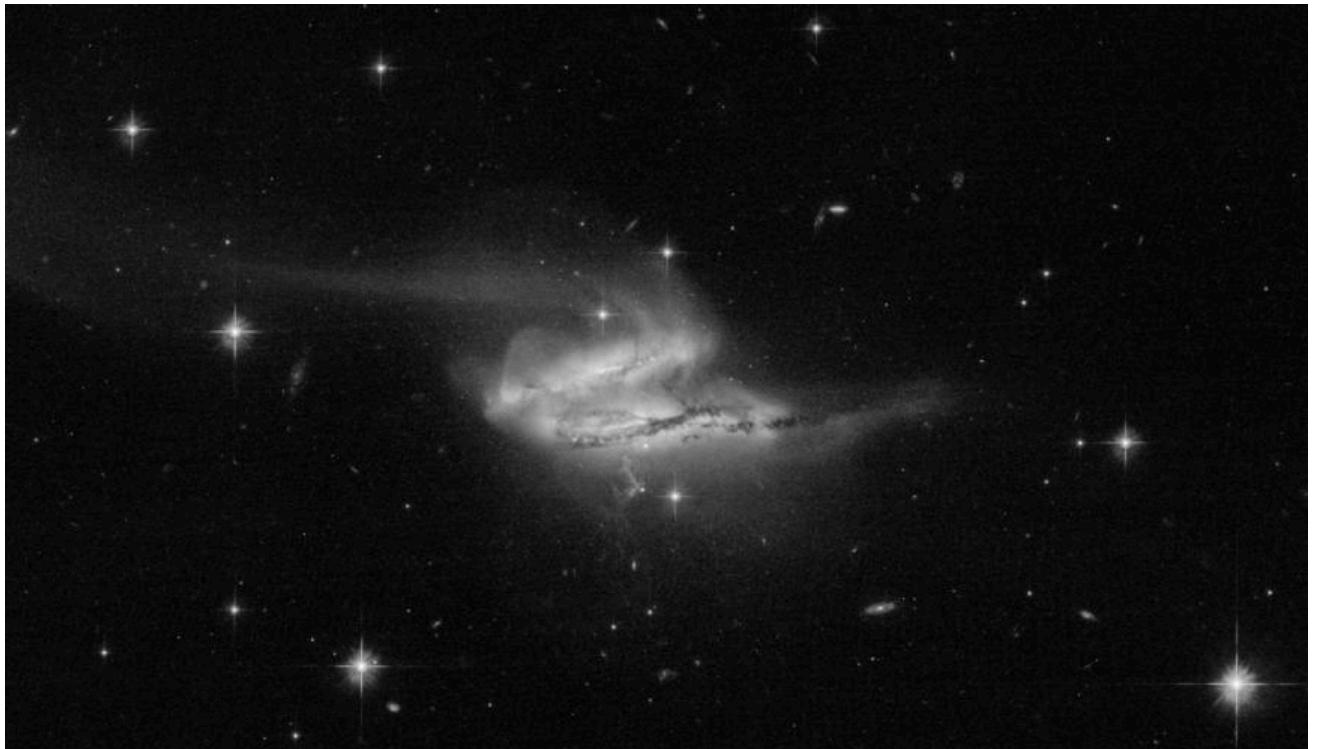
can make almost any sound, and thus they are regarded as great linguists (starting from level 1 they may choose any 3 extra languages and learn another language every 3 levels of experience). Their complex nose also gives them a tremendous sense of smell, and they can identify individuals by scent and gain a +3 bonus to any scent-based skills (such as tracking, food tasting, etc.). Other than taste and smell, which are exceptional, their other senses are roughly equivalent to those of humans.

The skin of an osakar is covered with hard, white, overlapping cells or scales, rather resembling clean white scale mail armour.

Osakar have only a single sex, each laying eggs that require no fertilisation. Strangely, to all other species, osakar appear to be functionally identical. This carries through to much osakar philosophy, and in their society they are truly equal, having identical rights and responsibilities. They do however

have a greater desire to assert their individuality than other species, each developing unique modes of speech and intonation (which are identifiable to any creatures living) and seeking to adorn themselves in the most individual clothing styles. Frequently they incorporate concepts from other species and cultures in this personal styling. They also freely embrace religions of other species, and in magic-rich worlds many become clerics, devoted to any of a huge range of Immortals. They may pursue any character class.

Few like osakar. At an almost intuitive level, most find them to be creepy and strange. They tend to get on reasonably well with vrusk, and they have better relations with humma than most (both being generally disliked, they find some common cause).



## Other Races, and the Sathar

*FSS Endeavour* Data Log: Other races.

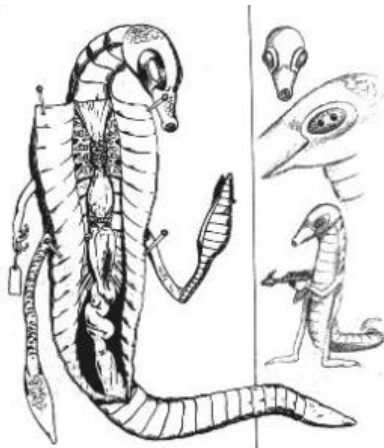
While four core and three frontier races make up the Federation, hundreds of other sentient species are found on worlds across the galaxy, and it is estimated that if hyperspace (known to Mystarans as the Ethereal Plane), e-space (or the Astral Plane) and parallel spaces (outer planes) are included there may well be thousands of other species awaiting contact. It is Federation policy only to watch and observe such races until such a point as they show a capability to travel from the Frontier or Rim worlds on which they are found the Galactic Core, at which point contact is made and peaceful relations attempted. This policy was enacted after the disastrous Blackmoorian Experiment caused irreversible damage to the world of Mystara, with the Federation having adopted (and maintained) a strict non-interference policy since that time. Usually, this has proved successful, and Federation missions are found on dozens of worlds, observing (without interaction) until contact becomes necessary. As yet, none of those aspiring civilisations have reached a point where offering Federation membership would be appropriate.

One notable exception is the sathar. This species of worm-like humanoids is of unknown origin, but most commonly found on Rim and Frontier worlds, where they are found to be aggressive, disruptive, and are invariably violent, with few known encounters ending without combat. The Sathar Wars, through destroying many Frontier worlds, effectively united the Frontier against the sathar. Since that time, sathar have gained more victories against the Federation through bribery, trickery and employment of espionage than direct confrontation. One of the key missions for Federation ships exploring the Rim is to watch for sathar influence, and to protect populations of less developed worlds from being enslaved thereby.

## Sathar

*FSS Endeavour*  
Data File: **Sathar**

Average Length: 3.5m  
Typical Mass: 55kg  
Lifespan: Unknown  
Reproduction: Hermaphroditic,  
unknown  
Body Temperature: Unknown,  
believed to be ectothermic.



The sathar are a strange extra-terrestrial race rather resembling limbed, segmented worms with reptilian features. Their long glistening bodies taper to heads with huge eyes containing twin pupils and thin mouths/snouts with round, toothed mouths. Their lower body tapers to a powerful, muscular tail. They have four limbs, capable of bending at any point, the rear two being thick and ending in larger pads, the forelimbs being thinner and ending in a cluster of tentacles useful for manipulating tools. In motion, they use their tails and rear limbs to propel themselves. Their motion is distinctly alien, possessing no kind of skeleton; their musculature works purely on hydrostatic pressure, giving them an eerie jerkiness in

motion. Sathar skin is yellow to tan, with pinkish underbellies and green tones on their tentacles.

Their twin pupils and large eyes positioned on each side of their head gives them excellent all-round vision, and their wet skin is itself a sensory surface for smell. Consequently, they can only be surprised on a roll of 1 on 1d10 and can faultlessly track foes by scent.

Sathar are an aggressive spacefaring race with no regard for the desires, welfare, or safety of any other race. They are not part of the Galactic Federation and are in fact sworn enemies thereof. Their goals, collectively or individual, are unknown, but encounters with their horribly bewepioned battle convoys are always spectacularly brutal. No sathar has been captured alive; they have means of ending their own existences before any can be questioned, and in every encounter, should violence be the result, they will fight until they or, more likely, their foes, are dead.

They are immune to electrical attacks, paralysis, and charms, and while unarmoured they are relatively easy to hit (AC8) they also frequently don collapsium armour that confers an AC of 0. But perhaps their most deadly weapon is their capacity to charm – once per round a sathar can stare at any foe within 30', and if that creature is not actively looking away they must make a saving throw vs. spells at -2 or become charmed.

Sathar may pursue any non-divine character class (there are no sathar clerics or avengers, for example) and fighters, magic-users and thieves have been observed.

# RESCUING EDERA

## A SOLO ADVENTURE

by Mark Dowson

For this adventure you need to create a first edition *Dungeons & Dragons* character of 3<sup>rd</sup> level (or higher for a Magic-User or Thief).

Give yourself an automatic 16 ability score in either Strength, Dexterity or Constitution.

You are welcome to run this game using later editions of the rules but will have to supply the monster stats and use your own judgement on what level of character you create.

If not very familiar with the first edition rules, it might help to know a 13+ is needed to hit an opponent with Armour Class 6, on a d20 plus your Strength modifier roll. Each point an Armour Class is lower than this increases this by one and each point it is higher decreases it by one. Monsters also need one less to hit for each extra hit dice they have above one.



- 1 A close friend of yours, the cleric, Edera, has been captured by orcs in the Black Peak Mountains. Fortunately, orcs were wounded in the battle where she was overwhelmed and there is a trail of blood for you to follow right back to the entrance of their subterranean lair.

Reaching what appears to be the mouth of a cave, you enter with your weapon at the ready. The passageway slopes downwards and you find yourself descending several steps. At the bottom, the passageway turns left. You see further along the passageway ahead of you, there is a passageway to your right and beyond it this passageway ends in a door with another door in the wall to the left of it.

To go along the passage to your right, read 39. To go through the door facing you at the end of the passage ahead of you, read 16. To go through the door in the left side of the end of the passage ahead of you, read 69.

- 2 You find yourself in a passage stretching ahead with a door near you to your right and further along a passage to your left. To go through the door to your right, read 69. To go along the passage to your left, read 39. To go straight ahead along the passageway, ignoring the door and the left cor-

ridor, read 10. To return through the door behind you, read 16.

- 3** You find yourself in a passage stretching to your right with a door near you to your left and further right along the passage, a passage going straight ahead. To go through the door to your left, read 16. To go along the passage to your right and straight ahead, read 39. To go right, past the passageway straight ahead, read 10. To return through the door behind you, read 69.
- 4** You come out onto a passage stretching to your left and right. To go left, read 10. To go through the door at the end of the passage to your right, read 16. To go through the door at the end of the left wall of that passage, read 69. To return the way you have come, read 48.
- 5** You find yourself in a passage stretching ahead, which has a passageway to your left. To follow the passage straight ahead, read 31. To go along the one to your left and through the door at the end of it, read 74. To return through the door behind you, read 44.
- 6** Around the corner you see the passageway ends in a door and has a passageway in the wall to your right, also ending in a door.

To go through the door facing you at the end of the passage straight ahead, read 44. To go through the door at the end of the passage to your right, read 74. To return around the corner behind you, read 31.

- 7** You find yourself in a passage stretching ahead, which comes out onto a passageway stretching to your left and

right. To the left the passageway turns left. To go that way, read 31. To the right it ends in a door. To go through the door, read 44. To return through the door behind you, read 74.

- 8** You find yourself in a room with a door further left along the wall behind you. To go through that door, read 3. To return through the door behind you, read 28.
- 9** You find yourself in a room with a door further right along the wall behind you. To go through that door, read 28. To return through the door behind you, read 3.



- 10** Ahead of you the passageway turns right, and you suspect the steps going up, leading to the way out, are around the corner, and find that they are. A short while later you hear footsteps behind you and turn to see two orcs running up the steps towards you with drawn scimitars.

Armour Class 6, Hit Dice 1, Damage d8,  
Save As: Fighter 1, Hit Points 4 each.

If you defeat them, read 21. If you are reduced to zero hit points, read 77.



**11** The passage ahead of you ends in a door before turning left. If you wish to open the door, read 41. To go left, read 49. To return the way you have come, read 20.

**12** You find yourself in a passage stretching ahead, before turning left. To follow the passage around, read 22. To return the way you have come, read 72.

**13** You find yourself in a passage stretching ahead, before turning right. To follow the passage around, read 72. To return through the door behind you, read 37.

**14** Further along the passage you come across a door in the wall to your left before the passage turns right. If you wish to open the door, read 41. To follow the passage right, read 33. To return the way you have come, read 49.

**15** Through the door you see a passage stretching ahead and a passage to your right. To go straight ahead, read 20. To go right, read 49. To return through the door behind you, read 75.

**16** You enter a room where you see two grey-skinned goblins, who draw jagged short swords on seeing you and move to attack.



Armour Class 6,  
Hit Dice 1-1,  
Damage d6,  
Save As: Normal  
Human,  
Hit Points 3 and 4.


If you defeat them, read 23. If you are reduced to zero hit points, read 77.

**17** Roll a d6 and add your Charisma modifier. On a 3 or less, read 60. On a 4 or more, read 47.

**18** Through the door you see a passage stretching to your right, before turning right. There is also a door near you in the wall to your left. To follow the passage around, read 11. To go through the door to your left, read 29. To return through the door behind you, read 40.

**19** Through the door you see a passage stretching ahead of you, before turning right. There is also a door near you in the wall to your right with something scratched on it in Orcish. If you can understand Orcish and wish to read what is written or can cast the spell *read languages* and wish to use it here, read 65. To follow the passage around, read 11. To go through the



- door to your right, read 40. To return through the door behind you, read 29.
- 20** The passage ends in a door with another door in the wall to your left with something scratched on it in Orcish. If you can understand Orcish and wish to read what is written or can cast the spell *read languages* and wish to use it here, read 65. To go through the door facing you, read 29. To go through the door to your left, read 40. To return the way you have come, read 11.
- 21** The last orc falls to the ground. To turn around and continue the direction you were going before the orcs caught up with you, read 30. To go along the passage to your right, read 39. To go through the door facing you at the end of the passage ahead of you, read 16. To go through the door on the left side at the end of the passage ahead of you, read 69.
- 22** The passage ends in a door with something scratched in it in Orcish. If you can understand Orcish and wish to read what is written or can cast the spell *read languages* and wish to use it here, read 57. To just go through the door, read 37. To return the way you have come, read 72.
- 23** The last goblin falls to the floor. You find yourself in a room with rust-coloured streaks in the walls. There is a door to your left and a trapdoor in the stone floor. To go through the left door, read 8. To open the trap door, read 46. To cast *detect magic*, if you can, read 64. To return the way you have come, read 2.
- 24** Magically you rise off the floor and through the trapdoor above you. A moment later you are in the room above, which has rust-coloured streaks in the walls. There is a door facing you and a door to your left. To go through the door facing you, read 8. To go through the door to your left, read 2. To jump back down through the trapdoor, read 62. To jump into the cobwebs, using them to cushion your fall, read 68.
- 25** You find yourself back in the room where Edera was held prisoner with the bodies of the two orcs still laid on the floor.
- “Did you take a hit to your head earlier on?” Edera asks. “Surely your sense of direction is normally better than this to take us back here.” Read 53.
- 26** Through the door you see two large orcs, and past them Edera chained to the wall. Her fair face is streaked with blood and dirt, much of the former probably not being her own. Her long hair is in a similar state, and she has been stripped of her armour.
- “I’m so glad to see you!” she calls out to you. “You orcs are so going to get it now!”
- 
- “Nah,” growls one of the orcs. “Your friend we’ll gut or have join you for worse.” With that the two orcs go for you, but the narrowness of the

doorway means they can only fight you one at a time.

Armour Class 6,  
Hit Dice 1,  
Damage d8,  
Save As: Fighter 1,  
Hit Points 3 and 6.

If you defeat them, read 38. If you are reduced to zero hit points, read 77.

**27** If you have not yet rescued Edera, read 26. If you have rescued her, read 25.

**28** You find yourself in a room with rust-coloured streaks in the walls. There is a door to your right and a trapdoor in the stone floor. To go through the door, read 2. To open the trapdoor, read 46. To cast *detect magic*, if you can, read 64. To return the way you have come, read 8.

**29** Through the door you enter a chamber where a goblin dressed in kobold skins charges you with a spear.



Armour Class 6,  
Hit Dice 1-1,  
Damage d6,  
Save As: Normal  
Human,  
Hit Points 3.

If you defeat the goblin, read 43. If you are reduced to zero hit points, read 77.

**30** Around the corner you find yourself going up several steps and at the top of them see ahead the glimmer of daylight from a cave entrance. A few moments later you are back out on the moun-

tainside with the sun starting to set in the west to your right. If Edera is with you, read 78. If she is not, read 67.



**31** The passageway turns right after some distance, ending in a door. To go through the door, read 73. To return around the corner behind you, read 6.

**32** You step into a passage stretching ahead before turning right. To go around the corner, read 6. To return through the door behind you, read 73.

**33** As you head down the passageway, a scimitar-wielding brutish grey-green-skinned orc charges at you.



Armour Class 6,  
Hit Dice 1,  
Damage d8,  
Save As: Fighter 1,  
Hit Points 5.

If you defeat him, read 20. If you are reduced to zero hit points, read 77.

- 34** Feeling the magical energies of your spell fill you, you gently float down through the trapdoor, past the cobwebs to the floor of the chamber below you. Read 35.
- 35** If you have not already killed a giant spider in this adventure, read 36. If you have, read 55.
- 36** From its hiding place among its webs emerges a six-foot-long spider, clearly determined to make a meal of you.



Armour Class 6,  
Hit Dice 3,  
Damage 2d6  
+ save vs poison  
or death,  
Save As: Fighter 2,  
Hit Points 13.

If you defeat it, read 54. If you are reduced to zero hit points, read 77.

- 37** You enter a cobweb-filled room. If you have not already killed a giant spider in this adventure, read 36. If you have, read 55.
- 38** The last orc falls to your final attack.

“Yay, I knew you would make short work of these brutes,” Edera calls out. “Now get me down from here so that we can escape this place and I can get some payback on any more orcs and goblins we encounter on the way out.”

A few moments later you have Edera freed, and she is retrieving her chain-

mail armour and mace, which the orcs had dumped in one corner.

If you are not at full hit points, read 45. If you are at full hit points, read 52.

- 39** Down the passage you find yourself descending sets of steps. Suddenly you see something three-foot-long and furry dashing up them, which you recognise as a giant ferret. To attack the giant ferret, read 61. To ignore it, read 17.



- 40** On opening the door, you are greeted by the fetid stench of rotting flesh. In the centre of the room beyond, you see a decomposing body. Groaning, it stands up and lurches towards you. You can now see it is chained to the centre of the room, but the chain is long enough for it to reach you. There is a door in the right side of the room, but you cannot reach it while the zombie is in your way.



Armour Class 8,  
Hit Dice 2,  
Damage 1d8,  
Save As: Fighter 1,  
Hit Points 9.

If you retreat through the door behind you, read 18. If you have the Cleric special ability, Turn Undead, and want to use it and are successful in doing so or Edera is with you, read 66. If you defeat the zombie, read 58. If you are reduced to zero hit points, read 77.

- 41** You find the door is locked. If you have the Open Locks skill and succeed at your roll for it or can cast the spell *knock* and wish to do so or you have already successfully done one of these on a locked door in this adventure, read 75. To go along the passage to your left, read 49. To go along the passage directly behind you, read 33.
- 42** You find yourself in a room with a door in the wall facing you, another in the left wall and a door further right along the wall behind you. To go through the door facing you, read 27. To go through the door in the left wall, read 5. To go through the door behind you to your right, read 19. To return through the door directly behind you, read 51.
- 43** The goblin falls to your last hit. You find yourself in a room with a door in the wall facing you, another in the left wall and a door further left along the wall behind you. To go through the door facing you, read 27. To go through the door in the left wall, read 5. To go through the door behind you

to your left, read 51. To return through the door directly behind you, read 19.

- 44** You find yourself in a room with one door to your left and two doors in the wall to your right. To go through the left door, read 27. To go through the first door to the right, read 51. To go through the second door to the right, read 19. To return through the door behind you, read 5.
- 45** “Oh, you’ve been hurt,” exclaims Edera, noticing your wounds. “I’ll soon fix that.” She lays a hand on you and mutters a prayer, and you feel your wounds heal. Recover 1d6+1 lost hit points. Read 52.
- 46** You open the trapdoor and see a cobweb-filled chamber below. A couple of humanoid skeletons are suspended in the webbing. To jump down into the chamber below where there are no webs, read 62. To jump into the cobwebs, using them to cushion your fall, read 68. To use the *levitate* spell, if you can cast it, read 34.
- To leave the room you are in by the door directly behind you, read 2. To leave by the door to your left, read 8.
- 47** The ferret vanishes up the stairs behind you. Read 48.
- 48** Further along the passage you see a passage to your right. Some distance straight ahead the passage ends in a door. To go right, read 14. To go through the door facing you at the end of the passage straight ahead, read 63. To return the way you have come, read 4.

- 49** Further along you come out onto a passage stretching to your left and right. To go left, read **4**. To go right, where the passage ends in a door, read **63**. To return the way you have come, read **14**.
- 50** Through the door you find yourself in a passage stretching ahead of you. Some distance along there is a passage to your left. To go along it, read **14**. To go straight on, read **4**. To return the way you have come, read **71**.
- 51** On opening the door, you are greeted by the fetid stench of rotting flesh. In the centre of the room beyond, you see a decomposing body. Groaning, it stands up and lurches towards you. You can now see it is chained to the centre of the room, but the chain is long enough for it to reach you. There is a door in the left side of the room, but the zombie is in your way.
- Armour Class 8, Hit Dice 2,  
Damage 1d8, Save As: Fighter 1,  
Hit Points 9.
- If you retreat through the door behind you, read **42**. If you have the Cleric special ability, Turn Undead, and want to use it and are successful in doing so or Edera is with you, read **70**. If you defeat the zombie, read **59**. If you are reduced to zero hit points, read **77**.
- 52** Edera will join you in fighting any future enemies. If you are against more than one foe, you only need to fight half of them rounded up. If you are against a single foe, half its hit points, rounding up to the nearest full number. Read **53**.
- 53** You and Edera leave the room where she had been imprisoned, returning through the door behind you. There are two doors in the wall facing you and one in the wall to your right. To go through the left door facing you, read **19**. To go through the door to the right of it, read **51**. To go through the door to your right, read **5**.
- 54** The spider collapses to the floor with its eight legs twitching. On searching the chamber, you find a +1 magic sword, which can also cast *cure light wounds* once a day (restoring 1d6+1 hit points) and a ring of protection, which improves your Armour Class by one. Read **55**.
- 55** Above you there is a trapdoor in the ceiling, which can only be reached by something like a *levitation* spell. If you have this and wish to use it, read **24**. To leave by the single door in one wall of the chamber, read **13**.
- 56** You manage to eventually free yourself from the webbing and drop the short distance the rest of the way to the chamber floor. Read **55**.
- 57** The Orcish word scratched into the door says "spider". To go through the door, read **37**. To return the way you have come, read **72**.



**58** On your final hit the zombie collapses to the floor. To go through the door to your right, read **42**. To return through the door behind you, read **18**.

**59** On your final hit, the zombie collapses to the floor. To go through the door to your left, read **18**. To return through the door behind you, read **42**.

**60** The ferret clearly does not like either the look or the smell of you and attacks. Read **61**.

**61** The giant ferret fights with great ferocity, however when you first inflict damage on it, if it is still alive afterwards, roll 2d6. If the result is greater than its Morale, it flees. If not, it continues fighting you. Also make a morale test to see if it flees if you reduce it to only a hit point on a later turn.

Armour Class 5, Hit Dice 1+1,  
Damage d8, Save As: Fighter 1,  
Hit Points 6, Morale 8.

If you defeat the ferret or it flees, read **48**. If you are reduced to zero hit points, read **77**.

**62** Enthusiastically, you jump through the trapdoor, landing hard on the floor below. You suffer 1d6 damage unless you have some means of avoiding this. If you are still alive, read **35**.

**63** Through the door you find yourself facing two grey-skinned goblins, glaring at you hatefully with jagged short swords held at the ready.



Armour Class 6, Hit Dice 1-1,  
Damage d6, Save As: Normal  
Human, Hit Points 3 and 4.

If you defeat them, read **71**. If you are reduced to zero hit points, read **77**.

**64** You detect two magical items in the chamber below the trapdoor unless you have already claimed them earlier.

To open the trapdoor, read **46**. To leave the room you are in by the door directly behind you, read **2**. To leave by the door to your left, read **8**.

**65** The Orcish words scratched into the door says, "stinky fun". To go along the passage to your left and straight ahead, read **11**. To go through the door facing you, read **40**. To go through the door to your right, read **29**.

**66** The symbol of an Immortal held forth causes the zombie to retreat to the end of the chamber furthest away from you.

To go through the door to your right, read **42**. To return through the door behind you, read **18**.

**67** While you have escaped the orcs' lair, you have failed to rescue Edera, leaving her certainly to an unpleasant fate.

**The End**

**68** The cobwebs cushion your fall, as intended, but you find yourself ensnared in them. If you have not killed a giant spider earlier in this adventure, read 76. If you did, read 56.

**69** Stepping through the door you find yourself facing a brutish grey-green-skinned orc charging towards you with a scimitar.



Armour Class 6,  
Hit Dice 1,  
Damage d8,  
Save As: Fighter 1,  
Hit Points 5.

If you defeat him, read 9. If you are reduced to zero hit points, read 77.

**70** The symbol of the Immortal held forth causes the zombie to retreat to the end of the chamber furthest away from you.

To go through the door to your left, read 18. To return through the door behind you, read 42.

**71** You find yourself in a room with a door to your left and another to your right. To go through the left door, read 12. To go through the right door, read 32. To return the way you have come, read 50.

**72** Around the corner you see the passage ends in a door. On going through the door, you find yourself in a room with a door facing you and another to your right. To go through the door facing you, read 32. To go through the door to your right, read 50. To return the way you have come, read 12.

**73** You find yourself in a room with a door facing you and another to your left. To go through the door facing you, read 12. To go through the left door, read 50. To return the way you have come, read 32.

**74** You find yourself in a room with a door to your left. To go through it, read 15. To return through the door behind you, read 7.

**75** On getting the door open, you find yourself in a room with a door to your right. To go through it, read 7. To return through the door behind you, read 15.

**76** While you are helpless in the webbing, from its hiding place among its webs emerges a giant six-foot-long black spider. You are powerless to stop it from sinking its fangs into you and feasting on your bodily fluids, draining you dry.



### The End

**77** The final hit from your enemy is fatal and you fall to the ground and die.

### The End

**78** "I'm so glad to be out of that foul orcish lair," sighs Edera, as the two of you head down the mountainside in the direction of the town of Threshold. "I feared I would never see daylight again." She turns and gives you a big hug and a light kiss on your cheek.

### The End



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- Pages 236 to 245: **[Image]**  
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## Submission Guidelines

### Proposals

All proposal submissions can be sent by mail to the editors at the following address: [Threshold.Mystara@gmail.com](mailto: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 9) for next issue deadline dates.

#Insert relevant issue number in place of ‘#’



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THE MYSTARA MAGAZINE

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