

The Wedding of Davis

By Ian Thomson

Pictures by Dario Corallo



What You Will Ideally Need to Run this Mini-Campaign:

- 1) A copy of either the original Big Rubble boxed set, or (preferably) the newer Moon Designs book 'Pavis and the Big Rubble' (P&BR).
- Without one of these the Narrator will need to invent a lot of missing detail -although some of that could be solved by downloading the articles from the 'Pavis and Big Rubble Companion' website.*
- 2) As much of the downloadable material from the 'Pavis and Big Rubble Companion' website as possible.
- 3) The official HeroQuest rulebook, or a good understanding of the workings of that game system. (Downloading the House Rules from the Companion website is also an option.)
- 4) Preferably an ongoing Old Pavis campaign on the model of the 'Grey Company' series from within the Companion 'zines; or something similar. If such does not exist, consider running one using the material from the Companion fanzines – much of which is now available on the Companion website. OR of course the campaign itself as it unfolds in the P&BR Companion fanzines.

Author's Introduction

This mini-campaign is really a bonus article for 'Beyond Pavis' (P&BR Companion: Vol. 5), and would - if considerably smaller - ideally have been published as the last section of that 'zine. 'Beyond Pavis' for instance contains the large 'Uleria' article (pp34-42), which is very useful background information to this article. Pavis' connection to Uleria was first mentioned in the 'Rough Guide to Pavis City', and the idea came to me after reading some articles on ecstatic worship as part of the ancient societies. In the 'Shadows of Pavis', Raus' dismissal is mentioned in 'Off to Pastures New' (p128). In my House Campaign timeline the Wedding scenario took place a few weeks after his dismissal. 'Off to Pastures New' effectively continued in 'Beyond Pavis' with the introductory scenario 'A New Governor' (pp83/84). An adaptation of this latter is at the start of Part Two below (again called 'A New Governor').

This adventure began as an attempt to create an official scenario for the famous 'Wedding of Pavis' that has been mentioned in canon literature for a long time. Some of the ideas were discussed with Greg Stafford during the months in 1999/2000 when he had the time to spend doing such things with an eager novice writer. Also several writers and participants in the Freeform 'The People of Pavis' had their experiences scoured for clues. Special thanks to: Andrew Bean, Nick Brooke, and Ingo Tschinke. Daniel Fahey also assisted in the early development stage. In the end my main priority was to create a suitably entertaining climactic and mythic series of events for the Grey Company campaign as featured in the 'Pavis and Big Rubble Companion' 'zines. (Although they also tied in to the few canon descriptions of the Wedding available in 'King of Sartar'.) I also decided to offer it to anyone who enjoyed the 'zines (via the HQ Discussion Group). Writing the Companion was an amazing experience, and this last scenario (plus the forthcoming 'Liberation of Pavis' mini-campaign) give it the scenarios in that magazine the ending they deserve.

This scenario is geared to the personalities of the players in the house campaign. The playtest in fact ran as the grand finale of my several-years-long house campaign, so it might not 'best fit' your own version of Pavis and Glorantha. Over the course of the Companion publications, a few people noted that 'something' seemed to be missing from the published material, and they were right - this was it. This adventure playtested excellently and was a very suitable climax to the Grey Company campaign. I hope it gives many other people a heap of fun as well. Although it is a very detailed outline, I improvised enormously when running it, and probably you will need to do that to some degree. Also, it took three days to prepare this draft, and by the end of which my error and continuity checking was probably not working at 100%. Therefore read it through carefully, and make notes for likely variant options that your PCs might take, and how to keep the show on the road if they fail at certain stages of the investigation or the HeroQuest.

I have completed the initial version (and am now running - from February 2005), of the final extended scenario for the house Pavis Campaign, involving a trip to renew the treaty with the Paps Elders, and culminating in the battle that liberates Pavis from the Lunars. This will hopefully be playtested within a few months. It also contains my notes for the campaign as it continues through an adaptation of Shadows on the Borderlands (Avalon Hill, 1993). That final piece will probably be the end of my long and overall happy involvement with Pavis.

I still remember seeing the original RQ Rulebook when I was about fifteen, and looking at the cool map, and saying "Pavis; what's that, can we go there?" Well, I guess I can say I've been there now! :)

Special Dedication: During 2004, another childhood icon of mine passed away - the UK's Radio One 'Disc Jockey' John Peel. This genuine and humble dry-humored man kept real music alive for decades in the face of endless barrages of commercial rubbish, and was a fixture at the Glastonbury Festival. He once said that he would only retire when songs stopped making him cry, and I still remember his famous 'John Peel shuffle' when he was contractually obliged to present 'Top of the Pops' on BBC1. (It was exactly the same dumb dance for each dumb song no matter what the style, and was his inimically subtle way of showing that he wasn't very impressed.)

SAVE THE ELVES - IF YOU ARE USING A COMPANY OR UNIVERSITY PRINTER PLEASE PRINT THIS ON DOUBLE-SIDED PAPER - THAT'S THE 'DUPLEX' OPTION IN PRINTER SETTINGS - SAVE THE ELVES

Acknowledgments: Bo Rosen for assisting with the Companion website all this time, Dario Corallo for the super new pic, and the (essential) playtesters (mentioned at the start of each section). Peter Maranci for the incredible inspiration of his Grey Company piece, onto which the P&BR Companion hung so well from the very beginning. (HeroQuest, Issaries, and Glorantha are all copyright Issaries Inc.) Also to Michael O'Brien for the extremely important concept 'MGF' (Maximum Game Fun), and to Paul Sommer for the canal map and all his other work.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If you want to play this mini-campaign rather than run it, STOP reading here. Zip this file, and archive a copy deep within your computer's dustiest folders (for reading later after having enjoyed an unadulterated playing experience). Then seek out a reasonably experienced – and Gloranthan-knowledgeable – Narrator to run it, and send them an electronic copy. Now sit back and enjoy the ride!

Setting the Date

The House Campaign is set during the term of Governor Raus (officially 1622-23), whereas in the official timeline the wedding of Pavis to the Red Goddess is attempted in Earth Season 1621. In my House Campaign, Part One of this piece was set during Raus' tenure, and the rest set just after his removal and exile to his holdings down-river. Transference of this scenario to the official timing will require only minimal alterations, although as it stands this is designed to end my House Campaign.

Narrator Notes

Heroes performing in this scenario must be worshippers of Pavis. (The majority of them must be at least initiates, though a minority can be communal worshippers – provided their main deity is one traditionally tied to the original city of Pavis.) Sensibly at least one should be a devotee of one of the Pavic Hero Cults (all detailed in the zines). They must also be known supporters of the city and not to be friends of the Lunars. (Otherwise it is not realistic that they would be chosen to perform this mission.) Since this scenario is highly difficult and dangerous, they must also be at least middle rank heroes. I have not given statistical ratings to some of the characters within, though I have of course listed the principle skills themselves. You as Narrator must go through and add these, as best suits the skill levels of the player-run adventurers. I think I shall also mention here that several times I accidentally wrote the 'weeding' of Pavis. I think I've eradicated all traces of that, although somehow it sounds almost apt! Please note that because I had been working on this for so long I actually found several documents with different ideas in, and so there is bound to be some repetition of information amongst the first pages of introductory information.

BACKGROUND TO THE WEDDING PLAN

Why is the Wedding Planned at All?

There are no longer any plans to build a Temple of the Reaching Moon in Pavis, so why are there plans to wed Pavis into the Lunar Pantheon? Because there are those amongst the Lunars in Pavis who realize that the city's founder and his Priests are connected to a powerful tradition. These people, who we shall call the 'Wedding Planners', are entrepreneurs who have sponsored the long-term plan of wedding Pavis to the Red Goddess, so that they can have complete access to the archives, myths and traditions of the Pavis Cult. Their connections in high places within the Empire have assured that their goal has official sanction, if not official sponsorship. In short, marrying Pavis into the Lunar Pantheon would benefit a cadre of Lunar Priests and Mystics who want to plumb the mysteries of Old Pavis and the Green Age, for their personal advancement. The benefits to the Empire follow from this, rather than the wedding being a main Empirical objective.

The Backing of the Emperor

A Hero Band of Lunar Mystics has been in Pavis since shortly after the occupation, following portents and hidden agendas. They are not an 'official' Lunar organization, but have been unofficially authorized by the Red Emperor. He backs them in their quest to plunder the Green Age secrets of Pavis because (a) such things interest him, (b) such things might add to his power, (c) he personally knows and respects two of the members of this band, and believes that they are sensible and skilled enough to handle this challenge without creating a terrible mythic catastrophe for the Empire. It was to this end that the Emperor secretly sponsored the raising of Cyrilius Harmonious through the ranks of the Pavis Cult, even making his induction to the priesthood a non-negotiable clause in the Treaty of Occupation (providing that Cyrilius met the entry requirements of course).

The Difficulties Involved

Their problems in Pavis have been mostly been the various convoluted challenges created by the Priests of Pavis. Although the priests are at pains to put themselves forward as neutral or mildly favorable to the Lunar plans, in fact most are opposed. Thus, they have carefully stymied the Lunar attempts to understand the myths of Pavis and have set various difficult requirements that the Lunars have had to fulfil in order to be admitted to a further level of involvement in the Pavis Cult. The first hurdle was that no worshipper of a foreign god can be initiated into the deepest levels of the cult, and that no 'deep' initiate can reveal secrets to outsiders. Even Cyrilius Harmonious is not privy to many of the secrets. Prior to his inauguration the other priests subtly altered the rights, duties and jurisdictions of the various priestly roles. This shuffle made sure that his position ('First Citizen') was the lowest

rank within the priesthood, responsible for as much of the drudgery and as little of the intricacies and 'secrets' as could possibly be arranged.

Hence, whilst Cyrilius is able to give helpful hints to the Lunars (but no solid facts otherwise he would become subject to Pavis' Divine Retribution and excommunicated from the cult), he literally does not have enough knowledge to help them nearly as much as they had hoped. Cyrilius is not the only Lunar worshipper of Pavis, but the Ancient Measure (Hero Band within the Cult of Pavis that secretly controls most of the non-Lunar power in the city – and even influences Lunar policy) also manages to divert these people down blind alleys (as far as mythic understanding of Pavis goes). A Catch-22 situation also exists: Lunar worship is a foreign form of worship until and unless Pavis is married into the Lunar Pantheon, and thus those who retain worship of the Red Goddess cannot be initiated very deeply into the City Cult.

The Priests of Pavis imposed many other difficulties for the Lunars to overcome. Typical of such things were philosophical debates on Pavic lore. The first major obstacle the Lunars faced was a decree (through augury) from Pavis himself: anyone who wished to petition him for marriage had first to prove themselves knowledgeable in the principles on which the city was founded. It took the mystics, and the best efforts of a group of Irripi Ontor sages, six whole years to piece together the fragmentary references - from the city's disordered and incomplete records, and from observations and measurements taken within the city itself - the answers to a number of highly-specific geomantic theorems. Only when this was done were the Lunar mystics granted access to the first level of Pavic myth. (Of course certain unauthorized investigations had already taken place, but none had been able to progress very far.)

The second major obstacle the Lunars faced was making sense of the myths that they explored. Each Gloranthan religion is internally complex and contains multiple inherent regional variations. Though the cult of Pavis has comparatively few full worshippers, its origins are within the vast city that once stood on this spot. However, tens of thousands of worshippers, hundreds of devotees, and scores of Heroes once supported Pavis, and their influences remain. The myths of Pavis are shrouded in Green Age symbolism and levels of hidden meaning, and - due to the (apparent) destruction of most civic records over the last 500 years of siege and occupation - almost impossible to research. Nonetheless, the Lunar mystics set themselves enthusiastically to trying to comprehend and solve the myths to which they were granted access. Knowing all the time that these myths were not sufficiently primary for their purposes, but also confident that every small thing they learned brought them closer to their goal, they persevered. Other, lesser, obstacles included ritual requirements such as a new petition for marriage to be made once per year in a precisely formal way at the original Pavis Temple in the Big Rubble. These things slowed progress, but in no way halted it.

The Lunar Breakthrough

This secret information will not be learned by the PCs until towards the end of the second section of this scenario. It is difficult enough for outsiders of any Gloranthan cult to understand the secret myths and rituals of another religion. (Each religion operates as a secret society even within its own pantheon, and even more so between pantheons.) Hence, the Lunars had been researching, investigating and stealing - and carefully impinging on - Pavic myths, for over a decade before they finally had sufficient understanding to believe themselves capable of marrying Pavis into the Lunar Pantheon. The final key was to find a Pavic myth capable of supporting this magical event (essentially the basis for a HeroQuest). This they uncovered within a history book recovered from the Rubble last year. Very little historical record of Pavis exists (except in the hidden archives of the Pavis Cult), because almost all the records of the EWF were wiped out when the dragons destroyed that Empire. Pavis had never (to the knowledge of these Lunars) been married since he left the EWF; however one or two records vaguely mentioned a consort.

The book that fell into Lunar hands last year (unwittingly through the auspices of the Imperial Society for the Reclamation of Pavis) was the journal of one of Pavis' lesser associates at that time. This man (Kenrast Harbilt) was one of the city priests (of which there were many at that time). He recorded his general knowledge of the initial romance between Pavis and Santrella Avere (the city's High Priestess of Uleria at that time) and the ritual requirements she had to go through in order to prove herself worthy to undertake the 'partnership ceremony' with the city's founder. So, whilst Pavis did not enter into an actual marriage (something which he had apparently sworn not to do), he did enter into a committed personal and mythic contract with a woman, which apparently endured until his apotheosis and resulted in offspring. This revelation provided the Lunars with all of the framework they needed to begin to prepare their own 'wedding'. (They had already uncovered the fact that the city was founded on a mythic lattice incorporating all five elements, and the actions of Santrella confirmed that some manipulation of this state of affairs could be crucial to any attempt to master the city's myths.)

One thing they suspect strongly, but do not have confirmed, is that Darkness is not properly linked into the city, and that Pavis only came to a tie in this particular contest. Thus, their plan is to alter the myth at this point, introducing Lunar-associated Darkness into the myth.

Involvement of the Cult of Pavis

Cyrilius Harmonius is the Lunar-friendly Pavis Priest, who has already allowed far greater Lunar access to Pavis Cult archives and traditions than most other Priests would wish. However, he is unaware that the Cult of Pavis is also intertwined with a secret organization that protects and continues the evolution of various ancient mythic

projects. These projects are themselves tied intrinsically to the design and function of the city itself, but such knowledge remains the sole province of the inner circle of this secret organization. Of course, rumors and intentionally incomplete and misleading information still circulate in the wider domain. The members of this inner circle of this group, that we shall name only as the 'Stonemasons', are painstakingly choreographing events that lead towards their greater goal, and this greater goal does not include the subsuming of Pavis into the Lunar Pantheon, and consequent hi-jacking of the Great Project.

What might surprise many (if the public knew any of this information) is that whilst worshippers of the City God form the majority of members of the Stonemasons, there are nonetheless several Lunars and members of other foreign cults within their ranks. All members do worship Pavis, but through an unusual Guardian Being, rather than through the main face of the cult. No great details on this organization are included in this piece, precisely because it is so well hidden. This scenario deals with the attempted wedding of Pavis to the Red Goddess, and the faces and motivations behind the scenes are only fleetingly apparent to the adventurers who are involved in working for the good of the city.

The Lunar mystics who are attempting to wed Pavis to the Red Goddess have been working for more than a decade to infiltrate the Pavis Cult and uncover the city's secrets. Their efforts have met with some successes, and at last they feel so confident that they have announced the Wedding. These plotters believe that they are now capable of proving Rufelza's mastery over the secrets that the Pavis Cult holds so dear. Despite the deep foundations of their own efforts, the Stonemasons are rightfully worried. They had hoped that their influence on the policies of the main Pavis Cult would delay the Lunars for at least a few more years, until they had completed several more key elements of the Great Project. Nonetheless, the Lunars have acted, and the Stonemasons must respond.

Involvement of the Ancient Measure

When the first petitions of the Wedding Planners made their pivotal intention known, Benderri the Son of Pavis, expressed his guarded sympathy for the idea. However, he explained carefully that Pavis would need to be courted, and would not simply step into the Lunar fold like some subject being. Specifically, the Lunars would need to show their understanding and mastery of the deepest ways of the city, and would need to do so without any help from the Pavis Cult. Benderri declared that only by proving their own worth in this way could they show that the Red Goddess was a fitting marriage partner for Pavis. Of course, the Lunars could simply have demanded that the wedding would occur, and then forced their way through any number of myths to make this happen. However, the interweaving of Pavis' goals with the myths of the Green Age proved a formidable set of obstacles, and the Lunars found that the simplest way indeed seemed to be to move step by step into a greater understanding of the real 'Pavis'.

The Wedding Planners have at last uncovered the elemental lattice that Pavis was attempting to construct. Pavis had succeeded in bringing together the elements of Earth, Air, Fire and Water, but failed in allying the Darkness to his cause. The Dark Priest, Jokat Pulos, failed even more spectacularly in his last-ditch attempt to complete this magical harmonization in order to strengthen the city against the nomads. (His failure resulting in the occupation of the city by the trolls of Dagori Inkarth – see 'Shadows of Pavis': "The Fifth Element".)

It has taken the Lunars years to uncover and investigate the myth that Pavis assembled for his use during his explorations, but now they are ready. They have reconstructed the myth of the Five Elements, and declared to Benderri that they are now capable of proving their mastery of Pavis' myths by completing at last the mythic ritual of harmonizing Darkness into the city's fabric. To aid in their attempt, the Lunars have brought in a group of Blue Moon trolls who will act as their own representatives of the Dark.

If the Lunars can indeed complete the harmonization of Darkness with the other four elements, they will have proved the Goddess' worthiness to wed Pavis beyond a shadow of a doubt. Therefore the Stonemasons are now urgently attempting to discover the full extent of Lunar plans, and sabotage them at their core, even if this means sending their own Heroes into the myth. The reason why the Stonemasons abhor the idea of a union with the Lunar Pantheon, is their hatred of Chaos. Chaos destroyed Genert's Garden, and is the very thing that Pavis' powers of harmony are designed to stand against. This intolerable dichotomy has not been explained to any Lunars, not even the very few that are mid-circle members of the Stonemasons.

The Wedding Planners

A group of Lunar mystics have known about some of the Green Age secrets of Pavis for a number of years, in fact they first visited Pavis in 1608. Their type of mysticism is elementally related and requires that they operate in core groups of five (one member for each primary element, and each member also tied to the Moon Rune). Though disappointed that the Lunars have abandoned their plans to bring Prax into the Empire, the mystics have received special dispensation from the Red Emperor to explore the myths of Pavis with an eye to marrying Pavis into the Lunar Pantheon. The mystics explained to the Emperor that many secrets of the lost EWF are available through the Pavis Cult's innermost archives. Not to mention the chance to study one of the few divine beings with a Harmonius Green Age connection, and bring these mysterious powers into the Lunar Pantheon. (The mystics have made a specialization of exploring Second Age lore related to the possibilities of great powers achieved through uniting the disparate elements into a harmonious single essence.)

However, these mystics are Illuminated and were able to keep secret from the Emperor that they also have their own goals for desiring an integration of Pavis into the Lunar Pantheon. They are nothing if not ambitious, and believe that Chaos is that last great untapped proto-element. Their greatest desire is to tap the power of the mysterious chaotic artifact beneath the Rubble, and use its energies to massively increase their own earthly powers - moving them one step closer to divinity. This artifact they mistakenly believe to be the key to harmonizing the city of Pavis and unlocking its mythic secrets. Little do they know that certain city magicians made a similar mistake over four centuries ago, and that is what caused the chaotic monstrosity to manifest beneath the city in the first place.

Once that have vastly augmented their powers through tapping this chaos power-source, the mystics intend to set themselves up as overlords of Pavis, turning it into a military base from which they will subjugate the local Praxian tribes and create their own Lunar province. This will of course be entirely loyal to the Empire and pay absolute fealty to the Emperor. Though the Emperor does not directly sanction their actions, the mystics are certain that they can explain the results of their 'unexpected' rise towards godhood to be merely an 'added benefit' of their myth meddling. (They are certain that the Emperor has no particular plans for Prax and will not be inconvenienced when they take over Pavis.)

They may be ambitious, but they are not stupid, and the mystics know that meddling with chaos can be dangerous. Nonetheless, they are all experienced heroes of the Empire and have met and dealt with many dangers and horrors over their careers. Through their mystical philosophy they believe they can harness and restrain the evil powers. They also believe that they can easily oust Sor-Eel and replace him from within their own ranks. From the position of Governor of Prax they believe it will be relatively easy to establish a more stringent Lunar regime. *NB: This is a simplified explanation of a complex plan. The mystics are not some pulp villains operating with only vague hopes of success. They are quite convinced that they will succeed, but then insanity is one of the dangers of Illumination.*

Part One - The Grey Company Rides Again

This section (by Ian Thomson with additional ideas from Daniel Fahey) was originally published in the 'Legacy of Pavis' (pp46-49) and was designed as an early introduction to the Wedding scenario. IE, after Part One (this section), the Narrator is expected to run other adventures from the Companion series (and perhaps from elsewhere) before continuing with Part Two and the Wedding adventure proper.

Playtesters: Andrew Bean, Martin Gibbs, Harry Grawe, Stef Mathers & Peter Tracy



Scene 1.1 – The Proclamation

The Lunar Priests and Mystics who watch over the reclusive Priestess Tala Errio are about to make an announcement. They have permission from the Red Emperor himself to arrange and conduct the marriage of Pavis into the Lunar Pantheon, and have set the date for Earth Season (1621).

As members of the Grey Company walk the streets of the Real City, a party of Lunars enters the main square. The Irripi Ontor sage is accompanied by two strangely robed associates who may be sorcerers or mystics, as well as several Yanafali bodyguards. The sage finds the convenient stump of a fallen column to stand upon, and unrolls a fancy looking scroll before speaking in a magically amplified voice.

"Let all residents of this settlement know that the benevolent gaze of the Red Goddess has fallen upon you. A most gracious and holy union will soon occur. The founder of your city has been deemed worthy of acceptance into the embrace of Rufelza, and this coming Earth Season will see this blessed bonding take place.

At this ceremony the bride and the groom will accept genuine curios from the days when this ancient city was once filled with life. These items shall signify that in partnership with the Goddess your city will rise from its ashes. Those who produce the richest wedding gifts shall receive great reward and honor from the Empire, and the person who donates the mightiest treasure of the Old City will be acclaimed as a lifelong citizen and granted a voice upon the city council.

So speaks our gracious master, the favored son and Red Emperor.

All Hail to the Reaching Moon."

Reactions are mixed, and many people of Old Pavis are disturbed at this apparent end to their chances of autonomy. However, although most desire their city to be free of its overlords, some welcome what appears to be a move to bring Pavis into the stable and mighty Lunar Empire. Heated disagreements occur.

Common knowledge suggests that the wedding is a private enterprise, and an unusual event for a province that remains outside of the Lunar Glowline (and seems destined to remain so). Later, in his public response, Benderri the High Priest of Pavis, seems to welcome this move, and yet his statement carries no firm acceptance of the wedding proposal.

Of course, the Lunar contingent's sponsorship by the Red Emperor is made clear in their proclamation, and any city officials who refuse to accept its validity must at least consider that they will come under suspicion from Agents of the Empire.

There is much speculation about how the wedding will be conducted, as no wife of Pavis is remembered in local folklore. Certainly Pavis had children, and several tales speak of his consorts amongst the citizenry of the day. Other stories suggest that at least his eldest son was born prior to the founding of the city. Nonetheless, the Lunars clearly have the confidence to make their announcement, after spending many years negotiating with the Pavis Priests and attempting to master Old Pavic myth and philosophy.

The talk of curios and great treasures to be brought to the wedding is puzzling. Surely, there are much more important concerns than the collection of Old City trinkets? Some folk with anti-Lunar tendencies suggest that the Lunars are after some specific items from the Rubble, and are trying to have the dangerous work of collection done for them. Others wonder aloud if the Lunars are somehow trying to gather local support through bribes for worthless knick-knacks.

The Wedding Plans

Politically minded adventurers might try to find out how long the wedding has been in the planning, and who is behind it. The best source of general information is probably Fleeter Nemm, if they have his confidence.

An obscure group of Lunar sorcerers and mystics arrived shortly after the Lunar army of occupation, bringing Tala Errio with them. They are almost as isolated as Tala herself, and even the Governor knows little about them. For years they have been negotiating with the Priests of Pavis in order to arrange the marriage service.

However, they have been continually blocked by convoluted requests from the Priests that the applicants prove their mastery of Pavic myth and philosophy. They were required to make each application direct to the old Pavis Temple at the Real City, and flawlessly fulfil their parts in a ritual of solicitation. Additionally, they were required to perform various ceremonies - over several years, at specific times of the year - to spiritually and mythically integrate themselves into Pavic culture and religion.

Adventurers get the impression from Fleeter that the Pavis priests probably never revealed all the necessary ceremonies to the Lunars, so there are still things which supposedly keep the Lunars from sufficient understanding of Pavic mythology. It also seems, from Fleeter's guarded hints, that some of the priests may even have had the Lunar heroquesters and priests perform actions which the Pavis priests were able to use to their own advantage. These may have been parts of heroquests that were too dangerous for the Priests to attempt themselves. Certainly they were activities that did not benefit the Lunars or advance their cause. In short, a complex spiritual double bluff has clearly been underway.

Until recently, the demands made by the Priests have slowed the whole process enormously, but now it seems that the Lunar mystics are confident that they can fulfil all the obligations. Fleeter does not know what they have discovered, but suspects they have found a way to mythically 'prove' that the Red Moon is, or can be, harmonized into the city of Pavis. Fleeter is not prepared to elaborate in detail on this aspect of arcane Pavic mythology, but may point out that the elements of Earth, Air, Water and Fire are one with the city through their related Priesthoods having historically and mythically acknowledged Pavis as the ruler of the land. He may also admit that the historical attempt by Jokat Pulos to add Darkness to this list was a catastrophic failure. Judging by some of the comments made, the Lunar mystics believe that this is something they now understand.

At this point it would be ideal to insert a minor Rubble scenario from the original book or boxed set, as the adventurers travel the ruins in search of adventure. Many other groups of treasure seekers will also be combing the ruins, especially those whose leader hopes to gain power and prestige by finding the most powerful or historically potent artifact. (This could be the escapade during which they find the clue that points towards Balastor's lost Axe and/or Mask of Office: see the Ghost Fort scenario.)

Scene 1.2 - Tensions Mount

In the Old City, the Lunar backed celebrations following the wedding announcement are short-lived. Unease in New Pavis and the Real City soon becomes palpable. Rebels certainly seem to be even more daring these days, with anti-Lunar slogans and pro-Storm symbols appearing on walls. Large rewards have been posted for any Orlanthi criminals brought to justice, and even in the Real City visiting Lunar patrols have increased. At least every few days one passes by the Grey Company's house and soldiers peer insolently through the gates. (Any formal complaints are met by protestations that emergency measures are required due to attacks on Lunar soldiers.)

Only a few days after the marriage announcement, another Lunar Herald arrives at the Real City, marching into the market place accompanied by a dozen soldiers. He too is a follower of Irripi Ontor, and his assistant erects a small wooden podium onto which he steps. Before beginning his speech he waits for a little while as word spreads amongst the inhabitants. When at least one member of the Grey Company is present you can have the Herald decide that enough locals are present, and begin - although if the players disdain to have their characters listen to a Lunar, this can be reported to them later:

"By order of the Lunar Governor all private access to the ruins known as the Old City, or commonly the Big Rubble, is to be tightly restricted until further notice. The regular supply deliveries from New Pavis to the Real City may continue, as the direct trail to New Pavis is exempted from these prohibitions. Also exempted is the road to Zebra Fort.

Hunters and others, who genuinely make their livelihood or reside within the Old City, must apply for special permits at Zebra Fort. These measures are necessary to counter the rising incidences of bandit and chaos activity. It is the responsibility of the authorities in this settlement to notify their population of these measures. The Governor thanks you for your co-operation."

This ban on adventuring in the Rubble means that all gates into the Old City are sealed against unauthorized traffic. Increased Lunar patrols also scour Manside and the Zebra Ruins, looking for lawbreakers and chaos creatures, and Lunar watchposts are set up across Manside. It has become a regular occurrence over the last few years for the Lunars to close the Rubble for various periods, but this time seems somehow more significant. The adventurers may also learn that Lunar Intelligence have pressured Governor Raus to make this decree (if they have any contacts close to the Governor - or through second hand accounts filtering from people within Lunar circles).

Coming so soon after the wedding declaration (with its open invitation to seek powerful relics as wedding gifts), this second proclamation causes some puzzlement. Adventurers might correctly suspect that something odd is going on within the Lunar bureaucracy.

Behind the Scenes: Which Governor is in power?

In the house campaign, Duke Raus is trying to strengthen relations between the Lunars, Praxians and Pavisites, by encouraging Prax's status as a self-ruling Province. Sor-Eel attempted a similar policy, but was motivated almost entirely by self-interest. In the house campaign, Raus is motivated, at least somewhat, by sympathy for the rough treatment of the Old Pavic society by the Empire. He is after all from a conquered province himself.

Unfortunately, local politics are making Raus' position as Governor fragile. Intelligence Agents are threatening his position, and he has been convinced to sign this particular decree if he wishes their continued sponsorship. Even so, he knows that powerful figures are trying to arrange his dismissal.

In the official timeline, the first wedding proclamation comes in Sacred Time 1620/21, and the second comes after the Cradle incident. Both of these happen before Raus replaces Sor-Eel. If you are running this

scenario arc alongside the official timeline, Governor Sor-Eel is desperate to undo the effects of his catastrophic handling of the Cradle's passing, and he is behind the actions attributed to Gimgim here.

Gimgim the Grim has decided that it must be one of his own followers (or perhaps himself) who donates the most impressive wedding gift, and has ordered the Rubble restricted to casual adventurers. In the meantime he has sponsored several expeditions, particularly those run or organized by Piers Bolde. (He and Bolde have been smuggling treasure out of the city ever since Bolde arrived, as part of an operation to finance themselves. They care nothing for the city, and merely want items they can convert to hard cash.)

(NB: Gimgim's position remains substantially the same - whether you run this scenario against the backdrop of Governor Sor-Eel in 1621 or Governor Raus in 1622/23. His dismissal is a fabrication to appease the Pavic Government, and he remains secretly in Pavis until slain by Argrath in 1625.)

Scene 1.3 – Life Goes On

'Adventuring in the Rubble' is not a sufficient reason for passes to be granted, but with the help of Captain Kline of the Real City Watch, the Grey Company might be set up as a security patrol attached to the RCAE. Otherwise, when it comes to be time for them to leave the Real City, they may need to utilize dwarvish goodwill and avail themselves of the secret tunnel from Flintnail mansions, passing into the Rubble by night to avoid detection from the nearby Lunar Watchposts. (This should be left for adventurers to think of by themselves, unless the characters ask Kline or the dwarves for help.)

Any description of travel through the Old City should make it clear that Lunar patrols have increased, and that they are not just soldiers, but also contain Irripi Ontor worshippers with detection magics. One possible explanation is that they are seeking rebels hiding in the ruins. Another is that they are looking for something else entirely. The adventurers will certainly be stopped and questioned thoroughly if they wander the ruins openly, or act in any way that could be regarded as suspicious. (Unless they can avoid being spotted altogether.) Those found without passes are likely to be imprisoned whilst their identities and excuses are investigated, and may be fined heavily if found to be harmless, and sent for a season to the Salt Mines if suspected of seditious activities.

Remember that the peculiar magical effects of the Rubble provide some defense against detections, and inexplicable warping of the air can obscure even line of sight. Cunning adventurers may be able to avoid the Lunars altogether, especially outside of Manside. Unusual Rubble spirits could be a great help here, if one of the adventurers is a Manside animist.

Scene 1.4 - The Dancing Priestess

This encounter can be inserted at any point in the campaign where it is the most amusing. In the playtest, one of the adventurers was a former member of the Watch and thought up the delaying tactic all by himself, with no help needed from the Narrator. It had already been established in the game that the Real City promotes itself as a truly independent settlement, and requests that all foreigners (including Lunars) who enter its gates complete entry forms declaring their identities and business. Of course, in most cases this is a mere formality, but the independent minded local guards make sure that all Lunars complete the full paperwork, whilst known locals usually pass through with little more than a nod to the Opili shrine in the gatehouse.

One of the watchmen from the main gate is spreading the word that a group of Lunar soldiers is coming towards the Real City, and that they are being led by a woman wearing a red dress, who is dancing about ahead of them waving crimson scarves.

Ideally, one or more of the adventurers will be amongst those who hear this news whilst there is still time to act. The junior officer on the gate does not know what to do, and any adventurer in the Grey Company might take charge. As the Lunars draw closer, someone will correctly declare that the dancer is surely Tala Errio, the Lunar Priestess who is destined to act as the embodiment of the Red Goddess in the wedding. Someone else suggests that these Lunars are intending to come to make the final application for the wedding. Guardsmen grumble that whatever they want, it cannot bode well for those people of Old Pavis who want their city to be an independent self-ruling settlement.

Some folk are doubly displeased when they notice that the Pavis priest, Cyrilius Harmonious, is accompanying the Lunars (unidentified earlier due to wearing a Lunar cloak over his priestly robes). Three other mystics or Priests are also with them, with their regalia and insignia obscured beneath standard military cloaks.

There is a dwarf guardsman amongst the watch staffing the main gate. He recognizes the members of the Grey Company and speaks up: *"Having an emergency plan for Lunar Surprise Event."* He quickly rummages in a storage chest, and pulls out a sheaf of forms. *"Permissions for Ambassadorial Delegates to entering settlement,"* he continues, and the most observant of the adventurers might notice a most unusual occurrence, as he seems to grin quickly before adding: *"In triplicate."*



The dwarf is suggesting that the regular forms used by Lunars entering the Real City should be replaced by these mighty administrative accessories, providing a substantial delay whilst the Pavis Priests are advised of what is going on.

When the Lunars arrive, an Irripi Ontor sage sharply requests the entry forms, and is most taken aback when presented with the huge pile of paperwork. Anyone watching the Priestess notes that she continues to dance, albeit less athletically when her group is not moving. She remains in a trance throughout this entire encounter, and responds to no one. The three male mystics also do not respond to casual contact (with Yanafali blocking them from anyone other than a Priest of Pavis). However, they are not entranced, and sometimes scan the crowd with piercing stares.

Of course the forms can only delay things, and eventually the Lunars will enter the Real City and move to the Pavis Temple, intending to begin another application ceremony. However, they are so confident this time, that they failed to make a proper appointment. Bendrath, who is strongly opposed to the Lunar presence in Pavis, comes upon the scene, and seizes upon a chance to thwart his enemies. Whilst the Lunars wade through the paperwork, Bendrath will ask one or more of the adventurers to accompany him swiftly to the Pavis Temple. He explains on the way that he has just decided that it is time to perform a ceremony that he has been putting off for too long. Of course, it is a lengthy ceremony, and they had better start immediately. Who knows, it might even go on for days, and unfortunately no other major services can take place in the temple during this time.

It could be fun to make it necessary for Bendrath, the adventurers, (and a few harried acolytes) to race around preparing the ritual. As the Lunar sage completes the forms, and the whole group head into the city, Bendrath and the others have to make their preparations look legitimate and unhurried. It is important to avoid directly antagonizing the Lunars and not to anger Benderri, who is also due to arrive some time soon (and will no doubt receive a full report from Cyrilius). Worried acolytes will run into the main chamber, alerting the adventurers as to how close the Lunars are getting.

The Narrator can simply invent Bendrath's hastily contrived ceremony off the cuff (as Bendrath himself might be doing), or could use this opportunity to have one of the adventurers instated as a City Marshal. (Presuming that this promotion has at least been discussed previously, perhaps having been eagerly awaited by the adventurer in question, due to delays in bureaucracy.)

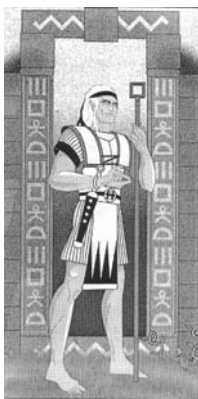
The First City Marshal in Four Centuries

If no adventurer has yet been instated as a Marshal (see 'Masks of Pavis') sometime during or before the Ghost Fort adventure (see 'Legacy of Pavis') might be ideal. (The adventurers will need as much 'oomph' as they can muster for that tough scenario.)

A new Marshal can initiate into the worship of Baskori, and can deputize his followers. (Of course, any new Deputies promoted in the field will need to have their promotions ratified by a Priest of Pavis on return to civilization.) These actions help add a sense of political involvement with the Old City, especially if Balastor's relics are recovered in the following scenario. A band of Deputies under a Marshal is an official Old Pavic military body, and has certain rights and privileges that even the Lunars cannot deny without causing political incident at this fragile time.

It is up to each Narrator, to decide what best suits the campaign. For instance, the adventurers might choose to accept these promotions, but without advertising their official existence. Even if publicly unknown, they remain entitled to the support of the Priests of Pavis and resources of the cult and Old City. (This presumes that they are loyally and competently aiding the interests of the Old City in their professional activities.)

Later in the campaign, the most senior Marshal might become the new Champion of Pavis, and his loyal Deputies become Marshals themselves. During the height of the Old City, these were all formal positions, something akin to the roles of military police. However, in the present uncertain political climate there is room for an independent group of Marshals or Deputies that has a roving brief to explore and defend the Old City.



Common Knowledge About the Wedding

Information we can assume any reasonably well-informed Pavis residents will know.

1) The Wedding Planners

The Pavis Priests have been very demanding over the years, insisting that the Wedding Planners fulfil various complex mythic and ceremonial requirements in order to prove their Goddess a suitable bride for Pavis. This group of Lunar mystics has been working with Pavis Priest Cyrilius Harmonius to try and fulfil the criteria set by the rest of the Pavis Priests. The exact details of these tasks are not known, but it is generally thought that the mystics have been asked to prove they can emulate several of the mythic actions and magical abilities of Pavis and the other city founders. The reason why they wish to do this is because the High Priest of Pavis has proclaimed that only an entity truly in tune with this city's unusual origins and myths could possibly marry Pavis. He further has stated that unless the spouse of Pavis was extremely closely tied to the city's original myths and magic then any wedding would irrevocably damage the mythic fabric that supports the city. (Nobody other than the senior Pavis Priests knows exactly what this fabric is, but that is only right, proper, and expected.) The mystics have now shown their mastery of Pavic myth and magic, through entering the fringes of a Green Age myth and returning safely with otherworld entities in the same way that Pavis did. Thus they have announced that the Wedding of Pavis to the Red Goddess will take place on Pavis' High Holy Day in Earth Season (1621). The Wedding Planners claim that they will prove to one and all on the steps of the Pavis Temple (just before the final vows are taken) that Pavis is part of the Lunar Pantheon. They do not explain what their evidence will be.

2) Talk on the Street

The following information may be suspected by any or all of the adventurers, but should be incorporated into gameplay. This might be indirect, such as the players asking the GM to relate what the adventurers have been hearing in the grapevine. Or it could be direct, with adventurers going into taverns and engaging in conversations with locals.

Old Pavic folk in New Pavis: The Lunar mystics have engaged in various rituals and minor heroquests to gain a deeper understanding of Pavis and his mythic legacy. Now apparently the Lunars have mastered the myths of

Pavis to such an extent that they claim to be ready to conduct the wedding. Perhaps our dreams of an revived city are over, or perhaps a city that is fully embraced by the Lunar Empire will be a good thing?

Dorasings: Lunars can't leave anything alone. Pavis is a mystery to them, and so they have to come here and show that they can go one better. They think they can own everything!

Lunars: The Mystics of the Reaching Moon have special dispensation from the Red Emperor to marry Tala Errio to Benderri the High Priest of Pavis. When Pavis is married into the Lunar pantheon perhaps this desolate backwater will at last receive some investment from Lunar enterprises and claw its way into being a decent place to live.

Real City inhabitants: I don't believe they can have learned all there is to know about Pavis and his myths. The wedding will never go ahead, and one day Old Pavis will rise again without any need for Lunar help.

3) Talk Behind Closed Doors:

Old Pavic folk in New Pavis: It's a little worrying. Why are these mystics so interested in marrying Pavis into the Lunar pantheon? The Priests of Pavis set many difficult tasks for them and still they persisted. Some say that they know more about Pavis now than most of Pavis' own acolytes.

Dorasings: These Lunar mystics are clearly chaos scum. They hardly ever talk to anyone, not even any other Lunars, walk around concealed in cloaks, and wield strange magics. And as for that young Lunar priestess they keep locked up - Tala Errio - she may be nice to look at if you don't mind bald heads, but there is something very wrong about her.

Lunars: The Mystics of the Reaching Moon are a bit odd. Nobody I speak to has ever met them socially. They pretty much keep to themselves, although I've heard talk that one of the Etyries Priestesses is a bit friendly with them. In my opinion they want to marry Pavis in order to access whatever strange Green Age magic is associated with this city. I hope they know what they are doing as meddling in such things can have severe consequences. I heard that even Governor Sor-Eel gets the cold shoulder from them!

Real City inhabitants: The Lunars can't be up to any good. What are their real motives? I reckon they just want to plunder Pavis for everything that it had, crate it up and ship it back to some museum in the Empire. Maybe they can use our myths in the same way and are trying to steal the special magic of Pavis.

What the Priests of Pavis Think

Benderri the High Priest: In public he says very little, but nods and smiles graciously in response to specific questions. In private he spends much time praying to Pavis for clarity, and the message he receives time and again is to have faith and patience - and that the right course of action will reveal itself. Benderri is of course somewhat intrigued by the idea of wedding a nubile Lunar priestess, but has recently been appraised of the disappearance of King Moraides of Tarsh on the even of similar nuptials. (Moraides vanished without trace, and certain commentators have speculated that when he was exposed to the raw erotic power of the Red Goddess he was utterly devoured by its potency.)

Fleeter Nemm: Fleeter is the practical leader of the cult of Pavis, and his dealings with the Lunars are always totally formal and correct. He is a walking encyclopaedia of rules, laws, clauses and precedents. In private, Fleeter dislikes the Lunars and their world-conquering arrogance, but more importantly feels that the destiny of Pavis is not best served by their involvement. He views the impending marriage as absolutely unacceptable, and is co-ordinating various heroes and clandestine ceremonies to thwart the designs of the Wedding Planners. In secret, Fleeter is of course pivotal in the activation of the city's mythic purpose, and absolutely nothing is allowed to stand in the way of this.

Broosta Nemm: Broosta is by no means an appendage to her husband, having her own opinions on many things. However, in this case their views match precisely - she too is active in the mythic evolution of the original plan of Pavis City.

Bendrath: In public Bendrath tries his best to be politic and suitably respectful to the Lunar overlords. In private he seethes with fury at the idea.

Bilkar: The Old City priest is content to toe the cult line without causing any disturbance. However, in private he has a very bad feeling about the wedding - but cannot explain why.

Cyrius Harmonious: Cyrius is wildly enthusiastic about the idea, both in public and private.

Ginkizzie: The King of the dwarves has remained reticent in public, which is easy to do since he is a semi-legendary figure and rarely seen in public in any case. The only way the adventurers could uncover any of his private views is through a contact within Ginkizzie's close confidantes. (If such is possible, he is most definitely not keen upon the idea.) In secret, Ginkizzie is the leader of the mystical Pavic organization known as the Ancient Measure, whose purpose is to continue the original designs of Flintnail and Pavis. It was he who ordered the assassination of the original leader of the Wedding Planners.

Deeper Research: Far more difficult. Options for uncovering information on these people are:

- i) Lhankor My spies within the Knowledge Temple (they pose as regular sages but specialize in finding secret knowledge on the Lunars)
- ii) Posing as Lunars and asking Lunar notables
- iii) Utilizing friendly contacts amongst Lunar notables (IE the Lunar archeology team).

Campaign Notes

In the 'Legacy of Pavis' this scenario linking section was set shortly before the epic Dungeon Bash adventure 'The Legacy of Ghost Fort'. If you have that magazine then run at least Ghost Fort (and preferably a few other scenarios as well) before moving in to the next section. When you eventually start to wind up (unbeknownst to your players) the Grey Company campaign in the city of Pavis, make sure that it is brought casually to the characters' attention now and then that Governor Raus is suffering more and more political problems. His comparatively lenient tenure has not been popular amongst the more radical Lunar elements, nor have the most vehement Lunar enemies ever been willing to accept Raus – despite his reforms. (In their eyes the only good Lunar 'is a dead Lunar'.)

Even so, a short period of peace and hope emerged under his rule, and less radical elements (including many members of the pro-Lunar factions in Pavis) had high hopes that political stability would last. In the house campaign, the timing seemed right to introduce the Windstop during this section. This mythic event is covered in detail in the official Sartar Rising campaign, but affects Prax (and Pavis) less than Dragon Pass. Nonetheless, since a couple of the PCs were Heortlings I halved their Air Pantheon magic abilities. Fortunately the new Common Magic rules, and the fact that all had a lot of Pavic magic (which wasn't affected) this didn't weaken them too much. Nonetheless, since the major social group of the region are Dorasings, the socio-political climate from this point added a powerful sense of continuity and 'bigger picture' – major events happening elsewhere – to the campaign. (Especially since two of the players had been with me in a Sartar campaign a few years earlier and had experienced the full might of the Windstop as Sartari PCs.)

One of the last scenarios I ran in this section of the campaign was a free-form evening giving the players a chance to kill Piers Bolde once and for all. He has been an excellent arch-enemy and was so hated, that I gave them this opportunity – explaining that they would have a reasonable chance of success, but that if they failed the PCs would likely either be killed outright, or captured and executed in short order. So, the adventurers sought powerful allies (including Bendrath, King Jaspas of Badside, and Snakefang the Alchemist), staked out Bolde's haunts (specifically his dodgy warehouse in Riverside), and tried to predict his movements as best they could. A decent plan was set up to ambush him at his warehouse, assisted by alchemical explosives and poisonous gas bombs, but in the end it was abandoned. When asked, I explained that the chances of success were at best 50/50 and they chickened out. It was still a very good evening's session of play, and I improvised much information on Bolde and his dodgy mercantile operation smuggling treasures illegally (against the Treaty of Occupation) out of Pavis to a contact in Tarsh. In fact, if I recall correctly, the PCs did manage to eliminate Bolde's main merchant contact, at least stopping the process for a while.

The Mystics of the Reaching Moon

Bear in mind that at the start of the scenario the adventurers will know only the appearance of these mystics. Nobody other than Sor-Eel, Gim-gim, and a few other high-ranking Lunars (mostly of the intelligence community) know anything about their mystic elemental affiliations or their powers.

The Wedding Planners are a group of mystics from the Lunar Heartlands. Prior to coming to Pavis they spent several years investigating the potential of bringing some kind of Green Age powers into the Lunar Pantheon. Their research concentrated mainly upon the fragmentary notes and myths of an organization that existed within the Empire of the Wyrms' Friends, known as the Elemental Harmonists or - more popularly - the Green Age Revivalists. After the Lunar Occupation of Prax they were delighted to be able to concentrate their research in the only surviving settlement from that time period with a link to such Green Age projects. (Albeit a settlement that has been drastically changed since those days.) Their direct goal is to wed Pavis and the Red Goddess through manipulation of Pavic myths (since they have discovered that it appears extremely unlikely that they can achieve such ends through negotiations with the priests of Pavis). Their indirect goal is to harness the powers of the wedding to imbue themselves with potent Green Age energies, supporting the personal quests to become heroes or demigods of the Lunar Pantheon.

This group of Lunar mystics and Priests planning to marry Pavis into the Lunar Pantheon is a private enterprise. They have permission from the Red Emperor to mastermind this union, and have promised that the Emperor will receive a great share of all lore, magic, and treasure that will be able to be funneled out of Pavis once this is achieved. Even more importantly, these people are aware of the Green Age connections of the Old City, and aim to use these links to add a whole new branch of wisdom and magic into the Lunar Pantheon. The Emperor is aware that a certain amount of risk is involved. However, since Pavis is not within the Empire it is the Wedding Planners that will suffer if things go wrong. Gim-gim the Grim is one of the sponsors of this group, and aims to grab much of the power for himself. Sor-Eel is also involved peripherally, but is unaware of Gim-gim's involvement. If Piers Bolde is still alive in your campaign, he too is a pivotal figure.

Narrator Notes: The ability Sedenyc Martial Arts is a catch-all ability that can be used for Running, Jumping, Climbing, Dodging and the like: their movements need to be described as graceful and calm, even when they are moving quickly. Sedenyc Philosophy can be used for many communication skills: their expression needs to be described as considered, intelligent and very hypnotic. Their list of statistics is limited, and one can assume that

many minor skills are subsumed as automatic augments. The 'Moon<xxx>' abilities are meant to be general and used how you see fit. You may also wish to add in some further abilities before running the scenario.

Alamav Shadoweye

Alamav is from Glamour and is the most senior of the mystics. He is a tall, thin man with a small pointed beard and the hair on his head kept cut back tightly against his skull. He always wears black and dark gray robes and leggings, and carries a long staff cut from a hard black wood and topped with a silver representation of the Red Moon. His mystic powers are related to the element of Darkness.

Personality: Commanding (___), Determined (___), Fearless (___)

General Abilities: Lunar Myths (___), Mental Balance (___), Myths of Pavis (___), Staff Fighting (___), Sedenyic Philosophy (___), Sedenyic Martial Arts (___)

Mystic Abilities: Aura of Command (___), Cloud of Darkness (___), Fearshock Touch (___), Heal My Injury (___), Indomitable Mind (___), Read Motivations of Other (___), Run on Moonbeams (___), Sense Magic (___), Moonspeech (___), Resist Enemy Magic (___), See in Darkness (___), Unseen in Shadows (___)

Languages: New Pelorian, Carmanian, Trade, Pavic

Tactics: Alamav is the toughest of the mystics, and augments his Staff Fighting with his Martial Arts. If deprived of his staff, his martial arts alone should protect him from a couple of the heroes. He has a shade bound into his staff. Normally he uses its Spirit Might (___) to augment him or to combat enemy entities sent against him, but it can also be released to attack his foes. His staff also has a limited number of 'charges' of Blast Enemy's Mind (___).

Shuella Glowchild

This attractive middle aged woman has a great mass of golden blonde hair, and always wears robes of yellows and reds. She carries a short twisted staff that is capable to sending out goutts of flame. Her mystic powers are related to the element of Fire.

Personality: Alluring (___), Mysterious (___), Proud (___)

General Abilities: Lunar Myths (___), Mental Balance (___), Myths of Pavis (___), Staff Fighting (___), Sedenyic Philosophy (___), Sedenyic Martial Arts (___)

Mystic Abilities: Blinding Flash (___), Control Flames (___), Flaming Staff (___), Heal My Injury (___), Ignite Object (___), Immune to Fire (___), Moonsight (___), Resist Enemy Magic (___), Shield of Flame (___)

Languages: New Pelorian, Dara Happan, Sunspeech, Trade

Tactics: Shuella fends for herself, and releases the salamander from her staff whenever she is facing concerted attack. It fights as an individual, burning and setting alight the foes and their possessions. Her staff has a limited number of charges – when used each sends out a great gout of flame (___)

Chadreth Talosmaster

Chadreth is an elderly man, but still very fit. He wears a brown robe with a deep green tabard, and his mystic powers are related to the element of Earth. He wears a clay amulet in which is bound a powerful Talosi, and carries a thick plain wooden staff.

Personality: Fortright (___), Grandiose (___), Strong-Willed (___)

General Abilities: Lunar Myths (___), Mental Balance (___), Myths of Pavis (___), Staff Fighting (___), Sedenyic Philosophy (___), Sedenyic Martial Arts (___)

Mystic Abilities: Ground Flyer (___), Heal My Injury (___), Impede Jumping Magic (___), Moonstrength (___), Pass Through Earth (___), Pass Through Stone (___), Resist Enemy Magic (___), Resist Missiles (___), Stunning Rock (___)

Languages: New Pelorian, Sylilan, Pavic, Trade

Tactics: Chadreth is the weakest fighter of the group, but his talosi (___), augments him in combat, and also can be loosed to grab the ankles of those standing on the ground, knock down walls (by undermining the foundations), or open pits beneath their feet.

Yenzal Moonflyer

This woman appears to be in her mid twenties, but is actually much older. She wears blue and white robes and owns a metal hawk that acts as her familiar, and she carries a gleaming silver scimitar. Her mystic powers are related to the element of air.

Personality: Clever (___), Determined (___), Resourceful (___)

General Abilities: Lunar Myths (___), Mental Balance (___), Myths of Pavis (___), Scimitar Fighting (___), Sedenyic Philosophy (___), Sedenyic Martial Arts (___)

Mystic Abilities: Confuse Foe (___), Great Wind Gust (___), Heal My Injury (___), Mighty Leap (___), Moonflight (___), Resist Enemy Magic (___), Sense Spirits (___)

Languages: New Pelorian, Rinliddi, Trade

Tactics: In the mundane plane Yenzal first uses the bound lune in her scimitar, preferring to hold back from combat. Her scimitar also holds several charges of Moon electricity (___), which can leap out and strike people.

Phanapos Riverwalker

Phanapos seems to be an entirely unimposing character, who dresses in gray robes of an everyday style. He carries an ordinary wooden staff that is decorated with faint rough carvings of fish and other marine/riverine creatures. His mystic powers are related to the element of water.

Personality: Cunning (____), Proud (____), Sycophantic (____).

General Abilities: Lunar Myths (____), Mental Balance (____), Myths of Pavis (____), Resist Enemy Magic (____), Sedenyic Martial Arts (____), Sedenyic Philosophy (____), Staff Fighting (____)

Mystic Abilities: Breathe Water (____), Dampen Fire (____), Heal My Injury (____), Impede Breath (____), Moonwater (____), Propel Vessel (____), Protective Scales (____), Walk on Water (____)

Languages: New Pelorian, Darjini, Riverspeech, Trade

Tactics: He will use his Impede Breath power, and/or send his bound undine to attack – hoping to undermine the morale of his attackers. When his staff hits it also automatically partially dehydrates his foes, although this is restricted by the number of charges it holds.

Tala Errio

Tala of course represents the Moon element in this grouping. All of the Lunars in Pavis recognize her as an extremely holy woman, and she is kept isolated from the common day affairs of humanity, in a life of pampered luxury at the Seven Mothers Temple. She only appears in public at certain powerful Lunar ceremonies and when the mystics need to petition the Pavis priests. Most of her day is spent meditating on the mysteries of the Moon. She was assigned to the mystics by the Red Emperor himself, and is fully aware that her duty is to act as a receptacle for the essence of the Red Goddess. She cares not that her own identity will likely be annihilated in this process.

Personality: Aloof (____), Beautiful (____), Calm (____).

General Abilities: Lunar Myths (____), Mental Balance (____), Myths of Pavis (____), Sedenyic Martial Arts (____), Sedenyic Philosophy (____).

Mystic Abilities: Heal My Injury (____), Heal Other (____), Ignore Damage (____), Resist Enemy Magic (____), Resist Mental Control (____).

Languages: New Pelorian only.

Tactics: Tala is unlikely to be directly confronted, so the Narrator will have to improvise. If possible she will call a lune from her holy pendant.

Fighting the Mystics

Directly attempting such actions are not advisable, since attacking a Lunar citizen with magic or weapons is punishable by crucifixion. Nonetheless, some heroes might attempt to lure the mystics into the Rubble and finish them off. The mystics have the right to call for an Imperial Bodyguard when on missions that are likely to prove hazardous, and they will sensibly call upon this right when they must travel outside of New Pavis. Typically a dozen soldiers and two or three of the finest Yanafali warriors will travel with them. All of the mystics (including Tala) are masters of Sedenyic martial arts. In defense these are great leaps and spins and rolls, and in attack they are flying kicks, spinning punches, and other acrobatic lunges. (Think 'Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon' and 'Hero'.)

General Natrim Kreutz

Kreutz is a strange figure. He arrived with the mystics, and was their head of security, plus an active member in their organization. Not only was he a heroic soldier and veteran of many battles, but also a budding mystic himself. It was said that he was hand-picked by the Wedding Planners to assist them. Although all of his operations were low-key, he was known to have adventured extensively in the Rubble for several years after their arrival. Then, he simply disappeared; vanished one day four seasons ago, whilst on a mission to the Blind King's Castle with a squad of Lunar soldiers and archeologists. Not a single one of them has been seen since.

Typical Guard

Keywords: Hoplite Soldier 5W1, Initiate of Marble Phalanx 10W1

Abilities: Heavy Infantry Combat 8W1, Scimitar & Shield Fighting 14W1, Scimitar Fighting 13W1, Command 3W1, Obedient 8W1, Tough 3W1

Magic: Destroy Enemy Moral 18, Raise Courage 18, Stand Against Many 20.

Augments: Scimitar +3, Superior Mail +4, Shield +1, Stand Against Many +2, Blood Scimitar +4, Shield from Harm +3, Confound Opponents Senses +3, Obedient +3, Tough +2 = Scimitar & Shield Fighting 19W2 or Scimitar Fighting 17W2

Superior Guard/Lunar Hero

Abilities: Scimitar & Shield Fighting 10W2, Scimitar Fighting 3W2, Jump 16W1, Listen 8W1, Scan Terrain 10W1, Run in Armor 4W1, Yanafal Tarnils Devotee 10W1. Command 16W1, obedient 10W1, and Tough 7W1

Magic: Charge of the Ram 12W1, Destroy Enemy Morale 12W1, Perceive Enemy Weakness 14W1, Raise Courage 12W1, Stand Against Many 12W1.

Augments: Iron Scimitar +7, Iron Mail +8, Fancy Shield +2, Stand Against Many +3, Blood Scimitar +4, Shield from Harm +3, Confound Opponents Senses +3, Obedient +3, Tough +3 = Scimitar and Shield Fighting 6W4, Scimitar Fighting 17W3

Note: Casts Magic at -15 and Resists Magic at +15 due to effect of Iron Equipment.

Contest: Resisting a Lune

(Simple Contest: Use *Initiate of...* -5, *Dedicated to...* -2, *Resist Enemy Magic* -6, *Resist Spirits* -3, *Resist Sorcery* -2, *Resist/Repel Elemental or Essence*)

Complete Victory - the lune is defeated and cannot be called again for a full day.

Major Victory - as above, but six hours.

Minor Victory - as above, but it can be called again after one hour.

Marginal Victory or Tie - the lune is temporarily driven off but may be activated again if the attackers are not soon overcome.

Marginal Defeat - victim is confused and at half abilities for the next three rounds.

Minor Defeat - victim is bereft of wit for three rounds and at half abilities for three more.

Major Defeat - victim loses their mind, typically fleeing mindlessly or falling comatose. (May recover in a day or so, or with mental healing.)

Complete Defeat - victim driven indefinitely insane. (Sufficiently potent mental healing can restore their minds.)

NB: On any success by the lune one of its summoning charges has been used, but if any remain it may be instantly directed to attack a new target. It is up to the Narrator how many charges each mystic has access to.

Part Two: Return to the Puzzle Canal

Playtesters: Martin Gibbs, Harry Grawe, Stef Mathers & Peter Ujvari

Author's Introduction

This adventure (apart from the introductory scenes) stemmed from a bunch of notes I have had lying around for a Canal scenario for ages. That piece was always intended to be put into the Companion series, but I never had enough time to complete it, and (as anyone who bought the magazines saw) there was never enough space in any case. Only with 'Beyond Pavis' did I ever run out of time to complete all the articles I wanted, and since bonus articles of very decent quality were standing by all was not lost. Anyhow, enough of the blah; suffice to say that I adapted these notes into a reasonably sensible introduction to the 'Wedding of Pavis' when I ran it in my campaign. So, instead of a sadly lost scenario, here is 'Return to the Puzzle Canal' in an adapted form. (Maybe this was its destiny all along!) It is useful if you have access to either the original Rubble boxed set, or to the superb *Moon Designs* 'Pavis and the Big Rubble' reprint, but not essential. A fair amount of information on the Puzzle Canal is available over the web, and even in summary form at the Companion website. Lacking the original material (in either form) you will have to make up some of the details. Page number references are to the Moon Designs book.

Scene 2.1 – A New Governor

The relative peace and hopefulness of Raus' tenure as Governor of Pavis comes to an end with the arrival (by Moonboat accompanied by gleaming Yanafal Tarnils bodyguards) of Draxius Diremoon. Draxius is a General who has everything to lose if he doesn't redeem himself by turning Pavis into the ideal outpost of the Empire, a task which is actually one he is extremely unlikely to succeed at. If the PCs make conjecture that Draxius' arrival (and the removal of Raus) so close to the planned Wedding is no coincidence, feel free to support that suspicion. Note that although the Coders are referenced obliquely below, they do not feature at all in this mini-campaign. If they are still in Pavis in your campaign (for whatever reason) a high-level conspiracy arranges for them to be sent away on an important mission the day after Draxius arrives. This is not such a coincidence, as the messenger bringing their sealed orders arrives on the same Moonboat as Draxius, and they are instructed to return to Dragon Pass on board that vessel. In Dragon Pass circumstances are arranged so that they cannot return to Pavis until days before the wedding, or perhaps not even until afterwards.

If it is available to you, adapt the information on the arrival of the Lunar Coders from 'Strangers in Prax' (Avalon Hill, 1994). Draxius arrives accompanied by his Carmanian sorcerer advisor Joaquin Ettandor. In order to convince the populace that this change of personnel is a good thing, Gim-gim and other anti-Raus Lunars have arranged a street procession. A festival day is announced, with notification only that important visitors will be arriving from the Empire. Many people are even paid to be enthusiastic, and many off-duty Lunar soldiers are asked to attend in mufti. (Both to act as cheering crowd members and to assist with security.)

Despite the deception, Raus strongly suspects what is going to occur, especially as all of this is happening only a few weeks before the wedding of Pavis to the Red Goddess is to occur. The soon-to-be former governor sends a message to the Grey Company asking them to pay him a visit after the 'notables' have arrived. Alternatively you may have some other way of ensuring that each player has a PC in the crowds lining the streets. In my playtest I intended the following to be a spectacle, not a participatory event, but underestimated the gung-ho nature of the players.

The moonboat moors again atop the city Pavis Temple, and Draxius, Ettandor, and two Yanafali bodyguards are met by various dignitaries (including a man that may be recognized as Gim-Gim if you have run the 'Donandar Temple' scenario from 'Shadows of Pavis'). The group then descends from the temple with a retinue of soldiers and hangers-on. They march down the main street towards the Lunar Barracks (HQ), and suddenly are swarmed from the crowd by scores of fanatical Orlanthe. The Lunars had underestimated Orlanthe intelligence gathering (assisted clandestinely by the members of the Ancient Measure), and not only had the rebels learned that Raus was to be replaced, but also that his replacement was a hard-liner.

Rightly, the rebel underground figured that the best time to get to Draxius would be before he was emplaced. Specifically, when he was distracted and laboring under a false sense of security – in short during the procession from the temple to Lunar HQ surrounded by the cheering and adoring populous. Their main objective is to assassinate Draxius at all costs, and to escape with his head to prevent his being brought back to life.

As I mentioned, once the attack began, first one then two, then three of the PCs joined in. This was not particularly out of character, as all were fervent Pavic loyalists, and they had gathered from my descriptions and from underworld rumors that Draxius was going to be even worse than Sor-Eel. Also, since by now the PCs are of a skill-level making them regionally renowned, they were equal in power to the best of the rebels, and were able to cut their way through to the heart of the action. I made this realistically difficult, but extrapolated fights with lesser figures into short contests. Two PCs got close to the center, one being caught up in a fight with a heroic Yanfali Rune Lord, and the toughest PC (a maxxed-up Humakti) decided (the player decided that is) to risk his life in a desperate attempt to slay Draxius.

I was improvising like crazy, and rolling dice to make decisions at percentage probabilities that were invented at the drop of a hat. The crazy Humakti actually managed to get through the melee and confronted Draxius, exchanging a flurry of blows. Because I knew that the garrison guards were closing in, and the chance of escaping with Draxius' head was minimal, I gave the PC three rounds to try and kill the new Governor. Unfortunately (for the rebels, but fortunately for me as GM), he failed, but in the meantime an NPC had managed to engage Ettandor, and by amazingly flukish rolling (Major Success against a Major Defeat) beheaded the sorcerer. Somehow in the flight from the Lunar guards, the Humakti got Ettandor's head and fled over the rooftops on the heels of some escaping rebels. I forget now where he took sanctuary, possibly Gimpy's lower tunnels, but the head was destroyed and the sorcerer was permanently slain.

Of course, all of this allowed Draxius an excellent excuse to implement his new draconian policies without delay, and starting the very next day (probably after a quiet lie down and some sleeping draught) he did.

Scene 2.2 - The New Regime

Once ensconced in office, Draxius will begin to act like this posting is a reward for long-service in the military, but the rumor mill tells people on the street that it was his heavy-handed dealing with Tarsh revolutionaries that very nearly destabilized Lunar control of that land.

Almost sixty years old, Draxius is still strong and hearty. He knows this will be his last posting and wants to leave his mark. His treatment of Raus is by the book, and yet brutally condescending. One moment Raus is Governor – with all the power, rights, and privileges – the next he is an ex-Governor – forced to clear out his office by the end of the day. Quite possibly (if a relationship has previously been established) Raus and one or two loyal followers will drop in on the Grey Company to give their farewells. He has been 'advised' to 'see to his neglected holdings in the Grantlands'; in short told to get out of town and not come back for a while.

Draxius is of course deluded, and the Pavis and Prax he sees bear no resemblance to actuality. He wants loyal subjects in Pavis, subservient Praxian nomads, and a reclaiming of the Old City to be rebuilt as a major settlement. This would involve the organization and proper-running of Pavis County and the River Valley as a major food supply area, and once in office he immediately instigates new edicts to this effect. Census-takers appear everywhere, agents of the Spoken Word begin rifling through every set of files they can lay their hands on. Nothing is sacrosanct, even the archives of the Pavis temple in New Pavis are invaded by administrators. (Though of course agents of the Ancient Measure have long since removed anything useful to the invaders.) Draxius is not happy with the moves towards independence that the Old Pavic representatives have been making. He retroactively repeals all of their new laws, including the establishment of the Grey Company as a body of law representing the Old City.

Scene 2.3 - Outlawed

If they were not involved with the attack on Draxius, the Grey Company members are still arrested (individually or en masse) dependent on how the Narrator wants to play this transition, and hauled before a Lunar Court. The charges are sedition and murder, for which the penalty is crucifixion.

(Narrator invents exact charges based on their recent activities to assist the reformation of the Old City, plus any Lunar sympathizers that might have been incidentally killed. Also, if the Company has done anything really bad – in the eyes of the Lunars – and gotten away with it, this charge will be launched against them as well. Fortunately, Fleeter Nemm is allowed to defend them, and gets the worst charges dismissed. He is able to call upon entities from the Pavis Temple to assist witnesses and defendants to lie without revealing themselves, and the Grey Company may see shadows flitting about the court that the Lunars are apparently unaware of.)

In short, the Grey Company will receive some minor sentence, like five seasons in the Salt Mines. Of course, they will be assisted to organize a mass escape from the Salt Mines, and the Narrator will need to write up the details of this. It sounds like a great idea, and I'm almost sad it never came about in my campaign.

If they were involved with the attack on Draxius, then this scenario opportunity is not viable – since powerful Lunar truth-magics would identify them. So, in the house campaign I allowed the Grey Company members to get wind of the imminent changes (through Bendrath), and gave them a chance to act. On the night after the arrival and attack, the residents of the Real City gathered all the handcarts they could find, and transferred all of the goods from the Grey Company House to (secret chambers within) the Pavis Temple. I described this in conspiratorial detail, and also made it clear that the end of Raus' tenure was an end of an era for the Old City. The task was completed shortly before dawn. As soon as dawn broke, a large group of Lunar soldiers rode out of New Pavis, made double-quick time to the Real City, and announced changes to the Treaty of Occupation – allowing Lunars immediate entry to the Real City when reasonable evidence was available that know rebels were within.

The Old Pavic guards and officials managed to stall them for a few minutes, claiming that someone in authority had to be present to allow this, and the Grey Company members escaped through the dwarf tunnels. The Lunars did (as suspected) have warrants for all of the Grey Company members, and I allowed the PCs to decide where they would hide out. They went first to Arlaten's Tower for a couple of days, and then to the hidden Jalmari HQ. *The information on the Old Pavic Jalmari was first published in Tales of the Reaching Moon (RQ3), then Tradetalk 9 (HW), then finally on the Companion website (HQ).* Finally we reached the point where the very distinctive members of the Grey Company had to assume disguises and (assisted by the Pavis Cult/Ancient Measure) new identities.

Scene 2.4 - On the Run

It was at this point that I also improvised a clandestine meeting with (disguised) agents of the Ancient Measure to talk about the importance of disrupting the forthcoming wedding service. When asked if they would volunteer for this dangerous mission, the PCs all agreed. During this meeting the PCs learned that the Lunars had turned Grey House into a Lunar Watch House. This was not only an affront to the Company, but also showed that the Treaty of Occupation was now in tatters – since the Lunars had originally sworn to have no permanent post in the Real City.

I allowed the PCs to do whatever they wanted, which was to chase up a few contacts and try to find out what was going on regarding the Wedding. The representatives of the Ancient Measure filled them in about some of the background information listed at the start of this piece (but not about Pavis and his consort), and the PCs learned some more (but again not about Pavis and Santrella) through their own sources. Specifically the PCs learned that the Lunars have been messing around in the Pavic Heroplane, meddling with myths. They learn too that members of the Pavic Priesthood and the Ancient Measure are trying to discover what is going on, and that when they do the adventurers will be required to go into the Heroplane and put things to rights. They also learned for the first time of the mysterious General Natrim Kreutz (see introductory information on the mystics). All of this occurs within a backdrop of stringent Lunar restrictions, Lunar-backed groups searching the Rubble for 'wedding gifts' (read 'plunder'), and increased persecution of Orlanthi.

Note: When the PCs learn about Kreutz, do not admit/reveal that this is a crucial part of the coming scenario. Present it more as an 'intriguing fact' that will get them thinking. They may suspect that it is a scenario hook, but it's more fun if they don't know for sure, and continue fishing in the dark until the segue at the end of this scene.

The key factor that is unknown to the Ancient Measure is which myth the Lunars are using to back-up the wedding. It is obvious they must have a specific myth they are attempting to subvert, but since they are engaging in some indiscriminate meddling nobody knows which, and time is running out to discover it. Even the shamans of Mani's Clan can only confirm that ripples in the Pavic Heroplane prove that the Lunars are up

to something. If the PCs think of any other ways to try and investigate this, let them. Perhaps they might even go on a minor HeroQuest with some members of Mani's clan, and experience some weird aspects of the Green Age, but nothing conclusive will be revealed.

It is important to note at this point that Lunar adventurers and military and archeological missions into the Rubble have been numerous over the last weeks. Presumably several of these groups have been undertaking the preparatory mundane aspects of the quest they are planning to subvert. However, although agents of the Measure have tracked some of them, this has proved to have been no conclusive help.

Narrator Note: The PCs may ask nonetheless for a list of all known Lunar expeditions. If so, improvise a very large one. Note that the critical visits have not yet happened (and will occur during the oddly extended time period that the PCs are inside the Puzzle Canal).

Scene 2.5 - This is Your Mission, Should you Choose to Accept It

Then, the good guys get a break: one of the Dorasing rebels hiding in the Puzzle Canal emerges with information. Apparently deep within the inner circles a crazed Lunar General is maintaining his own private army of misfit newtlings, bandits, and even broo. Vague rumors about something like that have been circulating for two or three seasons, but the Canal is much bigger on the inside than the outside, and also has many more dangerous things the deeper you go. So the Dorasing rebels pretty much stay in the one section.

Unfortunately, for all concerned except the Ancient Measure, a group of Lunar military operatives and a group of Dorasing rebels crossed paths in the outer part of the canal maze. After a pitched battle, three Dorasings were still standing. Although the two Lunar survivors would not talk, the Lunars had been unable to act in time to destroy all of their coded orders and information. This is delivered straight into the hands of the Ancient Measure, and is decoded within a day and a night. It is revealed that the group's mission was to find the fallen Natha worshipper General Kreutz and terminate him with 'extreme prejudice'. Apparently he has set himself up in a petty kingdom, after using his troops to conquer some surrounding territory, and is now insane. However, according to the notes he possesses information that might jeopardize a 'crucial imminent local ceremony'.

The Agents of the Ancient Measure know that time is running out. If the heroes can get to Kreutz and find out what myth the Lunars are using, the Old City might still have a chance to rectify the Lunar subversion and maybe throw in a few surprises of their own. The only people capable of undertaking this feat at short notice are the Grey Company.

Author Note: I know its not the best segue in the world, but it ran fine in the playtest. I was also lucky that one of the original campaign players returned from interstate for an indefinite period, and reactivated his quirky character that was last seen hiding out in the Rubble. It made sense for this PC to assume the role of the rebel delivery person, and then to become the Canal guide for the group. If such a lucky break is not available to you, then one game-realistic way to have this happen is for the person who comes out of the Rubble to be another of the Pavic Heroes that have been established to exist in your campaign. That is to say, the Ancient Measure does not solely rely on the Grey Company, and even has a few heroes that are Old Pavic born and bred, and deeper involved in the measure. In any case, this person emerging from the Rubble can be a Dorasing hero that escaped into the Canal in the original Lunar purges (when the Empire took over Pavis and Prax). This man is now in late middle-age, though still hale and hearty, and probably equal in combat prowess and magic to most Grey Company members. Since several of his compatriots were killed in the battle with the Lunar assassins, he himself must return to protect his families from the various dangers of the Canal, and cannot accompany the mission.

Scene 2.6 – Into the Canal

The PCs won't have much time to prepare, but can of course ask the GM what they know about the Canal, and may ask their own contacts, such as one of the two sages in the Real City, or even Arlaten and Mikos. Here is some information they might learn. More is available in the Moon Designs book (pp184, 281-283). Basically it is a huge oval area within the Rubble that is surrounded by a tall, but ancient and crumbling, wall. Within are canals of varying sizes, great islands of vegetation, ruins, tunnels, walkways, monsters, and the hideouts of bandits, rebels, ducks and newtlings.

The Puzzle Canal

Overview:

Created by Labrygon, a great Water Dragon priest from the Empire of the Wyrms' Friends. Some have suggested that this place is an elaborate Nysalor Riddle, as it serves no other discernible purpose. Now it is the home to outlaws and odd creatures that congregate around its outer waterways. Further in, the denizens and bank-side terrain become more dangerous and bizarre. The Puzzle Canal is often reported to be far larger on the inside than is physically possible, and there are numerous stories of entryways from the Canal into other planes. The Canal is

impossible to fly over, possibly because its magical nature encloses deeper and deeper levels of canal mazes in a geographical space that cannot logically be possible. Anyone trying to fly over simply disappears.

Historical Information (less easily available):

Labrygon was aware that Pavis is located on a site with a weakened barrier between itself and certain Otherworlds, and capitalized on this by situating the culmination of his life's work on this spot. Labrygon was indeed illuminated, as well as a draconic mystic, and the Puzzle Canal simultaneously supports Pavis' own designs whilst also functioning perfectly to Labrygon's own purpose. It is the single location in Old Pavis to have survived essentially unscathed since its inception. No-one who has flown over the canal in living memory has been seen again, though it is rumored that someone who did so in 1541 came out again in 1564 - and had not aged a day. One rumor says that at the center of the innermost maze, Labrygon dwells in his own private Otherworld, from which he occasionally ventures to visit other minor deities, such as Pavis and Flintnail.

A flurry of activity from the agents of the Ancient Measure will produce an 'expert guide' for the Rubble. Such a person cannot practically know the inner canals in detail, as these change and twist every season (and perhaps even more often). However, this person will know much of the ways of those in the outer canals, and many rumors about the inner areas, and even some stories about Kreutz. As previously mentioned, in the House Campaign, we had the ideal candidate in a recently reactivated PC, but you might wish to use an eccentric duck or newtling. Whoever you choose should be a wildly wacky character (hence the duck preference) who does not engage in much speculative conversation, but talks in riddles. (This prevents them from simply being a walking encyclopaedia about the Canal.) Nonetheless, they should come in useful when actually discussing options in the canal, although if you don't want to use them much in combat then they might be a person who prefers ducking and hiding. (Again, if you use a duck then this is even somewhat justified – since ducks, despite their bravado, are not particularly robust.)

Narrator Notes: Remember that it is likely that all of these preparations will go on with the Grey company as outlaws hiding out in the Rubble. They will need to travel about incognito, avoid Lunar patrols (and indeed any groups they don't know for certain that they are sympathetic. In the House Campaign the outlaw PCs first hid out at Arlaten's Tower, then the Jalmari HQ, then at the Old Mint – which actually became a featured site within this scenario, as you will see later. So it will be handy if you have run the 'Old Mint' adventure from the Companion series (also available on the Companion website), and friendly trolls now occupy the place. This is particularly important because the Mint contains an unregistered Pavis Shrine, and this became a focal point for the forthcoming HeroQuests. Of course other alternatives do exist, and when I originally ran this scenario I left it up to the PCs to work out what locations were sensible and safe, and just improvised around their choices.

The Ancient Measure recommend going into the Canal by boat. They have in fact procured a fine craft, a stolen and disguised Lunar fast patrol boat, powered by Zola Fel undines, and crewed by four brave newtlings who go by the nicknames: Trident, Cookie, Boss, and Spotless. This boat has apparently been operating on the Zola Fel inside the Rubble for a couple of seasons, transporting rebels by night and delivering (smuggling) supplies. Its main benefit in that regard is that because of the newtling crew and the powerful undines, it can actually travel underwater from time to time – though of course it moves less quickly below the surface. In any case, this capacity is not thought to be important for the mission into the Canal.

Note: Though the boat will eventually need to be abandoned, it is important for the scenario that the PCs agree to go in it initially, and not to try to walk alongside the canals. Whilst this is technically possible – as they may discover from their research, it will be much safer and faster to proceed in this small, swift and maneuverable craft.

Entry itself will have to be clandestine, and will involve the Grey Company meeting the boat somewhere near their hideout, and travelling under cover of darkness (probably just before dawn) into the Canal. It may be suitably atmospheric to utilize the following:

"As the first light of dawn crawls across the fractured ruins of the Old City of Pavis, the tall crumbling walls of the Puzzle Canal come into view. Festooned with creepers and moss, they reek with age. The undines powering the small boat mutter and chuckle as they push it quickly along through the spangled water of the wide river. The hundred-foot wide channel leading from the Zola Fel to the canal entrance is overhung with bushes and trees. Once ornamental bridges soared across its width, but these have all long since fallen, now leaving only the stumps of their foundations, peering over the edges like lonely watchers. The little boat putters between the sandbars, and approaches the once magnificent canal entry. The great flanking columns that mark the edges of the forty-foot high walls are now fractured, and their runic inscriptions almost totally indiscernible. Although the stone arch is still in place, it too is obscured with damp hanging mosses and a patchy coating of lichens. Inside the canal the waterway immediately narrows to around forty feet, between tall walls of what looks like natural stone. On the left is a pathway, hugging one of these cliffs, although

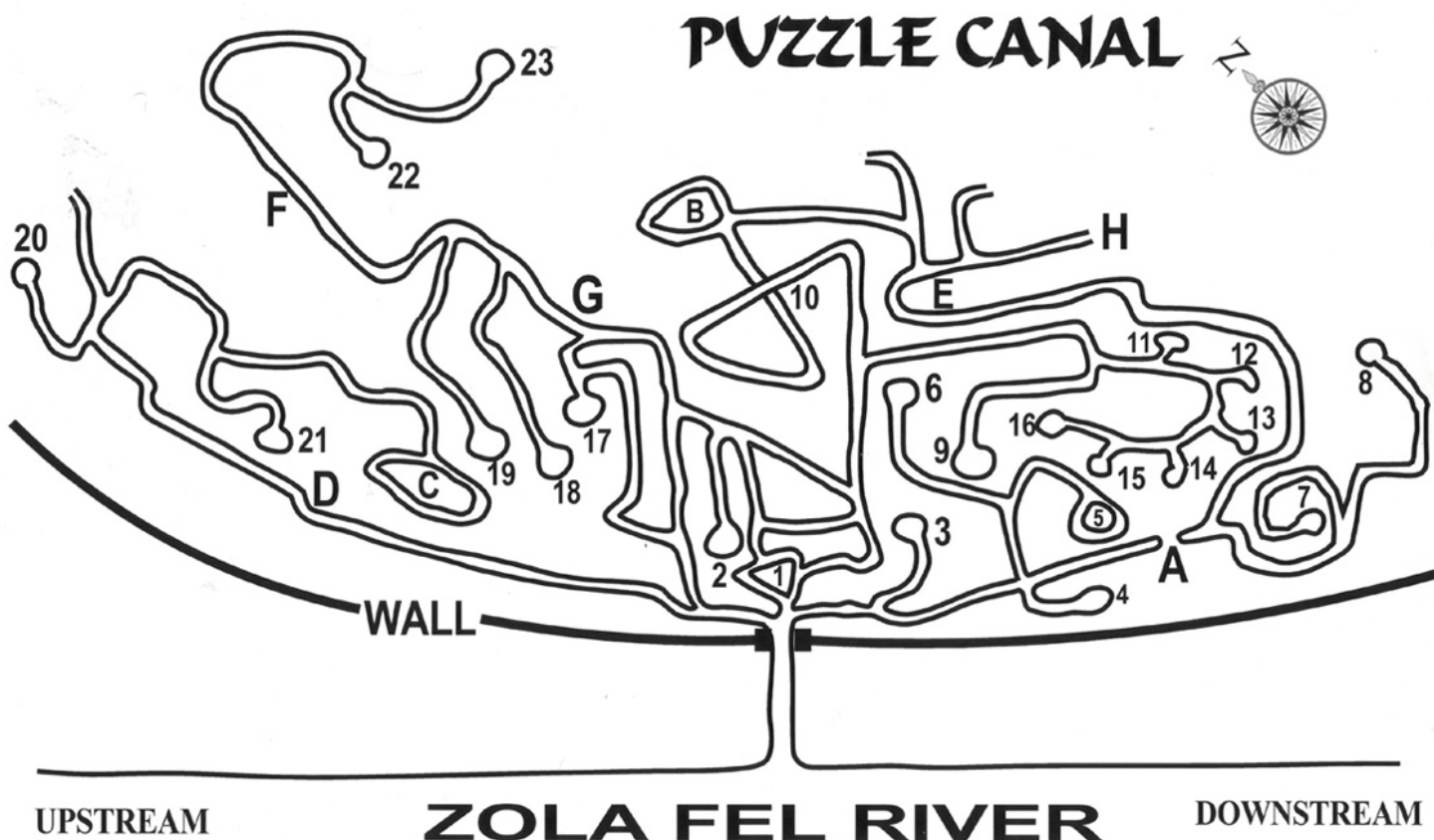
accessing it from outside would be awkward, since a large barricade of stones and wooden spikes blocks the way. Up ahead the canal strikes a T junction."

Scene 2.7 – The Outer Maze

The material on pp283-287 of P&BR 'How to Run the Puzzle Maze' should be reviewed before running this section of the adventure

This section is the least important structurally and most open to variation. Its importance is for the PCs to experience the canal in a more or less standard adventuring fashion. They will travel about seeking a way into the Inner Canal. Their guide cannot lead them directly to such an entrance since these things are not stable. Some exist for months, others for weeks, others for only days. As their guide tells them, the Canal is a fluid place in more ways than one. The guide firmly believes that one's intent has a bearing on one's experience, in the same way as happens in HeroQuests. This, their guide is sure, is because the Canal is linked in some way to the HeroPlane. One might ask then what is the use of a guide? The answer is that the guide knows many rumors about the canal, and can advise them when encounters occur. The guide also claims instinctively to know how to navigate the canal. Thus, their best course of action is to simply strike out boldly into the Canal, with the intent to find a way into the deeper maze of waterways, and from there to the lair of Colonel Kreutz.

When I ran this adventure I improvised crazily from one of my own downloads available from the Companion website. This is reprinted here in full, with a few additional notes. You may wish to add further notes of your own to aid fluidity of play, especially if you are not completely confident with improvising adventure details in this situation. Basically, the adventurers will sail around dealing with hazards, before eventually arriving at the transition location – detailed at the end of this section. Since the PCs can choose to turn around, backtrack, avoid etc, improvisation is a valid way to run this section.



RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

To be placed at Narrator's Discretion.

Typical Brollachan (P&BR, p296): Bite (____), Engulf (____), Resist Damage (____). These creatures back up the vough (see below) and may also attack the boat (and passengers) once or twice.

Bloodbirds (P&BR, pp295/6): Peck (____), Kick (____). Each bird has natural armor that resists damage at +2, and also has an additional draining effect (____) on any Major Success. Probably these will be only

directly encountered once or twice, though they may be seen on other occasions. On the direct encounters a flock of them will suddenly alight – optimistically expecting an easy feed. The first encounter should be relatively early in this section.

Gorp: I created one encounter with a massive gorp that was blocking the canal in a direction that their guide was convinced they must travel down (or possibly the only route available to them that wasn't a dead end. The PCs were hard put to create a diversionary distraction for it, which the newtlings steadfastly refused to have anything to do with the creature. Eventually the gorp was so badly damaged that it gave up and slunk away. (Though I rolled randomly to see which way the unintelligent creature would choose to go – fortunately it moved away from the boat.) I created another encounter with gorp later on after they had left the boat.

Goats, Kraken Weed, Manatee: P&BR, p298

Walktapus: A huge walktapus also added a touch of fun to the adventure, although if I recall correctly I situated this during the inner maze section. Here, since the Puzzle Canal is apparently one of the few places where walktapi are common are the complete stats from my old Tradetalk article:

Standard Walktapus

General Abilities: Fearless 5w, Large 20, Spot Prey 15, Strong 19, Swim 12, Tough 11w.

Combat Abilities: Grapple 19w, Poison Cloud 14w.

Armor: Rubbery Skin ^2.

Unusually Dangerous Walktapus

General Abilities: Fearless 10w, Large 2w, Spot Prey 19, Strong 2w, Swim 14, Tough 15w.

Combat Abilities: Grapple 5w2, Poison Cloud 18w.

Armor: Rubbery Skin ^2.

Unequivocally Deadly Walktapus

General Abilities: Fearless 15w, Large 4w, Spot Prey 3w, Strong 5w, Swim 17, Tough 19w.

Combat Abilities: Grapple 12w2, Poison Cloud 4w2.

Armor: Rubbery Skin ^3.

Target's Challenge of Walktapus Poison Cloud:

(Resist with: Dodge -10, Jump -5, Resist Poison, Tough -5.)

Complete or Major Victory: Target jumps clear or is able to take a deep breath before cloud strikes him.

Minor Victory: As Complete or Major Victory, but target suffers 3 Hurts if his defensive action did not involve a magical defense or his moving rapidly away from the cloud.

Marginal Victory: As Minor Victory, but 6 Hurts if his defensive action did not involve a magical defense or his moving rapidly away from the cloud, and 3 Hurts otherwise.

Marginal Defeat: Victim takes 6 Hurts.

Minor Defeat: Victim takes 9 Hurts.

Major Defeat: Victim is Injured.

Complete Defeat: Victim is so badly Injured by the toxic cloud that they are now Dying.

NB: Hurts sustained by exposure to a walktapus poison cloud last for several hours.

After releasing their gas cloud, walktapi attack with four or more tentacles simultaneously, and ignore multiple target penalties against up to four opponents. When half of a walktapus' AP are gone, the multiple target immunity is lost. On a Grappling Major or Complete Victory, a walktapus is deemed to have constricted its opponent, and each round thereafter is treated as simple contest in which it applies its Strong rating. The victim's defense may be augmented appropriately, bearing in mind that it is not possible to cast complex spells whilst constricted, but it is possible to call on theist magic at a -10 penalty to the rating of the magic.

Victim's Challenge to a Walktapus' Constriction:

(Resist with: Brawling -5, Dodge -10, Grappling/Wrestling, Strong, Tough -10.)

Complete Victory: Victim breaks free without taking damage, and, if still armed, strikes the walktapus for 6 Hurts.

Major Victory: Victim breaks free without taking damage, and if still armed strikes the walktapus for 3 Hurts.

Minor Victory: Victim breaks free.

Marginal Victory: Victim breaks free, taking 3 Hurts.

Marginal Defeat: Victim is unable to break free but takes no damage this round.

Minor Defeat: Victim is unable to break free and takes 3 Hurts.

Major Defeat: Victim is unable to break free and takes 6 Hurts.

Complete Defeat: Victim is unable to break free and becomes Injured. If already Injured instead takes 9 Hurts.

Water Leapers (P&BR, p302): Attack from Underwater (____), Grapple with Tail (____), Fly (____), Natural Armor (____). NB: On the first encounter a small school of them (4-6) will attack by surprise (unless someone on watch is particularly alert).

Water Lizards (P&BR, p303): Bite Attack (____), Dodge (____), Natural Armor (____). On the first encounter these unpleasant creatures should merely be seen basking, and not (on that occasion) actually attack – although some will look up and gaze at the passing boat with suspicion.

ROOM NOTES

Note that the numbered text is not to be read out, but is taken directly from the handout downloadable from the Companion website. Thus, the Narrator needs to reword everything into a game-suitable description, especially if one or more of the players might have access to the handout. Needless to say, the fact that this is a linear progression should be cunningly concealed from the players as their PCs make their way around the tortuous maze – choosing which direction to go at the various junctions. The map itself is just a guide; you can follow it to the letter if you like or simply move the encounters around to suit the choices the players make on the directions the PCs take.

1) Ducks and newtlings live on this island. They are all outlaws and angry people. If most of us weren't river worshippers I think they might have attacked us.

The newtling crew can negotiate here, and in the playtest the adventurers slept overnight at this place – after a long and trying day.

2) The first of many dead ends. This steep-sided pool was open to the air. In the middle was a small rocky island - enough for a few people only. Grelet said that it was radiating strong magic, so we didn't get out of the boat. *Should any PCs get out of the boat, the magic might be discovered to have a connection to the Air Rune. Possibly any Air-worshipper that stands here (first time only) gains renewed AP, healed or something like that.*

3) This place was a roofed cavern. It was mostly dry inside, being as the floor was so high. We landed the boat and looked around in the dark. Someone had been camping there, and someone found the haft of a broken axe. *Something else intriguing might be found buried here.*

4) Newtlings live here amongst some submerged ruins. Not for the last time I was glad some of us were river worshippers, but they seemed quite friendly anyhow.

These newtlings will not be sociable like the group at (1), but are neutral to the party because of the newtlings in the boat. The newtlings that live at this place care nothing for politics and just want to live a quiet life.

Alternatively/additionally if you have already run Borderlands, they may contain a core of refugees from the Five Eyes Cave scenario – and their supporters. They may know rumors about the Colonel, or possibly one of them even temporarily was a member of the Colonel's crazy band.

5) On this island was an old shrine all grown over with vines and grass. We cleaned it a bit, and one of the thieves said he recognized some runes on the side, and that it was a shrine to some kind of Storm being. Everyone reckoned he was just trying to impress us.

This can be a shrine to a storm spirit, that grants some temporary power to a Storm worshipper that makes sacrifice here.

6) A water hag lived in here. She wanted blood, but she was so stupid as to try and use river magic against us. She won't be bothering anyone any more, but unfortunately Esklat was killed here.

This refers to Cavern 15 (P&BR, p287). The HQ stats below will include standard augments.

Bloodthirsty Vough: Claw Attack (____), Conceal Self in Water (____), Resist Damage (____), Resist Enemy Magic (____), Terrify Foe (____).

7) An empty covered cave.

8) Some regular elves live amongst the thick bushes here, and some kind of oddly shaped building stands on an island in this steep-sided place that is open to the sky. They fired their bows at us, so we left real quick.

Pavis worshippers (as the PCs probably are) might be able to communicate with these plant-folk. In personality they are as weird as other elves, but do have speakers that communicate with outsiders. Their ancient purpose here is to maintain various ceremonies. They pretty much view all outsiders as dangerous interruptions. However, on closer interaction with the adventurers, one of the older elves may recognize that these people are 'different', and allow the access to the strange temple. (A mystic temple to Labrygon and Pavis, wherein some odd and beneficial gifts may be granted to any worshipping PCs.)

9) We thought this place was once a garden. Terraces around the edges were grown over with wild bushes, but some had pretty flowers.

10) The Canal passed over itself here in a big arch. The strangest thing was that although the water level must have changed it wasn't flowing downhill at any point. We just kept rowing and soon went under the arch.

11) This place had a dock and a plaza with flagstones. Mostly overgrown, but amidst the bushes were statues of people who were probably famous once.

12) A stone hut is here on a little island. It has places for sleeping, and a hearth.

13) An empty place open to the sky.

14) This place is an actual dock with some ruined buildings. There was smoke coming from one of the buildings, and a barricade along the edge of the dock. No-one answered our calls, and we had a bad feeling about the place so we left. I think it was the human skulls on posts that was most worrying.

A broo encampment.

15) This place had bars across the entrance and was dark inside. There were odd noises from in there. We couldn't find a way to open the bars, but I guess we didn't try too hard.

If this spot is reached after sufficient other rooms have been explored, then this is the way into the deeper maze, and the bars must somehow be overcome. How they work out that this is the way forward depends on the tone of the adventure at that time. A PC may 'get a feeling' or the guide might be intuitively certain, or some clue in barely discernible runes discovered on the wall may make it clear.

16) Mounted beneath an overhang on this cavern wall is a huge painting of the wall of Old Pavis. Flanrik the thief shouted that unless we wanted to see the symbol of our own death we shouldn't look. He explained later that he had heard that anyone who looks at the painting sees something in it that represents how they will die. Nobody was keen on that, and it was very difficult to get the boat back out of there with out eyes shut.

In the playtest, all PCs bar one decided to go and look at the painting (typical players, huh). If I recall correctly, the Humakti led the way, saying something like: "I have no fear of death", and the sneaky thief/outlaw dude was the one who pulled his hat straight down over his eyes – and refused to take it off again until they were out of the place. So I had to make up some vague symbols on the spot, which I based on the most dangerous aspects of the following sections of the scenario. Shortly afterwards one of them almost came true when a character was horribly injured by the Tigersons (see later).

17) Another place with a stone hut on an island. Same as the last one.

18) This place was a covered cave, and we floated around for quite a while because up on the ceiling was a beautiful map of the night sky.

Describe this in powerful terms – this place is very weird and special. The night sky is pictured as it was during the Second Age, and is actually a true visual representation that turns according to the amount of time spent watching it. Shooting Stars and other odd astral phenomena can be observed if it is watched for long enough.

19) A whole bunch of rebels live here. This time we were glad to have the thieves with us, because one had a cousin amongst the rebels. If we hadn't they later told us they would have killed us all. The cavern was another dry one and they lived in some caves around the edge. They didn't have much, but gave us some food and let us rest before we went. They told us that we shouldn't leave the canal until the sun started to go down, as they would have to pack and move to another hideout.

If necessary the rebels will be able to point the way to the entrance to the inner maze. Or they may just be a place to stop and rest. They do know that at least three armed Lunar expeditions have gone into the maze looking for something in the past three seasons. Although Lunar expeditions have gone in before, there was something odd about these. Since they attacked the first one, and found out how well-armed and powered they were, they have ignored the others.

20) The whole tunnel leading up to this place is underground, and alcoves in the walls contain statues of humans, dwarves, and representations of dwarf devices. The place at the end is a big cave with some ruins and some broken metal structures. An old man lives there, who is quite mad. But the strangest thing about him is that none of us were quite sure if he was a man or a dwarf.

Another possibility for the way into the inner maze to be somehow revealed by this odd character.

21) A metal statue stood on a rock in the center of this open cavern. It was vibrating and warm, and after we had been there for a while most of us could hear a ringing noise in the distance.

22) This place is another dock, and beyond it is an area of buildings and what may have been slave pits or places where animals are kept. The main building, of which only the front sticks out from under a hill, is sealed with magic. We could not get in.

23) Water elves live in here, and attacked us with living riverweed. Again, if several of us were not river worshippers I don't think they would have given us the chance to retreat.

The River Elves are detailed at: P&BR, pp299/230.

A) The canal goes through a long tunnel here. Before we went in we could hear very peculiar noises, like a child's crying but different. Two of the thieves volunteered themselves to walk over the top through the undergrowth. In the end we never saw anything in the tunnel, except for some lights flying along. We waited at the other side for an hour, but the thieves never came across. Probably something got them, but then again they seemed like smart guys, so maybe they thought they'd take their chances against the Lunar oath and just took off.

B) An island surrounded by water. We had to explore at least three places away from the water so the Lunars said, so we made this one. Definitely some people had been making camp here not all that long ago, but we didn't see anyone. But right at the top of the island was a huge pillar with a great big bronze ring at the top. There was some magic there, but we couldn't make sense of it. What especially we couldn't make sense of is how come we couldn't see the pillar from the boat, nor why it isn't visible from outside the canal.

C) This was another big overgrown island and we could see some ruins on it. We thought maybe we could rest here if it was safe, and decided to explore. Before we had seen very much, something invisible killed Ranis, and after we ran back to the boat Jasal was no longer with us either.

The island of the Catoblepas (P&BR, p285/6).

Catoblepas: Gaze Attack (____), Tentacles (____), Bite (____), Trample (____).

Resisting the Gaze Attack:

[Resist with: Devoted to XX, Initiated to XX (-5), Resist Sorcery, Resist Enemy Magic (-5), Resist Spirits (-10), Resist Mind Control/Strong-Willed etc (-10). NB: Humakti gain a bump up in the result of any resistance roll, i.e. a Minor Victory changes to a Major Victory etc.]

Complete Victory: Character shrugs off the weird effect easily, and is not susceptible to this magic again during this encounter – although they won't know this.

Major Victory: Character resists the effect, but ends up feeling pretty awful.

Minor Victory: Character fights off the effect, taking 5 Hurts in draining damage.

Marginal Victory/Defeat/Tie: Character barely fights off the effect, and takes the equivalent of an Injury in draining damage

Minor Defeat: Character succumbs, but only takes two injuries in draining damage.

Major/Complete Defeat: Character is struck dead.

D) We were attacked here by giant legless toads with wings, which just jumped right out of the water. Haalma was taken before we even knew what was going in, and I took a nasty slash from one of the barbed tails and needed healing.

Water Leapers – see above.

E) On a sandbank here were some scruffy looking birds with long beaks. As we drew alongside they attacked us. Stupid things. Maybe they don't even know what swords are. We killed one and wounded three others, although several of us took nasty pecks that needed healing.

Maybe immature Bloodbirds? See above.

F) An old stone bridge crossed the canal here, but we were in a cutting that looked hard to climb, so we did not stop to investigate. I was sure that I saw a movement up there, but nothing attacked us.

G) Things that we thought were some kind of gorp were on the bank here and came across the water at us. They were all blobby but with two little eyes, and mouths full of teeth. We lost Jornar and one of the thieves here before we slew them all.

Brollachans – see above.

H) A gorp of all things took the front of the boat here, and although we all got out safely apart from Ulber, the boat sank with the gorp still attached to it. There were only four of us left then anyhow, and we started walking back along the paths on the bank.

Ignore this one in this direct fashion, as the boat needs (if at all possible) to survive to well into the inner maze.

Nonetheless a gorp may try to do this, but be repelled.

Transitional Passage

Eventually the PCs and their boat will reach some kind of portal into a tunnel. Make this portal interesting and ancient. (One or two suggested locations are above, although the PCs need to have ample time to explore the outer maze first.) Beyond the portal is a wide tunnel with a stone walkway on one side, leading away for a considerable distance. Maybe the PCs need to solve some kind of riddle to gain access through the bars/energy-barrier/series-of-unbreakable-glass-doors/whatever?

Once inside, the canal goes on, and is pitch black. After a short time an alcove is seen against the wall. Inside is a metal golem that charges out and attacks anyone on the passage, or leaps the distance onto the boat. Although this is the first of a series of very strong foes, the golems do not attack (nor even animate) if the boat hugs the far wall. Eventually, after passing a large number of alcoves, the canal starts to pick up speed, and then a stone-framed doorway is seen on the path. (The canal also continues beyond this point.) At close range runes can be seen carved all around the doorway's lintel. An energy barrier blocks the way onto a flight of steeply descending stairs. The Narrator must decide exactly what they say if a full translation is made – something about the path of destiny perhaps? Certainly some of the runes indicate that this is a portal to the 'Otherworlds'.

Probably the way to defuse the energy barrier is by using divine power (Devotee/Initiate of XX) and a focussed will or specific magic. However, as soon as someone steps onto the path the golems from further back all animate and run towards the door. The nearest one is some distance away, so they have a few rounds still. Nonetheless, it is entirely possible that combat will begin with series of a couple of dozen powerful metal golems. (Fortunately only one at a time can fight on the narrow path.) The golems retreat a few minutes after everyone goes back to the boat (or passes through the door – through which they will not follow in any case) as long as the boat then goes to the far side of the passage.

The stairway descends steeply in a curved path and emerges into a small heavily-foliaged steep-cliffed valley. This valley was once some kind of pleasure garden (as can be seen from stone paths underfoot and statues etc. However, it is all now a jungle of undergrowth and trees. Half a mile away a large waterfall pours over a series of fairly steep rapids and enters a wide river. It should (but may not) quickly become obvious that this is either the HeroPlane or some place attuned somehow to the HeroPlane, as the river

though not a massive flow is still too wide to be supported within any normal part of the Puzzle Canal. After some examination it should be also clear that the dangerously steep rapids is where the river they just left comes out of the cliffs.

In the playtest two PCs decided to stay in the boat, along with the newtling chief. A minimum crew of three were needed to operate the rudder I decided, and only one newtling could be persuaded to risk his life in this way. I was prepared to allow injuries and possibly even death, but everyone rolled well, and despite a very exciting trip (I described the terrifying journey in three stages of detail for the dice rolls) all survived. (Though the Humakti took a dunking, and minor injuries, after being tossed out of the boat in the lower reaches.) If the boat is damaged or destroyed, allow the PCs to repair it or to construct a raft. If they construct a raft the newtlings will refuse to go on. Their loyalty is to their boat, into which their group wyter was/is bound. (If the newtlings remain with the group they are now expendable, and might well die on the way upriver, though preferably at least the wacky Trident should survive.)

Scene 2.8 - The Inner Maze

This is the meat of the search for (and encounter with) Kreutz, and is – as you have surely guessed – the third or fourth Gloranthan attempt to utilize the plot skeleton of a well-known cult movie. (Though this is possibly the first such attempt to call upon the Director's Cut for inspiration.) Because this is an otherworldly experience, the vagaries of reality are all entirely excusable – as is the way the plot now becomes linear. The movie was in any case based on an older book by Joseph Conrad, which was an even more direct metaphor for the darkness of the soul. All in all, the theme lends itself well to a HeroQuest. Incidentally, it might be best to tell the players something like – “Some of the following has been adapted from a reasonably well-known aspect of popular culture. If you recognize the source please keep it to yourself until the end of the session. Also, be aware that it is adapted, not copied – so don't make the assumption that you will know what is going to happen even if it is familiar.”

Again certain sections are in outline form only, and must be expanded before play or improvised during play as I did. Only attempt running it without making further notes if you are really sure what you are doing. I had several solid ideas in my head at the time, which I was able to use, but haven't been able to recall sufficiently well to add them all back in to the following text. The encounters below all have some kind of mythic resonance, but it is not important that the PCs/Players fully understand what each one is about. Nonetheless, it is important that each encounter be run as a fully-formed interactive role-playing experience, not as some abstract observed series of events.

It doesn't matter if the PCs do not understand the sense of all this, only that they understand it has some kind of mythic meaning. PCs may gain Hero Points, or other rewards for acting nobly and/or peaceably, as this is what Pavis would have done. In between each encounter describe and emphasize the endless rolling river – make it clear in this case that the river is a metaphor for life and/or understanding, and also that considerable distance separates each encounter. This is important even if they lose their boat and are walking.

Although they are on the HeroPlane, or some similar Otherworld environment (the PCs themselves may not be qualified to identify this variation) night falls, and they need to eat. Thus, sleeping and eating arrangements, and possibly hunting or fishing activities, will need to be role-played. The night sky is that of Second Age Dragon Pass, though it may be that no PCs are capable of any greater awareness than 'the stars are different to normal'.

No Flying – Note that outside of the first small valley it is not possible to fly more than three meters from the ground during this stage of the scenario. Magic simply fails to propel one any higher than that.

The River

The river ends a little further down the valley, disappearing through small holes beneath the front of a great stone platform of fallen and ruined statues. You should make this location interesting and weird, though it has no direct bearing on the progress of the scenario. Perhaps ghosts patrol this ruin, intent on some almost forgotten and unfathomable tasks? If the newtlings remain with the group, sometime during the exploration of the valley, Trident will discover a patch of hazia, almost desiccated in the sunshine. By bizarre coincidence the leaves are perfect for rolling and smoking. Trident collects suitable dry leaves for this process, and begins creating and smoking his 'own'. Consequently he is of very little use from now on, and this should be seen as a sign of the growing fear of these newtlings – now very far outside familiar territory. (The other newtlings, except Boss, may also smoke from time to time, but not nearly so much.)

The river comes into the first valley through a high natural cutting. Beyond the cutting, the river flows along a steep-walled rocky valley - with a flat area overgrown with vegetation beside it (all along one side of the river). This bankside area varies in width on this side from 10m to 200m or rarely 350m as they progress upriver. Sometimes, particularly early on, it has a covering of tall swampy grasses rather than trees and

bushes, but the further upriver they get the taller and thicker the bushes get. Stands of trees also become more prevalent, then small woodlands, then jungle-like forest. This is important to note as you run this section, as it symbolizes their progressing deeper and deeper into the wildness of human nature.

Due to the mythic nature of their experience it is not possible to get out of this river valley, nor to fly high enough to see what lies beyond. From now on their fate is tied to proceeding upriver. If they have lost their boat then they can either walk, or can construct a raft. In the latter instance, since there are no elementals tied to the raft they will either have to recover the rudder of the old boat (to which the undines are bound) or use their own divine allegiances (or HeroQuest intent) to power the raft. By HQ intent, I mean that this is now a myth (or at least something resembling one), and they can call upon various forces to allow them to continue their journey despite this set back.

Remember to run the gaps between encounters with suitably atmospheric descriptions of the passing foliage. Each such section should give the PCs a chance to discuss their progress and notice the passing scenery. The Narrator needs to ask who is on watch, and call for Perception rolls every now and then, to emphasize the fact that significant distance is being covered. Basically, the Players need to be aware that their PCs are going deeper and deeper into this particular episode, and the PCs will certainly suspect that they are on some aspect of the HeroPlane – and will know that such things are not to be taken lightly.

The Battle

Around a bend in the river, the bank gets wider. Here is a settlement of Lunar farmers: a village inside a tall palisade fence of sharpened tree trunks. Their crops are in fields outside the village, and people working in them turn to look at the boat. Various local militia come at the run to see who the visitors are, but are not immediately belligerent. However, before the PCs can reach the bank and interact, screams come from the other side of the village upriver. A number of large canoes are racing across the water – presumably powered by even stronger elementals. Inside these vessels are many tattooed and savage Heortling warriors. In the lead canoe is a huge naked man wielding a massive axe. The soldiers that were waiting to greet the PCs flee north to meet the threat. The battle is more of a carnage, with the Heortlings eventually winning due to overwhelming savagery.

The PCs can involve themselves if they like, and can protect women and children, or those who surrender, but this will not be enough to stop the slaughter all round. The warriors will largely ignore the PCs unless directly interfered with. The PCs may be able to prevent people being burned in their homes, slaughtered when injured, stop the killing of children. This is not meant to be a pleasant scene, but to directly confront the PCs with the moral dilemmas of war and combat. If it fits the tone, they may even engage in furious debate with the leader of the warriors as to why prisoners should be spared etc – and even be able to influence him to make orders to lessen the savagery. (Even so, these will be small effects compared to the overall brutality going on.)

Only when the settlement is entirely crushed will the Heortlings calm down and allow the wounded to be treated and the prisoners given water etc. Throughout the battle the leader of the Heortlings cannot be reasoned with, though he can be fought. Nonetheless, he is a massive man and powerful hero, and is surrounded by bodyguards. He declaims that all the enemy scum must be eradicated. Indeed he is the only one who speaks, and may (if suitable opportunity presents) tersely explain that he is following the advice of Colonel Kreutz, to act without mercy against the foe.

After the battle the Heortlings leave, heading downriver, taking all surviving prisoners and leaving all the dead (friend and foe) burning in huge funeral pyres. If the PCs attempted to intervene and were attacked and treated as enemies, they will be left and spat upon, but not further harmed, although their boat will be burned. Mythically, this encounter is simply about the horror and brutality of war.

Mirror Image

Downriver comes a disguised Lunar fast patrol boat, just like their own. (This occurs even if the PCs are now trudging the riverbank.) In the boat are versions of themselves, but not good ones. These people are clearly in the grip of savage semi-madness, and will fire missile weapons and throw refuse and foul abuse at the PCs, as they zoom past. Some injuries will occur. Mythically, this indicates the dark saboteur within the self, and the opportunity for failure. Note that if the PCs have lost their boat, it is possible to taunt these replicas sufficiently to actually engage in combat and gain their boat from them – but this only occurs if one of the PCs suggests it and puts a sensible plan into action. The replicas are technically exact copies, but are not as intelligent as the PCs and therefore fight at minimal efficiency and with no real thought for survival. (Though they may use special abilities from time to time.) It is up to the Narrator if certain magics no longer function for the replicas (as presumably they are now excommunicated). If the PCs have not lost their boat, someone from the replica craft will throw a burning brand into the PC's craft, and a fire will ensue. If the PCs are not quick and intelligent with methods to put it out, their craft will be significantly damaged, and they will need to stop for repairs. (See next encounter.)

Never Get Out of the Boat

Some kind of intriguing overgrown ruin of some kind is clearly visible amongst the trees on the bank. It is not a very long or difficult walk to reach it; perhaps it is some kind of temple. Evidence can be found that some kind of bare-footed humanoids have been in the area recently. Soon a group of Tigersons will be encountered. Mythically this represents 'unfinished business' or 'unexpressed aggression'. Whether or not the Tigersons are real is immaterial; however below are the stats from the Tigersons that were in the 'Ghost Fort' scenario. When I ran that in the house campaign, the wily Tigersons escaped unharmed, although their best skeleton was smashed to bits under a dwarf trap. (They do not have any animated skeletons here.) So this is their chance for revenge. Out here in the canal they recognize some of their former oppressors, and are no longer bound by the niceties of hoping to live alongside the human settlements of the Rubble. Battle will be fierce, and indeed may be some kind of mythic payback for past mistreatment of foes.

This information is still in the original HW form, because the creation of this mini-campaign is taking ages, and they are not a crucially important foe.

TYPICAL TIGERSON

Keywords: Tigerson 9w, Initiate of Great Tiger 8w.

Virtues: Agile 18, Enthusiastic 3w.

General Abilities: Climb 10w, Hide 11w, Jump 7w, Listen 18, See Hidden 9w, Speak Old Pavic 12, Speak Trade 15, Track by Scent 10w.

Combat Abilities: Axe 2w2⁴ (7w2⁴ w. agmts.), Claws and Bite (Manbeast) 17w³ (4w2³ w. agmts.).

Integrated Spirits: Ripping Claws 12w, Tiger Strength 18w, Shape Change to Tiger 6w.

BLACKCLAW

Rune Lord of the Cult of the Tiger, Shaman of Zorak Zoran

Keywords: Tigerson 14w, Initiate of Great Tiger 11w, Shaman of the Dark Eater 4w.

General Abilities: Climb 12w, Hide 9w, Jump 8w, Quiet as a Cat 10w, See Hidden 6w, Speak Old Pavic 13, Speak Trade 14, Track by Scent 14w.

Combat Abilities: Claws and Bite (manbeast) 18w³ (10w2⁴ with spirit augments), Close Combat 8w2⁴ (Sword and Cestus).

Integrated Spirits: Tiger's Thews 12w, Stamina of the Beast 11w, Red Rage Berserk 9w, Tiger's Claws 14w, Shape Change to Tiger 10w, Tiger's Pelt 14w.

Fetish: Fear Spirit 9w 1/day, Block Light Spirit 14w (1 use), No Sound Spirit 12w (2/day)

Equipment: Zorak Zoran Medallion (stores 14 AP for use in magical contests), Neck Band (Resist Magic 9w)

Notes: Darkclaw will use his Tiger's Pelt ability to grow a thick hide that will augment his armor rank. He always prefers to engage in Combat in his Manbeast form, although he conducts ambushes in tiger form.

The Festivities

Here is a settlement of Heortlings. It is clearly the Storm Age, and they are partying hearty. Since in my house campaign some of the PCs are Dorasing or Heortling no problem ensued in having them join in; they were cordially (well drunkenly) invited. Describe the place in detail – the chieftain's hut and table, the carousing of both men and women. Gluttony and Lechery are possible here in a big way, bragging is expected, and violent fist-fights are considered to be prime entertainment. Naked wrestling is practiced by both males and females (though not together), and these lewd spectacles are enthusiastically supported, though attempting to touch or become involved is (aggressively) discouraged by the referees. As many stereotypical brash Heortling types as you can conceive of can be found. The mythic point of this encounter is to explore the selfishness inherent in people. PCs should receive rewards for concentrating on the mission, and the Narrator may wish to set up game-mechanic temptations that they have to contest. If any PC becomes engaged in carnal pursuits, do not pass this off in a rudimentary way – that character will feel a confusing emotional connection and a sense of loss, and perhaps drop into melancholy when the encounter is over. This does not need to be role-played in some kind of melodramatic way, but needs to be strongly implied at the very least. Likewise, other pursuits will, after the fact, be perceived as shallow and meaningless. Specifically, this section reflects the shallowness of life without morals, goals, and consideration of one's actions.

The Mists

From now on a mist starts to drift across the river and its valley. This is not initially particularly thick, but grows to be that way. Mythically this represents fear and uncertainty. All of the encounters from now on to greater or lesser degrees appear out of the mist.

The Insane Bridge

Up ahead on the single substantive bank of the river, which the PCs will be walking on if they have lost their boat, they can see a rough fortification wall. Beyond that is a half-built stone bridge protruding into the river. Not much can be seen because of the mists, but it seems that further stone pylons exist in the river, and that

makeshift wooden platforms join them to each other until at last the far bank is reached. Up on the better half of the bridge, semi-civilized warriors (think Dorasing or early Sartari rather than Heortlings) are attempting to extend the structure by building wooden frames from which they can then support stonemasonry work. However, clearly someone or something is preventing them.

When the PCs' boat first arrives (presuming they are on a boat), various of the warriors will try and swim out from the nearest edge of this area, begging to be taken back downriver. They will cry out that they will surely die here, that this place is ruled by madness, and that they deserve to be spared. However, they will refuse to travel any further upriver – saying that the madness only gets worse in that direction. They may even band together to try and takeover the boat. If questioned, they may have heard rumors about Kreutz and his band marauding across the countryside and killing all that oppose them. They believe the enemy across the way to be somehow connected to Kreutz. (NB: These are the only people during this encounter from which any sense at all may be had.)

More than half of the bridge builders have bows or huge shields, and are trying to protect the workers from stones and spears that periodically come flying out of the mist. It is possible that if the PCs are in a boat, they won't want to stop at this crazy place, but they will need to get hold of some of those shields to protect themselves when passing under the bridge. The lie of the ground is such that it rises up to where the bridge begins, and the adventurers must skulk through earthworks if they wish to pass safely this way. (Some of the thrown rocks that come out of the mist from time to time must be thrown by some kind of mechanical device.)

None of the warriors round the main section seem to know where the bridge is supposed to be going, who is stopping them ('they are', 'the enemy'), or who is in command of the operation. If questioned about other details such as the year or their pasts, all seem to find it difficult to remember details, and in any case are either too fatigued, depressed or involved to be available for conversation of any depth. And they certainly know nothing about Kreutz. Their comrades will not look well on forcing a person to answer questions via intimidation – although this is about the only time any of them will act purposefully. Though the atmosphere is one of siege, it is not a constant barrage. Even on the bridge, it will be quiet for a while and work will begin again – then a barrage will fell a few workers, retaliation will begin, much shouting and carrying on. In the trenches near the start of the bridge on top of the hill some of the warriors are lying listless and dispirited, obviously convinced that their task is hopeless. If the PCs try to cross the bridge, they get under progressively more deadly fire the further they get, and it should become clear that this is an impossible task.

No sense is meant to be established during this particular encounter, but neither is it meant to be a farce. Though clearly a ridiculous situation, the atmosphere is one of great purpose, and the risk of physical harm is high if the PCs don't take precautions. If it adds to the adventure, the boat comes under direct fire, and may even be sunk. It is possible for the PCs to destroy the bridge if they think of a clever enough way. For instance, they might find oil in a supply dump behind the warriors' trenches if they look for it. This clever thinking grants them enough time to pass safely, since the barrage stops when the bridge is even partially destroyed in any substantial way beyond its current state of disrepair. However, the warriors will get angry and begin reconstruction straight away. Some kind of further mythic reward should be granted for such an action, especially for any PC that thinks of it, or assists significantly in carrying it through.

Branching Out

Some miles beyond the bridge the river splits in a delta like style, though clearly it is not near any ocean. Navigation from now on is very very difficult, and the PCs will have to reply on their questing intent. If they don't have a boat they will need to construct a raft. (Fortunately, though they don't know it at this point, they can pick up a new boat in a little while at one of two possible locations.) You may wish to call for Boating and Navigation rolls, and pretend to consult charts and optional encounter lists. Strange creatures will be seen swimming in the mist, and you may wish to add odd encounters – such as obscure chats with semi-intelligent water dwellers, and attacks or threatening behavior from bizarre water beasts.

The Broken Boat

A Lunar patrol boat like their own is supported on the broken upper branches of some large trees, as if it was picked up by a giant and then casually tossed down, and two rotting bodies can be seen within. Parts of three other skeletons are scattered in the undergrowth below. If the PCs have their own decent boat, this one is beyond easy repair. If they are in a shoddy raft, then it may be possible to fell the trees in such a fashion that this boat lands in the shallows, where it can be repaired. If the bodies above are examined (a task that requires great agility) these are the remains of a Lunar group sent to slay Kreutz. (Papers will be found in an oilskin pouch.) Maybe one or two useful magic items will be found too. It is not meant that the boat should fall on anyone and crush them, but any examination should be fraught with difficulty, and also rewarded for bravery. If they try and salvage the boat, but it smashes as a result of the fall that is fine, since a second opportunity for a new boat is about to occur.

Another Settlement

From out of the mists the PC on watch sees a stone wharf become visible. This is decorated with draconic architectural motifs and seems indescribably ancient and is significantly ruined. If they don't want to stop, remind them that this may in fact be where Kreutz is holed up ("Maybe this is where you are supposed to be heading?"), and in any case they are pretty exhausted after all their efforts. (They may of course decide to go a little further back down the river and rest, before investigating this encounter further. If so, the following incident will occur at their camp instead – even if on the opposite side of the river.) Another option is for the colonists to have set up some kind of chain barricade that rises out of the water mechanically. Then, when the PC boat has to stop, the colonists put to water in their own craft and surround them.

So, either immediately on their initial exploration of this place, at their campsite, or on the river as they try to go past, a large number of oddly-dressed and armored men and women appear out of the mist, armed with draconic longbows and ornate swords. It is immediately obvious (though some kind of history rolls may be called for) that these are settlers from the age of the Empire of the Wyrms' Friends (EWF). However, their clothes are homemade, and their weapons and armor show great age or are clearly inferior replicas. Clearly they have been here for a long time. Not all of them are the same racial stock, and some are possibly travelers on the HeroPlane who have become trapped at this place.

Communication is possible through the use of Old Pavic (which is based on the common tongue of the EWF), but this is halting and painstaking at first – until each group gets used to the accents of the others. Several of the members of the group are indeed more recent arrivals, but this is a comparative thing, and they have become used to using the local language.

This is a hierarchical settlement, and whilst its individual members are not oppressed clearly it operates under some semi-military kind of organization. The spokesperson is one of the elder males, who is apparently descended from the founder of this colony, and he will primarily be the one to address the PCs. The PCs, once their friendliness has been established will be invited back to the main house, and if they are in a boat this will be pulled into one of the small docks and camouflaged. Guards are posted nearby.

This place is a small plantation, where the 100 or so souls grow their own food. The main house is a mansion in the Old Pavic/EWF style that has clearly been much repaired over the centuries. Nearby is a large graveyard (large for a plantation of this size, not a massive place in itself) where previous occupants are buried.

These people are intelligent, though information will need to be drawn from them (and will not be volunteered). However, they know very little about the outside world. As far as they recall, this place was deeded to them centuries ago (by Pavis himself they say), after their family had been subject to immense persecution (the details of which they do not wish to divulge). Over the centuries various creatures and warbands have tried to drive them away, but they have always managed to repel these, despite losses and slow birth rates. (Originally there were 600 or more adults and 200 children – now there are 93 adults and 9 children.)

Their settlement is partially protected by the magic of a dragon shrine, and many of the adults are able to manifest dragon magic if required. (They will not casually demonstrate this, but are willing to discuss the mystic religion if anyone is generally interested.) The temple can be visited, but the inner sanctum is only open to those who truly embrace (or majorly respect) the draconic way. Interior and exterior of this place need to be described in suitably wondrous style, with draconic motifs and statues. Since time is so fluid here, it is possible if a PC desires it that they can gain some training in aspects of the draconic mind – run any such thing as you see fit, but make it a suitably mystic and impressive experience.

The settlers are little interested in the outside world, but will politely listen to anything that is said. They are aware that they live on the edge of normal reality, and don't care. They are almost fanatically loyal to this place, the land of their ancestors, and none of them will consider leaving. Even the few newcomers who are clearly of other racial stock have been fully adopted into the family and will not leave. (Although the Narrator might make one exception – perhaps a person who vanished from Pavis only 10 years ago, who at first shows only slight interest in leaving, but can be persuaded. The Narrator will need to invent a suitably intriguing and detailed background and identity for this person.)

The settlers do know vaguely of recent attacks from fanatical warbands that have killed several of the settlers, but always been repulsed. However, they know nothing of Kreutz per se. The PCs will be invited to a fine meal of fish and vegetables at the huge table in the main house. This is a very civilized affair, and must be something like what life was like for the wealthy in the original Pavis City so many centuries ago. It even puts the notables of New Pavis to shame.

In deference to the source material, if it fits the style of your game, one of the settlers is an attractive widow who takes a shine to one of the characters. If a tryst takes place later in her room, she will first ply the character with something resembling hazia, which she swears is non-addictive. Afterwards the experience will be recalled as dream-like, and the character will manifest some odd draconic gift – providing he treated the woman well. (Feel free to reverse the genders if necessary.) She is a pacifist, and though she will not leave

this place – unless the GM decides it makes a good game incident to do so – has had enough of fighting for their land, and is filled with sadness about the necessity for so much killing.

If the PCs arrive here without a boat, the settlers will help repair one of their own old boats, and gift this to the adventurers. They may also trade some of their classic weapons for modern models of an equal state of repair, so long as the settlers gain a 2:1 benefit. (They have very limited resources.) These traded items will continue to exist back in the mundane plane and will be priceless historical relics.

Missile Attacks

After many long hours travelling further through this network of waterways, observant PCs may notice figures skulking in the dense underbrush. When they can eventually make out details, these are both human and newtling, but both species are caked in dried mud and decorated with random patterns of tribal paint. Soon these disturbing figures will have been seen often enough for it to be known that there are scores of them at least (but scattered along the bank, not all in one group). Then, at a place where the river rounds a bend and narrows shortly afterwards, these figures launch an attack with a hail of arrows from shortbows. The initial attack is of dummy arrows that can do little more than scratch the unprepared. Nonetheless, roll the amount of hits on each character, as their lack of potency is not initially known. The trick to this encounter (and a sleight variation from the source material) is that this is just an aiming round, and the next round of larger arrows, and a few spears, are not dummies. If the PCs do not think to take cover they may well take serious damage. Any attempt to attack those on the bank will result in the assailants fading away into the undergrowth, though some small combats can take place if the PCs are swift enough.

The Colonel

The PCs will arrive at a large island, and blocking their access is a huge fleet of rough canoes, each with 2 or 3 warriors armed with spears and bows. Behind these, the island has a small stone dock of ancient design, though this is now overgrown. Around the dock and on the bank more newtlings and ducks, and some humans scurry and peer. Now they are not hiding it can be seen that they are dressed in only rough clothing, with odd tattoos, fetishes made of vegetation, feathers or animal parts - some are even covered in drying mud. It is hard to tell how many of them there are as the surrounding vegetation is like a jungle. All seem somehow to be in a trance. It would be quite a battle to defeat this small army. But then a voice calls from the bank. (No sign of the owner of the voice is ever seen, but he cries out "Make a noise, they are frightened of noise!" And indeed shouting and banging things causes them all to back away.) Any attack results in retaliation in which the PCs will inevitably be overwhelmed – in which case see below. If the PCs moor the boat, any surviving newtlings will wish to stay with it (except for the weird and wacky Trident if he still lives – who will come with them).

If any of the main inhabitants are later questioned, they seem drugged and are unable to provide clear information. (It seems they both worship and fear the Colonel, considering him a madman and a demi-god.) These denizens nonetheless will shadow the adventurers as they make their way inland following a partially cleared roadway. From time to time through the jungle the adventurers see small fields of some type of Hazia (a local narcotic). The island's residents occasionally pause and pull off a few leaves to chew. The adventurers may even be offered some. Animals may be seen along the way, but none are normal - there are bears, wolves, deer, large cats, monkeys and Praxian herd animals, but all appear to be half-human. They skulk fearfully in the undergrowth.

At the center of the island is a ruined town and at the center of this is a ruined mansion house on top of a small hill. At the edge of the town are the remains of what may once have been large animal cages or herd beast enclosures (a private zoo). The odd animals are braver here and join the procession. Many of them too wear the odd adornments. Passing through the town the heroes cannot but notice the very odd architectural styles - odder even than the EWF styles in the extant parts of the Rubble – perhaps (deities-forbid) God Learner structures. Sometime during this stage of the procession an observant PC may notice a human in partial Lunar armor of a modern nature. However, this man is as weird as the rest of these beings. The PCs may mistake him for Kreutz, and address him as such. If so he will laugh hollowly, and deny this – saying he is not fit to even be mistaken for the General.

As the PCs approach the mansion, the crowd around them turns nasty, attacks them for subdual damage and strips them of weapons, armor and magic items. (All except the drugged-up Trident, whom they ignore.) They are bound and forced into metal cages (which are enchanted to resist magical breakouts). For two days they will suffer in these cages (hot and dry, and only occasionally given water by the man in Lunar armor). During this time Trident may be seen wandering about mingling well with the locals, and may possibly be persuaded to give them water – but is otherwise of no use at all. If the PCs question the Lunar, he will say only that the Colonel is a genius, a man of immortal vision, who's feet he is hardly fit to wash. He also adds that if the PCs came here to kill him, then they will meet a terrible fate for even desiring such a thing. The PCs may well deny this and explain their purpose. If so he will listen, but not comment. During this time he may

admit that it was he who shouted out then they arrived, having been instructed by the Colonel to do so. During this time, the heads of any newtlings who stayed with the boat are delivered to the PCs on metal plates, decorated as if they were a fine meal.

Their ordeal ends when a huge man comes to look at them. This man too has remnants of Lunar gear upon him, but the most remarkable thing about him is that he has huge rams horns and one of his lower legs is a muscular hooved limb. This is the Colonel. He will engage them in illumination riddles. Play this as you like – if any of the PCs know of Illumination or have any mystical/philosophic ability then rolls can be made. Success may increase the ability being used slightly. However, it will be clear that the Colonel has gone insane. His philosophies, though founded in deep and clear thought have long-since taken their own route into the realms of madness. Nonetheless, he will be impressed by any attempts to engage him in discussion at his level. The general topic is that in war one must have absolute focus, and do everything necessary to crush the foe and the foe's morale. If asked about the Wedding of Pavis, he will monetarily go quiet, then say: "Pavis, the only mind I have met that was equal to my own." The PCs may correctly assume that Kreutz was partly illuminated in some Lunar fashion, became exposed to Pavic mysticism and then tipped over the edge. This mentioning of Pavis may be noticed by the PCs as the point at which Kreutz becomes more respectful of them. Allow PCs to debate Pavic philosophy with him if they wish – perhaps talking about the lack of respect of keeping people in cages. The Colonel will eventually leave, but soon after this incident the PC who impressed him the most will be released.

The Colonel lives in the ruined mansion, which is surrounded at all times by the cream of his troops. However, the interior of the building is not crowded – just a few people wander in and out. Soon after the PC's release, the Lunar will say that the Colonel has invited him to visit the house. Inside the Colonel resides in the remains of a library, living amongst squalor. As well as rotting books, there are animal hides, stuffed animal heads, and weird experimental equipment bubbling or glowing on stone benches. Many Narrators will assume that the Colonel will explain all that is occurring around here – but not so. He at first assumes that the adventurers have been sent here by the Lunars to assassinate him, and only a whim has prevented him from having the heroes ambushed much earlier. He will be mysterious and threatening until convinced that they are not assassins, quoting mystic riddles and obscure Lunar theology. When this has been established, he will take the adventurer into the back garden of the mansion, where there is an odd shrine building. Inside this is a glowing hunk of rock that keeps pulsing and slowly changing form from rock to plant to flesh. Indecipherable runes decorate the walls of this shrine.

The Colonel, even when he has taken a liking to the Hero, speaks only in vague terms. It can be gathered that he worked directly for the mystics across Dragon Pass and the Empire, and has done many unsavory things. Eventually it seems that he somehow snapped. Something he learned in Old Pavis unhinged his mind. The Narrator should create further odd dialogue to lead up the following phrases.

"Down the thousand steps beneath the playground of devils, it lies quivering in its own foulness."

"Its minions are horrors corrupt beyond description."

"My masters have formed a pact with the devil."

"Oh they seem human, but are devourers of flesh. Already innocents have been sent screaming to satisfy their foul cravings."

"The Masked One has no conscience and no pity."

The Colonel is hinting (truthfully) that the mystics have made a pact with chaotics at the Devil's Playground and visited some kind of chaos entity there. His words might also indicate (again correctly) that Gimgrim the Grim is an ally of the mystics, and that the chaotics have been supplied with human sacrifices. He sits before the strange shrine, his head in his hands, and his final comments are quite lucid. (Bear in mind that the PC must pose the question about which myth the Lunar mystics are using before this happens – though not necessarily immediately before.)

"Perhaps we can do a deal, you and I. You desire information, and I desire release. Swear on this shrine that you will provide what I require, and I will likewise swear to assist you."

(In case it is not obvious, by 'release' the Colonel asks for death.)

The Colonel (after they have both sworn) then takes the PC back to the house, whilst engaging in a rambling attempt to explain his view of the functioning of the universe. Whilst his followers begin a crazed ceremony outside, on a gaming board in the house (a game of elemental balance once popular in Dragon Pass during the time of Sartar) he demonstrates an unusual series of moves that result in a stalemate in which no element has the upper hand. (He takes the role of the Moon element (a rules addition created by Lunars and obviously not adopted anytime this game is played by Sartar loyalists). The hero chooses another element. If the Narrator wishes he may play this out as some kind of strategy game, however, if the Colonel falls into difficulty, he will begin to introduce extra pieces to augment his position. (He will do this later in the game even if he is winning.) These pieces are from any element but are warped and twisted, and seem to be allowed any combination of moves. The game soon degenerates into unplayability, and the Colonel claims victory.

Once he has won, he puts his head in his hands and mutters: *"Hollow, so hollow. All my victories are now so hollow"* (Pause) *"The myth you seek is the one in which the harlot proves herself worthy to be the king's mistress. She has five tasks, and the last one traditionally fails. When my comrades perform this quest the last task will not fail, but will be a blasphemous union of chaos, moon and darkness. They seek not just to join your god to the Red Moon, but also to create their own foul fealty here in your city and land. Now fulfil your side of the bargain."*

This final scene can be run as the Narrator wishes. The Colonel may allow himself to be slaughtered. (The PC will need to find some weapon amongst the weird debris in the room.) In this case he will die whispering the words: *"Hollow, so hollow."* Or he may fight back with all his might, revealing chaotic powers, even perhaps the ability to regenerate after death. (Thus he will need to be repeatedly slain and/or his remains utterly dissolved in acid – which can be found as part of one of the experiments.) If combat ensues and the character is losing, the mysterious other Lunar may let the other PCs out of their cages. (Don't make this a arbitrary event – the Lunar will dither with indecision first, talking about how great the Colonel is, and yet also how insane.) They may be able to find their weapons straight away (or at least some of them depending on frantic Search successes), or may have to improvise instead – a necessity perhaps leading to the discovery that acid is useful against the Colonel. Note that during all this time the other PCs may have been trying to escape or to convince someone to let them out. Probably these attempts should fail utterly, but be ready to improvise if the story requires it.

In any event, the Colonel will finally expire, and the adventurers will recover their belongings from amongst the debris all around. The fight (or slaughter) will have been obscured by the noise of the ceremony outside, so the PC/PCs have not been disturbed. However, when the PC/PCs leave the building the Colonel's followers will all bow down before them, and offer their weapons. If a PC accepts any weapon, they immediately gain some kind of flaw to do with pride or aggressiveness. If alone, the PC will find that the Lunar is now freeing the others from the cages. As they return to their boat, Trident will approach them offering a spear that he has gotten from somewhere. They may choose to take this newtling with them, or not. Anyone who actively encourages or assists Trident to come with them gains some kind of benefit to do with being Honorable (or loses the recently acquired flaw).

Narrator Note: You can invent stats for Kreutz using some kind of combination Natha and Chaos magic, or merely improvise. (He is quite mad after all, and unlikely to use all of his capabilities.)

The Journey Back

The rest of their way out of the Puzzle Canal can be as simple or involved as the Narrator requires. It might be a change of pace to have the adventurers forced to abandon their boat and flee over unfamiliar trackways to get out of the Canal. If they do return by water, in order to emphasize the weirdness of the Canal, the route will have changed in at least one place, leading to a new encounter.

Alternatively, you can simply briefly recount the return journey as if in a dream, and when they get to the place that they entered the Inner Canal, instead of the peaceful valley they find a massive waterfall over which they are swept. This is an ejection from the HeroPlane, and instead of a deadly drop they land bruised and shaken (and very wet) in the shallows of the River of Cradles directly opposite the entrance to the Puzzle Canal. From here they will no doubt make their way back to whichever hideout they were using.

Scene 2.9 - Back in the Mundane Plane

Due to time distortions, although when they entered the canal they may have had a few weeks in hand before the Wedding, when they emerge from this magical place only three days remain before the Wedding is to take place. (It may take them a little while to realize this if they don't proceed immediately to some place where people are who know what is going on – and its temporal urgency.)

Note: This is a clear and unashamed plot device to speed things along and not allow much time for independent action outside the scope of this already action-packed scenario.

The Lunars have surely already done their mundane plane preparation, and must be preparing for the ritual that will climax in the actual wedding. All that the PCs' contacts know is that a large number of Lunars have arrived in Pavis from the Empire (50 or so in the last week): priests, mystics, and warriors. All of these new arrivals, and a significant number of locals, went into the Seven Mothers temple yesterday, and have not come out. That temple is now sealed except for special access. However, before all that happened a communal Pavis-worshipper who also follows the Seven Mothers let slip (under careful 'casual' conversation) that all of the new arrivals and some of the more notable locals are in the inner sanctum with the mystics and Tala Errio. Still more are in the outer chamber, supporting the wedding in a general ceremony, and food and drink is at hand to support them all for several days.

The Pavis Priests and any Ancient Measure contacts are overwhelmingly relieved to see the adventurers back. They had given them up for dead, and several other Pavic heroes have recently died or disappeared on the HeroPlane in foolhardy attempts to find the precise myth that the Lunars are corrupting. The only result of this work, is that the members of the Measure have pretty much confirmed that a myth involving the linking of the five elements into the city's mythic structure is involved. Unfortunately there are scores of such myths and their variations. It is with great relief that they learn that the myth involving Santrella ('the harlot') is the one. Prior to this point they had assumed that the Lunars had no knowledge of the existence of Santrella, since she had never been mentioned or even alluded to. In fact the best minds of the Measure had falsely concluded that some variation of the 'Fifth Element' Quest was involved. Now it is revealed that the Lunars were deliberately setting up a false trail, since the Santrella quest does indeed involve the elements, but not in the way the Lunars had let slip they believed. The agents of the Measure are angry with themselves for having allowed themselves to be fooled in such a way.

Santrella Averno

The following text summarizes what the Lunars know about Santrella and her relationship with Lord Pavis. Once the adventurers find out what the Lunars are basing their quest on, this text can also be used to represent the basic information initially revealed to them by their contacts in the Ancient Measure or the Pavis Priesthood. Further research will immediately begin (see 3.1 below).

Santrella Averno came from the EWF with the first waves of settlers (possibly at the direct invitation of Pavis – although it is not believed they knew each other previously), and founded a grand temple to Uleria near the city's market. Although she was already in middle-age, apparently she was a woman of profound earthy beauty and immense vigor and sensuality – having mastered various principles of Uleria's sensual and erotic mysteries. Apparently she had previously had legions of lovers, and it was noted that she had never committed to a single lover for any significant length of time.

It was not widely broadcast, but neither was it a thing that would have been found abhorrent, but Pavis himself was an advanced communal worshipper of Uleria. Since Santrella was High Priestess of Uleria, it was only fitting that she be the one to engage him in Uleria's embrace during his religious activities in worship of her goddess. For some years this was a mutually satisfactory arrangement for both of them, but then it appears that the unthinkable happened and Santrella fell in love with Pavis. Whatever dialogue passed between them is unrecorded, but they decided that if Santrella was able to prove her deep connection to the mythic purpose of Pavis, she could become his consort indefinitely (and he hers) and she could be acknowledged as his partner in public. (Although she could not, and would not wish to, leave her position as High Priestess of Uleria to take up some new position within the city's government.)

In order to prove herself worthy to be such a pivotal part of the city's mythic unfoldment, Santrella had to prove her connection to each of the elements. It is not recorded how these tasks were decided, or if there were any alternatives available, nor even exactly how they were performed. However, it is known that she had four followers who accompanied her (but not who they were).

Running a HeroQuest

This section is adapted from 'Shadows of Pavis' and is a simplified rules variant for running HeroQuests, based on some of the original ideas that were discussed during the design of the official rules (HeroQuest: pp191-205)

HeroQuests operate in 'stations'. Each station is a different encounter. In mechanical terms each station is more difficult than the last (having higher ratings of difficulty and opponent skills to be overcome). One must sometimes also overcome incidental obstacles (such as getting onto the HeroPlane in the first place). Typically one uses normal abilities to deal with each station. Rather than constantly altering and re-altering the ability ratings of the PCs, this optional variant changes the levels of difficulty in the stations. Therefore the Narrator alters the background rules to cope with the successes or failures of the questors as they continue. For instance in the following HeroQuest it is split into two sections – the mundane quest and the heroPlane quest. The mundane quest does not have variant ratings: the PCs simply deal with the world in the normal way. However, depending on how well they succeed at each 'station' of the mundane quest, they whittle down all future difficulty ratings they will encounter on the true quest. Bear in mind of course that the PCs/Players will never know these mechanical adjustments, but can be kept informed of how well they think they are doing. Also, the players should know that the Narrator is keeping a tally, so that this encourages good role-playing.

As an example, a 6 stage HeroQuest can have its ratings devised as normal for a real-world encounter, and then adjusted up by 30, with further bonuses as follows:

HQ Difficulty Levels

- Stage 1: +10 (effectively +40)
- Stage 2: +20 (effectively +50)
- Stage 3: +30 (effectively +60)
- Stage 4: +40 (effectively +70)

Stage 5: +50 (effectively +80)

Stage 6: +60 (effectively +90)

As you can see, by the time the PCs get to Stage 4 their regular abilities start to look a bit paltry, especially when you bear in mind that all HQ difficulties tend to start off as reasonably notable in any case. Fortunately the PCs have many chances to whittle away all of these totals as they go. (Note that no matter how high their negative augment rating accumulates, it never actually undermines the skills themselves, only the bonuses in the list above.)

NB: The figures below are negative augments, applied to the Quest difficulty bonuses above. Although the residents of Glorantha do not think in mechanical terms, any person remotely knowledgeable about HeroQuests knows that you do as many of these things as possible in order to make the quest easier.

Bonus Preparations

Superb Idea -3 (per idea)

Great Idea -2 (per idea)

Good Idea -1 (per idea)

Note: These are clever and relevant things that the PCs might do, and the GM has not necessarily specifically thought of. Something like starting the mundane quest with a night at the Uleria temple is a superb idea because it ties in directly with the nature of the quest and can involve all the questors. The main character (in this case an Ulerian Acolyte playing an Ulerian Priestess) spending a prolonged time in devotion at her temple before the quest is a good idea (good rather than great because it involves only her). Also include how well prepared they are with items taken as supplemental items appropriate to the quest (not their own gear, no matter how good). However, this particular bonus (special goods taken) rates only once overall, not per item, and is relevant to the actual (rather than known) requirements of the quest.

Overall Success at Any Mundane Quest Station

Superb -4

Good -2

Just About Acceptable (no benefit)

Appropriate Assignment of Roles

An example of a superb match is a Pavis devotee playing Pavis; a very good match – a long-time Pavis initiate playing Pavis; a good match would be a loyal communal worshipper or a new initiate of Pavis playing Pavis; and a tenuous match would be someone who lives in Pavis and has been to Pavic festival playing Pavis

Per Superb Match -6

Per Very Good Match -4

Per Good Match -2

Per Tenuous Match (no benefit)

NB: Quests without at least a tenuous match for each person are considered ill-fated and no-one will run them

Backing of Your Society

Minimal -5 (Acolyte and scores of worshippers)

Minor -10 (Lesser priest and scores of worshippers, or acolyte and hundreds of worshippers)

Middling -15 (Full priest and scores of worshippers, or lesser priest and hundreds of worshippers)

Major -20 (Full priest/hundreds of worshippers)

Performance/Success of Ceremony/Ritual to send you off

Poor (no benefit) Marginal Success/Tie

Adequate -3 (Minor Success)

Very Good -6 (Major Success)

Superb -9 (Complete Success)

Overall Success at Any HQ Station

Superb -6

Good -4

Just About Acceptable -2

Specific Acting in Character During a Station (per PC)

Superb -2

Good -1

Acceptable (no benefit)

Temporary Benefit for Acting in Character (for that PC only)

Acting in character during the actual station also creates a temporary and notable benefit applied only to that specific incident in which the performance takes place. This is designed to encourage the PCs to act as that being, or type of person, that they are portraying.

Superb Characterization -15

Great Characterization -10

Good Characterization -5

Hiding in the Myth

In the following actual quest, the Lunar mystics lurk in the myth (one at each stage). Exactly how this works in terms of when and where they really are I don't know. Perhaps these manifestations are merely 'echoes' of the actual person, deliberately left behind by repeated 'disaster management' trial runs at that stage. However, if the PCs manage to soundly overcome one of these manifestations, either by a superb regular defeat or by suspecting its presence and making a HeroForming Contest, then they should gain another -5 to their ongoing negative augment accumulation at least. In the playtest I actually intimated that the one superb success the PCs made actually catapulted that mystic out of the myth and back to their body. Such a thing may or may not work in your conception of the Quest. (I was able to rely on the old 'the workings of the myth are unfathomable to mere mortals' bit, in order to hide my own lack of complete understanding.)

Note: Whilst all this may seem to be a lot of calculation, as Narrator (and a noted non-maths type person) I found it extremely easy to keep track on a scrap of A4. It was also a great experience to be doing calculations without anyone having to roll dice. It eventually reached the point where the players' first thoughts at each encounter were how to increase their chances through appropriate mythic actions, and the negative augment was routinely whittled down to something more manageable.

Example of the System in Action

The number of stations of the mundane quest pretty much equals those on the proper quest, since to some extent the preparatory mundane quest is a re-enactment. However, any bonus sections that do not entail any risk are unlikely to increase the negative augment unless they are mythically very relevant.

In the playtest the characters thought to spend the night at the Uleria Temple in New Pavis before starting the mundane quest. This was a superb idea gaining them a -3 augment to the Quest difficulty rating. At the old Uleria temple in the Devil's Playground they did very well, taking great precautions and acting bravely, so again -3 (total: -6). At Mani's Fort everyone performed well and was involved, and although there was no risk each character threw themselves into the ceremony wholeheartedly, so I allowed a -2 (total: -8). The ceremony in the Garden was another participatory experience, and being so foreign they could only just let it happen. But dealing with the difficulties of getting to the garden was a heroic experience and the PCs acted bravely and loyally, so I allowed -2 (total: -10). Trying to tame the fire-horse was a bit of a struggle, with everyone having to pitch in. In the end I acknowledged it a good effort -2 (total: -12). They had to seek assistance outside of the quest to deal with the chaos creature near the river. Even though this was a result of Lunar sabotage that doesn't matter. I would have given them only -1, since at least they used their wits and won, but because of the clever preparation (the PC going to learn the summoning of chaos ritual) -2 (total: -14). The PC who tried to out-philosophize the dragonewts failed badly, but at least tried hard, so -1 (total: -15). The bargaining against the trolls was well thought out and executed, so -3 (total: -18). Thus at the end of the mundane preparation quest they have managed to accumulate a -18 negative augment which is applied to the bonus totals listed above this section.

The assignment of roles might come before the mundane quest (not so important) or before the actual HQ (essential). In this case there was one superb match (-6), two very good matches (-8), one good match (-2), and one tenuous (0), adding up to -16 (total: -30).

They were well-prepared with items necessary as gifts in the quest, so I granted them (-2). The backing of society was technically middling (scores of worshippers, led by Bendrath), but since Ginkizzie and a heap of dwarfs, and Fleeter and Broosta Nemm also turned up at the Old Mint (via the secret dwarf tunnels) it was Major (-20). Bendrath also made a major success in his performance of the ceremony (-6), so the actual total negative augment for the full HQ is already a massive: -58.

As you will see in looking at the HQ stage penalties above, the PCs have already amassed sufficient negative augment against the HQ bonus to wipe it out for the first, second and (most of) third stages. It is now up to them to continue to rack up negative augments against the remaining 32 points of bonus available to the Quest difficulties in the last stage. As you will see this needs to be done through overall success at each station and by acting as closely as possible to the manner of the mythic individual or type of person that you are portraying.

Narrator Note: Just to clarify, all of the above means that you only have to design each stage of the actual HeroQuest to normal difficulty parameters - as if it was a real world encounter. When the PCs actually arrive at the beginning of each HQ station, bump all abilities of enemies, and difficulties of challenges, within that station - by the amount indicated in the HQ Difficulty Levels table (or your own version thereof) **minus** the negative augment that the PCs have accumulated so far.

Part Three: The Mundane Plane Quest

Playtesters: Andrew Bean, Martin Gibbs, Harry Grawe, Stef Mathers & Peter Ujvari

Narrator Note: It was very fortuitous that an old stalwart player (who ran the Champion of Pavis) arrived back from overseas for a long holiday at this point in the campaign. Thus, the Champion of Pavis returned (having been recalled for this emergency) from his time in the Wastes negotiating with nomad leaders such as Argrath Whitebull, and rejoined the team.

Scene 3.1 – Preparation

Despite the urgency of the situation, the PCs must rest, eat, give thanks to their deities and perhaps obtain healing. Their ordeal in the Puzzle Canal is not one that can just be shrugged off. Over the hours that these things occur, the agents of the Ancient Measure are scouring the Pavis Cult archives and other sources for information on Santrella. Of course they already have a fair bit at their fingertips, but need to be absolutely sure now that the quest is confirmed. Once the PCs are rested and fed if they are not already in the Real City (not likely) they will be rushed their through the secret dwarf tunnels on carriages pulled by their iron horse that belches steam. Emerging from Dwarf Mansions they will need to be disguised, and may note in dismay as they pass through the Real City that Lunar patrols now march these ancient streets. They may also see for the first time the Lunar flag hanging on the flagpole inside the courtyard in front of the Grey House. Firstly they will be caught up on the latest news about the wedding:

The Wedding Plan

Common Knowledge: The Wedding will take place in three days, atop the Pavis Temple. The morning and early afternoon will be spent in a happy (but not too boisterous) festival. All of New Pavis will be decorated with flowers and fruits (paid for by the Lunars), and the citizens have a holiday all day. Various low-key entertainments (mostly Lunar plays and Lunar variations of Pavic plays) have been commissioned to be performed on the evening before. A procession will start from the Lunar barracks at high noon, and proceed to the Pavis temple. (All are invited, and all notables have been 'invited' in no uncertain terms to be there. Only certain suspected anti-Lunar air-worshippers have somehow had their invitations mislaid.) A great party will take place in the evening after the wedding is over.

Semi-Secret Knowledge: The Priests of Pavis have been told that once the crowd is assembled at the temple a short Lunar ceremony will be performed and that then the mystics will arrive at the top of the Pavis temple with Tala Errio. (Since no provision has been made for them to have a path cleared through the crowd, Bendrath is certain that they will appear from the otherworld at the climax of their Quest.) A Priestess of the Seven Mothers will then wed Tala to Benderri in a ceremony that will take until early evening (and presumably include many speeches of propaganda from Lunar notables). After the ceremony Tala and Benderri will retire to rooms in the Seven Mothers temple to consummate their union.

Narrator Note: *The Moon will of course be full on the day of the wedding.*

Their contact within the Pavis Cult (Bendrath in the House campaign) will then tell them the following: *"We had assumed, and indeed been led to believe by the cunning double-bluffs of the Lunar wedding planners, that they knew nothing of the history of Pavis and Santrella. Nothing exists in public historical documents, and very little even in the secret archives. It seems that our historians had deliberately made sure that this was so, and this shows their wisdom. Nonetheless, the Lunars have somehow found out that Pavis had a formal consort, the woman who was the mother of most of his children. As you yourselves will be aware, nothing is mentioned about this woman in any public ceremonies, nor is she known to be worshipped, and is barely even remembered anywhere except amongst the Ulerians themselves, who in fact do worship her in secret. As far as most people know, the common rumor is that Pavis spawned his children in some way related to the Aldryami fashion.*

What we have now confirmed, is that when she and Pavis decided to form a union, he was obliged to request that she link herself to the city in the same way that he had done – through binding the five elements into the mythic framework of the city. Although of course in the case of Darkness, the Fifth Element, this was not fully completed until recently, and so was a section of the quest she did not need to fully succeed at. From our exhaustive examination of city records and journals from just before the unity ceremony, we have ascertained the following:

After a period of preparation at her own temple, she spent time in retreat with the folk of Mani's Clan,

Next she engaged in a ceremony with the Flintnail dwarves,

After that she joined the folk of Joraz Kyrem for their annual ceremonies,

Continuing with this theme, she next assisted the Riverfolk of Zola Fel with certain cleansing rituals,

Then she renewed her vows as a communal worshipper of the Heortling Storm Pantheon,

Then engaged in a series of trading arrangements with the city's Argan Argari traders,

And finally she retreated into Pavis' temple for seven days and seven nights, from where she presumably embarked on a full HeroQuest, having presumably just completed the mundane rendition.

These are the only solid details that we have, but they are enough. It is clear that she was replicating the common civic version of the Element quest that was extant at that time."

This has been a longish speech, so probably best to pause here for further discussion, after which Bendrath will continue:

"The civic version of the elemental quest from that time was, as you would expect, secret from the majority of the populace. All of those seeking high office had to succeed at it. Here is the outline:

Stage 1: Pavis sought the help of the Oasis People to enter the Green Age, so as to become sufficiently attuned to the binding force of the elements as to be able to perform the quest. The few heroes who attempted to complete this myth, which included Joraz Kyrem by the way, went to visit Mani's priests to learn as much as they can about the Green Age and its magic. Then if they passed a test they were allowed to join in one of the clan's outer ceremonies.

Stage 2: Pavis and Flintnail initially engaged in ceremonies of bonding and friendship with the Elves of the Redwoods. In the civic version, the questor takes gifts to the elves of the Garden and joins in with their ceremonies.

Stage 3: Pavis originally tamed the legendary Fire Stallion of the Pure Horse people, and thus gained the respect of Joraz Kyrem. In the civic version the questor joins the Zebra Tribe's recreation of this event and takes the role of Pavis.

Stage 4: Pavis once aided the spirit of the Zola Fel against a chaos demon that was polluting its waters, and gained friendship in return. In the civic version of the quest, one joins the River Cult's ceremonies then assists them with a significant problem.

Stage 5: Pavis proved his kinship with the folk of the Storm, securing allies for his quest to build the city. In the civic version of the quest, one must prove oneself to be a communal worshipper of the Air God.

Stage 6: Pavis originally used the powers of Issaries to beat Argan Argar at his own trading temple, but lost more than he bargained for in the process. In the civic version of the quest one must challenge an Argan Argar trader, beat him twice and then lose significantly in the last deal."

Another pause for questioning may be appropriate here, after which Bendrath continues again.

"As you have no doubt gathered, the information I have just imparted covers only the mundane version of the quest through which one must proceed before actually engaging in the full Otherworld Quest. What actually happens when one enters the Otherworld presumably, as is normally the case, reflects these activities to a fairly close degree, but is individual to each questor. Fortunately, we have also established that Santrella had several assistants with her on this quest, although accounts vary as to exactly who it was. She had associates from amongst the local Donandari, the city cult of course, and a few others. We must decide which roles each of you will take according to some degree of sensibility. These decisions will aid the power of the quest."

Choosing roles

Who plays who? Must they get an Ulerian to help them? Female to take on Santrella's role? Perhaps they should all gain temporary initiation at the Uleria temple? It can be presumed that her assistants/followers, were at least communally worshipping Ulerians, but what would have been their primary cults? What cults are usually allied to Uleria? (Not many: Donandar and Pavis, and to a lesser extent Kargan, Yinkin, Vinga and Issaries.) Any of these vague links must be capitalized upon (and add to augments to assist the quest). Since Santrella had only 4 companions it is clear that only 5 people can go along.

Narrator Notes: Change these numbers so that it suits the number of PCs. In the playtest the outlaw character already had established links with the New Pavis Ulerians and went to seek their help. An initiate he had known was now an acolyte and felt called to assist them in their quest. Though she could have been a GMC (played in a suitably otherworldly fashion) we actually had a player without a character, so I created an Ulerian acolyte using the rules in 'Beyond Pavis'. With careful thought the skills presented there can be adapted into a game-useful character, especially one from a Dorasing background that possesses their common magic.

The following information can be presented as shown, or may be imparted through a more fluid conversation with Bendrath.

Bendrath again: "You must do the best you can to replicate Santrella's activities, as the Lunars have presumably done. However, the city has of course changed, both politically and socially, so levels of improvisation are entirely acceptable. Firstly, you must go to the original Uleria Temple. This is within the boundaries of the Devil's Playground, and we know that a Lunar archeological expedition was there last week. Once there perform a ceremony to Uleria."

Narrator Notes: The priests will send a squad of Rubble Tracker dwarves to clean this place out before the adventurers have to go there. [Unfortunately the dwarves will not detect the Lunar secret traps.] The adventurers must also learn (or at least obtain a description of) an appropriate Ulerian preparation ritual. The dwarves don't find anything unusual, but signs that some people performed some kind of ceremony in the main temple chamber a week or so ago.

Bendrath: *"Fortunately Mani's Clan are our allies, and their Fort is accessible to us, so you must next go there and they will assist you. The Lunars have not visited them, but an unlicensed expedition performed rituals near their fort only six days ago."*

PAUSE FOR ROLE-PLAYING

Bendrath: *"Next you must take gifts to the elves of the Garden. We can discuss what might be appropriate. They advised us five days ago that a group of adventurers defiled one of their lesser sacred groves and then inexplicably left gifts behind. This is another example of where we actually have the advantage, as in both the case of Man's Clan and the Elves you will be welcomed as allies and given access to the deepest rituals possible."*

Narrator Notes: The elves have already reported an adventurer incursion into their territory five days ago. It was notable because there were only five of them and all were hooded and unidentifiable. However, this seemed to be only a party who had potent magic to hold back plants and resist Aldryami magic. They managed to force their way to one of the minor sacred groves, performed some kind of ritual (which didn't seem to damage the Garden) and departed leaving gifts. The elves found this inexplicable, and yet such events are not unheard of. After some groveling by the Pavis Priests, the elves (who after all hate the Lunars) will agree to receive a deputation authorized by the Pavis Cult, and will take these people to their main grove for a ceremony of friendship with the Pavis Cult.

Bendrath: *"Then comes the taming of the Fire Stallion. The only priest of the Zebra Tribe within the city is a member of the hidden Red Stallions gang. We are attempting to contact them at the moment to enlist their aid. The Lunars we know four days ago performed rituals at Zebra Town at the edge of Pavis County, which we must presume were their preparations in this regard."*

Narrator Notes: Out at Zebra Town four days ago five cloaked and hooded Lunars arrived and demanded access to the most fierce unbroken colts. (They had authority from the Governor.) It was clear that some kind of ritual was taking place and the angry zebra people could do nothing about it. (Because of their precarious political position.) They were excluded from their own corrals except for a few handlers. Apparently the colts assumed tremendous vitality, and even were wreathed in flames – from what little these handlers could perceive of the otherworld goings on. However, a Lunar champion rider eventually broke one of them. The Red Stallions (otherwise known as the Pavis Survivors) have also, over the last season, been hunted terribly and inexplicably intensely by Lunar Bounty Hunters, and have lost several key members to the blades of the Red Moon.

Bendrath: *"After this is the Zola Fel section. Three days ago the Lunars sponsored a massive chaos slaying expedition up and down the river. It was said at the time to be an act to prove Draxius' respect for the rebuilding attempts in the Old City. Now we know that it must have been their mundane version of the assistance of the Zola Fel cult, and will also of course make it that much more difficult to replicate."*

Nonetheless, this is the simplest re-enactment, to slay a chaos being that is at the edge of the river."

Narrator Notes: Almost every Rubble chaos creature drinks from and defecates into the Zola Fel. The adventurers merely have to find and slay a particularly tough one. (The tougher it is the better the augments they get.) Little preparation can be done except to inquire on the adventurer grapevine as to what is around at the moment.

However, it was only three days ago that the Lunars sponsored a great Chaos-slaying expedition up and down the banks of the Zola Fel within the Rubble. At the time it seemed like this was a mutually beneficial move for all Pavis residents (except the chaotics of course). But now it is clear that they had ulterior motives. (Five Lunar champions led the expedition, apparently military strategists, but nobody had ever seen them before, and they vanished (almost seemingly into thin air) as the huge group returned to New Pavis.

Probably it is best not to just wander the Rubble looking for chaos, perhaps they can learn and perform the Summoning of Chaos once they reach the river? Leave it to the PCs to discuss the issues of actually joining in with the Zola Fel cult ceremonies. This can actually be easily solved, as anyone who takes a trip on the river must acknowledge their respect for Zola Fel, and this can be an enhanced ceremony. So as long as the PCs set off on this section aboard a Zola Fel river craft that can all be managed. In the playtest, the only full Storm Pantheon character suggested that she learn the ceremony of the Summoning of Chaos and perform that at the edge of the river as part of this section. So an extra part of the session had her sneaking back into New Pavis and spending a few hours secretly learning this from Govoran the Magnificent.

Bendrath: *"When Pavis proved his kinship with the folk of the Storm, this was of course during the days of the Dragon Empire. By one account that we have, Pavis proved his kinship by demonstrating mastery of dragon thought, and in another he tamed a dragon that was terrorizing a city. In the preparation section of this quest you might choose one of these options, perhaps by taking gifts to Windwhistler at Griffin Gate to convince him to enter ritual combat. Or you might perform some kind of interaction with the dragonewts at their temple in the Huntlands. Both options seem initially viable, as Windwhistler is a friend to Old Pavis, and also the Pavis Cult has certain ritual connections with the dragonewts. As far as we know, the Lunars have not approached*

the dragonewt temple, but may have had interaction with Windwhistler, who has not been seen for some days."

Narrator Notes: A deputation is sent to Windwhistler the friendly dragon, but cannot find him. (Perhaps he is down at the Sun Dome Temple again?) Nobody wishes to send a deputation to find the rumored evil dragon on Blind King's Hill. Perhaps when the adventurers begin the quest the dragon will be forced (by the mythic pressures) to reveal himself (or return from the south) if they look for him? If so, no doubt they will then have to best him in some symbolic contest. Does he perhaps have any hobbies or games he enjoys? The other option is of course to contact the Dragonewts of the Rubble. These strange beings sometimes attend Pavic ceremonies, and the Pavis priests know rituals of friendship for them. However, they cannot be communicated with sufficiently well to plan anything in advance. Still, again once the quest is begun, even in this mundane stage, events will be evoked into action, so it is unlikely that such efforts would be wasted.

Bendrath: *"For the last mundane stage you must arrange a series of bargains with an Argan Argar trader, and lose the last one. This must mean at least two that you win, and one that you lose. We know that Lunar traders were yesterday in the Troll Stronglands attempting negotiations with the Xaragang clan. Although the Xaragang are now our allies, they would not reveal details of what happened. Nonetheless, their spokesperson seemed pleased with himself, as if the trolls had bested the Lunars in at least one deal."*

Narrator Notes: Only yesterday, the Xaragang were visited by a small Lunar party (five recently arrived archeologists, whom nobody had seen before or since) with minor darkness relics to bargain. These Lunar merchants acquitted themselves well, but seemed to underestimate the value of their last piece. (The troll traders are still chuckling over their good fortune.) The adventurers must decide whom else they are going to bargain with (and what they will use as bargaining counters). In the House Campaign the trolls of Ormol's troop are now in the Old Mint, where there is a secret shrine to Pavis. This presents itself as a perfect place both for performing the mundane version of the bargaining section, and for beginning the actual HeroQuest.

Bendrath: *"In concluding, I have to remind you that although you have friends here that will help you as much as we can, the nature of questing means that the more you do for yourselves, the better your chances of success will be. For instance you need to arrange gifts for the elves, and possibly for the dragonewts, and trade items for the trolls. Also you need to consider how you will defeat the chaos entity beside the river. From the best of our intelligence and understanding of such things, we most strongly suspect that Lunar Heroes will begin their otherworld quest on the evening before the wedding day. It will work best if you depart at the same time, and most likely this will be when the moon rises in the west. The fact that this is the night of the Full Moon seems to confirm our suspicions."*

Narrator Notes: Bendrath says that once the adventurers begin they must stay in character to receive maximum benefit, and travel directly from one encounter to the next. At some level the mythic nature of the ritual will protect them from incidental encounters, since at the height of the Old City, Santrella was unlikely to have been attacked in the street. However, mythic foes may still be drawn to them. There is no point in sending an armed force before or after them, as this will disrupt the ritual. Such things have been tried before, and only leads to unforeseen difficulties. (Usually in any case the two groups inexplicably lose each other.)

Narrator Notes

Though presented in a linear fashion, the scenario was initially presented much more fluidly to the players, and here I have summarized the options as they emerged during play. The PCs should be allowed much free action in preparing for and undertaking these activities, encouraged by the fact that the more they ask for help the less powerful their successes are likely to be (as Bendrath has explained).

Scene 3.2 – The Recreation Quest

Narrator Notes

The following are in outline form, and need to be read carefully before play, so that each section unfolds in a convincing, detailed and atmospheric interactive role-playing experience. (Rather than in a simple rush of description.) Statistics will also need to be created for the adversaries. No quest bonuses etc have been calculated for this stage. However, ideally degrees of success should be noted for each stage, and these should directly transfer to quest bonuses for the full Quest later on. It is certainly worth mentioning, that the crafty thief PC with connections to the Uleria temple suggested that they might spend the night prior to beginning the quest at the current Uleria Temple in New Pavis, as this could only further enhance the success of their mission. This was an entirely accurate assessment, and so is perhaps one of the few occasions in my campaigns where a night of debauchery was a legitimate part of the scenario.

Beginning: The Uleria Temple

Santrella prepared for her task in the main Uleria temple. Unfortunately this was in the City Marketplace, which is now at the center of the Devil's Playground. The trip to the temple is not part of the quest, so a squad

of tracker dwarfs, or other allies, will aid them until close to the Playground. The parting with these allies, should be suitably 'farewell to the heroes' in tone.

Some signs that the Lunars were here recently (tracking etc) can be found by the alert: such as rubbed-out chalk markings and Lunar runes obscured by having dirt thrown over them etc. The guards left behind are female Nathic priestesses who are summoned by Lunar magic when the adventurers activate a ritual. They may be detected lurking in the Otherworld, or may be heard during the ceremony (as noises nearby but with no discernible source).

An Ulerian accompanying the PCs will advise them that she has decided to perform the Ulerian ceremony that calls upon their goddess to protect her worshippers when they leave their temple to go on some necessary journey. It can be abbreviated (she tells them, if time seems pressing) to take only a few minutes, though this will be a 'rush job'. The action here is to protect the Ulerian priestess so that she can complete the ceremony. She will to some degree be protected here by the magic of Uleria – that is, enemy magic will bounce off her, and missiles will be diverted so that they skim past her. But the characters should correctly presume that should two or three Nathans manage to make it into the ceremonial circle that the Ulerian acolyte has created, their magically-enhance scimitars might be able to slay her with impunity.

Green Age Attunement: Mani's Fort

After the fun and games at the Devil's Playground, the adventurers will need to backtrack to Mani's Fort. They are now on the quest, and will note Lunar mercenaries lurking at various points near the fort. Since the PCs are now in quest mode their powers are substantially enhanced in comparison, so they should easily be able to avoid these spies. In actual fact the magical energy of Mani's Hill is also aiding the PCs to see and avoid these crack troops. Note that slaying the Lunars out of hand will disrupt the energy of the quest, and any smart characters will know this. Specifically, any attack made on the Lunars will bring the PC questor temporarily out of the protection of the quest, opening them to full and normal retribution from the Lunars. As the PCs approach the fort the walls will fade away, allowing them to simply walk inside.

Using the information available in: P&BR Companion Vol 1 'Man for All Seasons' (available on the Companion website: manforallseasons.zip), Vol 2 'Masks of Pavis', and particularly Vol. 3 'Legacy of Pavis', improvise a ceremonial experience at Mani's Fort. This is probably the first moment that they will learn (through observation rather than being told) that Mani himself is currently incarnate as a small boy. The entrance to the clan's otherworld garden of plenty is through their small earth temple, and the ceremony consists of ecstatic worship, particularly dancing and singing (and perhaps more dependent on the adult rating of your scenario). Once in the garden they will meet Getenak, see in the distance Pavis' Palace on the Green Hill, and see even further away (a brief glimpse) Grandfather Genert wandering by. This all needs to be portrayed in a suitably weird, wonderful and otherworldly kind of way, and after the event memories of it will become dreamlike and insubstantial.

Earth: The Garden

Since they cannot influence the Rubble elves, the Lunars have put guards in the way of the trip from the Uleria Temple to the Garden. These guards are weird Chaos plant-beings from Dorastor, specially imported from Dorastor (having arrived aboard the new governor's moonboat). They have been sowed across the entirety of the area north of the Garden and south of the Devil's Playground, and are activated by adventurers on the same quest as the Lunars that sowed them. (The Lunars made this so by myth-meddling and the heroes are not likely to ever work out exactly how it was done.)

Piers Bolde is lurking on Yelmadio Hill (or some other Lunar champion if he is already slain in your campaign). Priests who are monitoring the Lunar preparations for the quest alerted him to the fact that Pavic heroes are now following the myth, and he has gained the help of a Lunar sorcerer to teleport him back to Yelmadio Hill (to a specially prepared spot). This is the one stage of the quest that he is certain some Pavic heroes will attempt to subvert. (Other members of the Wedding conspiracy have less respect for the Old Pavics, and are less worried. They believe their safeguards – and the divine right of the Lunar Way – will make sure that nobody defies their well-made plans.)

So, the heroes will first of all have to ride through a number of weird seed pods. These start off small and insignificant (due to this being partially a Hero Plane experience), and get larger and larger as the characters ride towards the Garden. At length these things will be as big as children, and start to 'pop' open. (The first ones that open will be some distance away.) From the pods will spring thorny runners (small woody elves of animal-level intelligence, spotted with many thorns). Individually each is no problem, and characters can scythe them aside. The action here is when numbers of them converge, and when each riding beast is hampered by having its flanks slashed as it races past. One or more rider is bound to have one of these creatures grab on and haul themselves up. Thus they must fight whilst trying to ride – lots of fun. If a character is pulled off and left behind, a rescue mission must be mounted. (If the creatures mob one person, they will certainly tear that person to bits.) However, experienced warriors, riding on mounts, or even racing in

and racing out, can certainly break through and out again. A stand against them is not ideal, since there are so many that eventually they will surely bring the characters down.

As the characters draw closer to Yelmalo Hill, and with the safety of the Garden in sight, they will see a solitary figure striding down from the ruins. He will begin to use Lunar sorcery to attack them, possibly killing one or two unprotected steeds in the first few moments (a good way for story-realism to have the headlong flight abruptly slowed). The thorn-elves will not come too close to the Garden, and will stop hesitant, leaving the characters with a half-mile still to go. Before they can cover this ground they will have to take on Piers Bolde (or whomever you have here). This may of course be the time and place Bolde is slain, or he might be rescued at the last minute by his lackeys, who arrive on wyverns, having flown all the way from New Pavis, starting at the moment that Bolde teleported out. Bolde should at least be horribly wounded here.

One option is to have the fight go really badly for the adventurers. For instance, the wyvern-riders might be Rune Lords (or HQ equivalent). At the point where defeat looks certain a squad of elves rushes out of the Garden and manages to rescue the adventurers, though they lose many of their own in the process. (Good adventure point if one heroic PC is fighting Bolde and is managing to whittle him down, only to have to retreat with the others. Another fine moment is if a PC believes they are about to be slaughtered, and elvish arrows suddenly cut down their opponent as the Aldryami forces emerge. Another option, since this is an Ulerian quest, is to actually have a dryad leading this force, and for her to use strange Aldryami magic to save the day.)

Once this fight is over (whatever way that happens), the elves (who will meet the adventurers inside the tree-line if they weren't instrumental in the battle), will form a solemn ceremony and lead all of the characters deep into the Garden. Though they travel at first merely through the trees, they soon are progressing along an ancient roadway, now mostly overgrown. In amidst the trees and bushes the heroes can see occasional ruins, and more Aldryami of various sorts watching from hiding. The journey takes longer than they could have expected, and finally ends at a large ruined plaza, now quite overgrown, at the base of a large hill (larger than any hill that has been seen within the Garden from the air). A little way up the hill (not at the top) is a massive oak. This is the Aldryami sacred tree.

An Aldryami/Pavic ritual will occur, and the characters will have to play out whatever parts they have decided for themselves. Each hero will receive some kind of gift from the elves. Once the ceremony is over, the heroes will be escorted to whatever edge of the Garden they wish to go to.

Fire: The Pavis Survivors (Red Stallions)

The Lunars have no adequate block for this part of the scenario, although as noted earlier they have been making concerted efforts to find and kill the single priest of the zebra people at large in the Rubble. The adventurers will be met by a representative near the Old Mint (or some other place that has been arranged) and taken to their secret base north of the Blind King's Hill. Here in a large ruin below ground are corrals and a shrine to Pavis and Joraz Kyrem.

Alternatively, as happened spontaneously in the playtest, I decided that representatives had come to the Old Mint, and the breaking of the stallion zebras took place outside the Mint in a temporary corral. (I am running things so that it seems people behind the scenes are working to make the task of the PCs that much easier. Also, my version of the Rubble is huge, and its odd magical properties mean that detections and even long-distance sight are obscured. So, no Lunars would be able to spy on the Mint, or approach without being spotted by the troll scouts in their outposts around the Mint.) In order to give more PCs things to do, a PC with rope skills was the one who actually lassoed and stopped each zebra, and then the 'rider' PC was able to climb on.

Water: The Zola Fel

The Lunars have a terrible chaos beast of their own now floating in the river; one of the few powerful safeguards they have put in place to ambush any Old Pavic questors. The adventurers will have a difficult time defeating it. It has been summoned by Lunar sorcery from some place, possibly even the moon, and needs to be portrayed as a slaving tentacled beast of great potency. Each round it roars and actually causes mental paralysis in those who fail to resist. On its first arrival a great eye-stalk peers out of the river. It is clearly Lunar because it glows with an eerie silvery light. It of course has other magical properties as you see fit.

As a prime example of the improvisational nature of this scenario - again, this changed in the playtest. (Not least because of only recently having seen the movie "The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen".) Instead of a river beast I had a huge ogre (whose Lunar influence was indicated by a Red Moon medallion hanging off his chest - this gave him defenses against magic). This hulking entity (like the alternate Mr Hyde who had drunk too much potion), shambled over the bridge from Ogre Island at as much of a run as it could manage, and converged on the PCs. If your PCs choose some other place than near Central Bridge, you may

need to think again. Once this creature was defeated, I had it turn into a super-gorp (the players were all waiting for the 'explode on death' Chaos Feature). This proved almost impossible to destroy.

However, in my campaign, a few adventures ago the PCs liberated the Donandar Temple (see adventure in 'Shadows of Pavis') from ogres, and knew that it had been re-occupied (in great secrecy) by dwarves. Thus they were able to flee to this nearby location, and use secret codes (from the 'Pavis Survivor Signals') to attract the attention of the dwarves, who gave them some grenades and a flame-thrower device hastily converted from a hand-driven water-pump. All jolly good fun, and illustrated the benefits of on-the-spot improvisation. (Certainly in quest terms this reduced their Quest augments for future stations.)

Air: The Dragon

Windwhistler the friendly dragon has been kept at Sun County. (The Lunars somehow managed to trick or trap him into staying there, and possibly were the ones who convinced him to go there on this occasion as well.) It is rumored that another dragon lives around Blind King's Hill, but since finding it would involve a dangerous trip into the labyrinth under BKH, likely the PCs will approach the dragonewts (which are in any case known to be somehow linked into Pavis' Grand Plan). In the playtest they almost went to BKH, but had been alerted by agents of the Measure who rushed there beforehand that the dragon could not be found.

On approaching the Dragonewt Temple in the Rubble, the PCs will notice the giant platform (see 'Dragonewts Dreaming' in the "Legacy of Pavis" zine – which will also serve to supply more info on the newts.). This doesn't mean much, but worth pointing out and giving a quick overview of how it came to be there (if the PCs weren't involved). This adds to the enigmatic nature of the 'Newts in the eyes of the PCs. It is also worth mentioning that people don't normally visit the 'Newts, as it is hard to understand them, and occasionally travelers have been killed (but only rarely except for adventurers who tried to storm the place). Others have had strange magic or curses put upon them, especially would-be thieves.

As the adventurers draw near, a file of dragonewt scouts will emerge from the place, each of them carrying a piece of fruit or a budding branch. (Very weird, and normally the kind of thing they only do in the rare Pavic ceremonies they attend.) These smaller newts will move around in lines, like dancers intersecting, but travelling quite slowly, and clearly marking out geometric patterns (clear to anyone who understands the concept of geometry). Then they will stop, marking out a semi-circle spreading out from the temple like open arms.

Next a smaller number of warrior 'newts will emerge, each of them holding their Klanth as if for battle. They will move around the 'arena' marked by the scouts, hacking and slashing at one another with ferocity, but also parrying with magnificent speed and skill. This too appears as a dance, and soon they will stop and make a smaller semi-circle within the scouts.

Next two dragonewt priests will emerge. One will stand at the center of the inner semi-circle, the other (Aumstan – see 'Dragonewts Dreaming') will approach the adventurers, halt and bow before them. It is very clear that the newts were expecting the adventurers.

Aumstan (who is a reincarnated dragon-priest from the time when Pavis was part of the EWF – before the fall of that Empire) can talk Old Pavic. This is with a heavy accent, but he has learned to talk slowly. After all he is the spokesnewt, so needs to be understood. He will greet them in an Old Pavic ritual manner, as one does when persons of another clan (whose allegiance is uncertain) come to visit. The PCs know only that they must subdue or best a dragon somehow and so will likely engage him in conversation.

Aumstan remembers when Santrella herself came here, and the newts know why the PCs are here, but will not reveal the extent of their knowledge. Indeed, only Aumstan shows any trace of humanity, and even he should be played as exceptionally weird and enigmatic. Nonetheless, he will understand when they explain they are here for a ritual purpose, and he will explain that things have changed since Santrella was here. (The PCs may not have known she came here.) The Newt's, Aumstan explains, can no longer accept such challenges except from a representative of Pavis, or a direct descendent of Pavis. In my campaign, this is no big deal. Anyone of Old Pavic origin might fit these criteria, and one of the PCs is the Champion of Pavis. Once the challenge is issued (by going to the main priest and claiming the right to renew Pavis' alliance with the newts – something Aumstan may explain is necessary) any follower/ally of the challenger may be the actual person who performs the task.

Aumstan will approach the challenger and explain what is required – three contests: one of proving mastery of dragon movement, one of proving mastery of dragon thinking, and one proving mastery of dragon awareness. If they ask him, Aumstan can explain that the best people to perform these challenges are (respectively) someone with great movement magic, someone with knowledge of Philosophy, and someone with actual mystic capabilities. Again in my campaign this is not such a problem. Our Vingan has movement magic, we have an Ulerian mystic who can engage in philosophical debate, and a partially illuminated character who can use this ability instead of Mysticism. The three contests: mystic archery, mystic philosophy, and mystic awareness.

1) Combat

The warrior newts will draw back, and out of the temple will fly three balls of light. These travel so fast and are so indistinct that they seem impossible to hit. Nonetheless, one of the warrior newts steps forward with a dragonbone bow, and knocks an arrow. First of all he stands in a trance for a while, then whirls and spins without even seeming to aim. He is likely to strike them all. Each light disappears with a low sonic boom when struck. A PC must use some unusual means (magic at the very least) to try and hit some of these balls. Incidentally, since the newts do not ask for a champion to step forth, the PCs may change champions when they see what the contest is.

Dragonewt Warrior

Tactics: Dragonbone Bow 20w (Dragon Magic +3, Large +2, Strong +2, Tough +3) = 10w2.

2) Mystic Philosophy

The dragonewt priest will step forth. Aumstan will explain that their leader also speaks Old Pavis, and someone must accompany him onto the temple and engage in mental contests. How detailed you make this is up to you. I am simply extrapolating into debates on finer points of other realms and deeper aspects of reality, without really explaining any detail. The challenge then is of rolling a good Philosophy score against the Newt's. This will not be exciting role-playing so use description to hint at the weirdness of the conversation. Also use rich description to cover the inside of the dragonewt temple, big crystal at the center, odd twisting walkways, glowing rune-metal ornaments of no discernible function... If anyone rolls really well, reward them with an increased Philosophy skill or even some small dragon magic ability. If they roll really badly then their Philosophy skill is reduced.

3) Mystic Awareness

The Newts all march over to the platform (some distance away), and Aumstan himself goes to stand at one end, indicating that the PC champion must stand at the other. The other newts dance and spin around, again in some kind of dance where none hit any of the others. This goes on for several minutes until at the center of the platform an ethereal dragon appears, looking suspiciously from one champion to the other. Aumstan begins to concentrate, and the dragon turns towards the PC champion and takes several steps forward. Its manner is not particularly friendly. Basically the PC must use their mysticism skill in Simple Contests to make the dragon instead turn towards the opponent. It takes 2 or 3 successes in a row to make it reach your opponent. Describe the menacing movements and manner of the dragon, plus the concentration required in sufficient detail to make this an exciting encounter. When it reaches a contestant it lunges forward and grabs them in its jaws, swallowing them down, then vanishes. This could be a worrying moment if the PC loses, but they are found nearby momentarily stunned and not physically harmed. On a Complete Success the manifestation can be dismissed, but this should be very hard to accomplish. (The dragonewt cannot do this though, since the dragon manifestation is part of its philosophy.)

Winning and Losing: It is not essential that they win, only that they prove themselves. This does not tie in exactly with Orlanth 'subduing' the dragon, but who is to say that Orlanth did not exaggerate his success. And also of course, Pavis' original actions would have changed the nature of this encounter.

Darkness: The Argan Argari

This is the easiest of the stations. Presumably the adventurers have chosen friendly trolls, who play along. However, the actual trader and other staff chosen must not know the exact nature of the ritual, since such would undermine the strength of support this mundane introductory quest would be able to provide to the full quest continuation. (Thus the trolls will do their best to overcome the PCs. The PCs must win two out of three, and lose the last contest.) They must present their goods in the best way they know how (and even if they fail they must still continue with the Quest). Prior to the bargaining a Blue Moon assassin troll (or trolls) will have sneaked in, and will attempt to assassinate the PCs. Some may succeed. If they do, the troll healer will manage to bring the PC back to life. This incident will cause all manner of consternation amongst the trolls, who have been doing their best to assist as best they can. (Remember, Lunars slew many of Ormol's friends back in Heortland.) Once this is all over, Bendrath will step forward. He has gathered a large number of people (trolls, Pavis Survivors, Vingans) to send the PCs off with a ceremony here at the Pavis Shrine in the Old Mint. First the PCs will be allowed to eat and rest for a little while. If there is one day remaining, then of course the preparation takes a minimum of one day.

Part Four: The Full HeroQuest

Playtesters: Andrew Bean, Martin Gibbs, Harry Grawe, Stef Mathers & Peter Ujvari

Scene 4.1 - Preparation

Bendrath will talk to the adventurers before it all begins, to make sure that they are adequately prepared. What goods are they taking to trade with Argan Argar? Are they taking gifts for the elves? Ideally all must be personal magical possessions, though Bendrath might have a few things for them. What do they intend to do to reassert the Darkness Rune if it has indeed been replaced by the Moon Rune? Balastor's Axe might be given to the Champion of Pavis here; and if so will simply act as an additional automatic augment in the following section of the scenario. This would not be a simple handover, but would need to be role-played as

an amazing event – a clear sign that the Pavis Priesthood are backing these heroes to the hilt. Bendrath reminds the questors that there is no predicting exactly what will happen in the Quest itself, and that they must act as closely as possible to the nature of the characters or character types they are playing.

Bendrath summarizes the stages:

*Earth: Pavis and Flintnail engaged in ceremonies of bonding and friendship with the Elves of the Redwoods.
Fire: Pavis tamed the legendary Fire Stallion of the Pure Horse people, and thus gained the respect of Joraz Kyrem.*

Water: Pavis aided the spirit of the Zola Fel against a chaos demon that was polluting its waters, and gained friendship in return.

Air: Pavis showed that he was as wise and brave as Orlanth when it came to dealing with dragons, and tamed a dragon that had been terrorizing the city.

Darkness: Pavis used the power of Issaries to beat Argan Argar at his own trading temple, but lost more than he bargained for in the process.

NB: Explain that this is general because various depictions of what might happen are available. Bendrath will talk about a few of them if required, but basically says that this could be as misleading as useful. The questers must simply behave in the manner of Pavis and his companions (whomever's role they are taking), even in the face of whatever disruptions have been made to the myth.

Ceremony

Great gathering in the shrine room, packed to bursting, with more outside. Several ghostly figures (ancient heroes of Pavis, including Opili) appear to give their blessing. Take the time and effort to make this spectacular, with much rich description evoking the atmosphere and characters within this major event! Adventurers must each describe their position on the team (which character each is taking) and justify their right to be a representative of Pavis in this momentous quest. (The Ulerian of course takes the role of Santrella.) At the height of the ceremony, the mundane plane and the hero plane will merge. Their surroundings will blur, and people will slowly become trees. The main characters will find themselves standing next to a huge forest.

Scene 4.2 - The Quest

What follows outlines how the improvisational lines I was planning panned out. Be flexible as you run this.

Stage 1 - Earth

Pavis and Flintnail engaged in ceremonies of bonding and friendship with the Elves of the Redwoods.

Nothing happens, and nothing happens for quite a while. Someone with keen observance may notice that this is weird. The energy feels that something should be happening, and yet it is not. If they progress into the forest they will be taken prisoner by elves, who will drag them forward to meet their leader. The leader is a wise old elf, who looks rather like one of the Wedding Planners (Chadreth). He declares that they are enemies of the Forest, interlopers and imposters who will be killed. It is up to the PCs to claim the right to prove that they are friends. (Pavic Lore rolls might be required, or the like.) Though the leader will stand against this, other elves will call out that the leader is also part of the collective, and the will of the forest must prevail. (If someone with translation magic is in your party, only they can understand this exchange.)

When the PCs have convinced the elves of this right, they will all be led into the forest, to a large glade. Initially a ceremony will take place in which 'Pavis' must share his blood with an Aldryami. A dryad will emerge from the gloom, accompanied by many bedecked runners. The Aldryami stand aside and a path is formed. She beckons. Whom will go? (If more than one step forward, the spokes-elf will explain that only one person is needed.) The Ulerian will go if nobody else is up to the job. What will happen is that they will go to a smaller sacred grove, wherein stands a stone plinth, on which lies a bone knife. The dryad cuts her arm and drips sap into a wooden bowl. She indicates that the PC should do the same, but before they can the ruler elf (now clearly visible as Chadreth) lunges into the clearing and with a gesture rips up a chunk of stony ground and throws it at the PC. The PC must fend off this attack and disable or kill Chadreth. Once this happens the leader elf will revert back to type as if nothing had happened. (During the fight, Chadreth will curse them and make claims of Lunar superiority; that sort of thing. He is clearly real, rather than an echo of himself. In this encounter he will be confident of victory.)

NB: Killing someone here ejects them from the myth, (Whether PC or Lunar challenger.) Wounds taken are represented by permanent loss of ability rating points.

If the PC defeats the Lunar they may continue with the ceremony. It seems that merely showing his elvish heritage was enough for Pavis to claim allegiance. They will be conducted to the edge of the forest. If the PCs win through all of this they will be given an armband of woven vines, which they are told allows them to attune to spirits and creatures of the wild.

Stage 2 - Fire

Pavis tamed the legendary Fire Stallion of the Pure Horse people, and thus gained the respect of Joraz Kyrem.

Dusk comes on as they walk, and ahead they can see a camp. In progress is an animist fire ceremony, with fire-twirling and feats of endurance. The PCs will be challenged by guards and must claim their ability to ride the fire stallion. No outsider has ever done this, and so they will be awed. (The ceremony is secret, so even the PCs' knowledge is a key factor in their being taken seriously.) Once they get to the center of the celebrations, there is stone-walled corral. A flaming steed will be brought in, and someone must ride it. When the person gets onto it, a shamaness (Moon Rune on forehead) from the tribe steps forward and casts some red dust. The steed somehow becomes a Lunar red deer, and as she whoops and yells to encourage it, it races away across the Hero Plane. Must be tamed or the person on it is lost. Or others can pursue and try and bring the beast down to save their colleague. If it is killed then this stage will fail, and the Horse People will be angry as the characters stand over the body of the slain fire-horse. If the character comes off they will also fail. The other PCs may challenge the shamaness, but she fades away, laughing. If the PC succeeds, the tribal leader is so impressed that he gives the PC a golden amulet in the shape of a sun, which has the ability to call forth the purifying rays of the sun.

Stage 3 - Water

Pavis aided the spirit of the Zola Fel against a chaos demon that was polluting its waters, and gained friendship in return.

The characters are directed towards the river, where they find a sturdy small craft that awaits them. The newtling on board welcomes them, and thanks them for coming to help deal with the hideous beast that is befouling the sacred waters. The newtling is voluble and obsequious, but its knowledge of their language is limited, and so detailed communication is impossible. It is very keen to be away about the task, and poles the sturdy craft out into the river. As it does so, the elementals at the stern begin to churn, and the craft picks up speed.

Problem

Suddenly everything changes, fading and warping in a way that disorients. After things stabilize, the PCs find themselves on a Lunar boat, sailing down the Oslir. A boatman welcomes them as honored guests, and shows them a small deformed reptilian creature (looks chaotic but isn't) in a cage on the prow (it excretes and urinates into the river). The boat is powered by a Lunar elemental bound to the stern. If the elemental is destroyed it will benefit them far more than just slaying the creature.

Solution 1

If they attack the creature in the prow, the boatman looks concerned and saddened (all an act), but does not try and stop them. If they destroy it, the boatman laughs out loud and the myth fades back to the Pavis one – where they see they have slain the newtling. This is clearly not a 'solution' as such.

Solution 2

If they attack the Lunar elemental, the boatman becomes Phanapos and tries to defend it. (NB: their powers are lowered, because this is a Lunar myth – so beef him up.) He cannot be challenged at Heroforming, because he succeeded so well at subverting this section of the myth. (Well, he can be challenged, but only a Complete success will reveal him.)

If Phanapos is killed (driven out of the myth), the myth reverts to the regular one, and the characters are back with the newtling. Up ahead they see a huge brood urinating into the river, and must deal with this horrible character. If they have used the amulet this will be a hard fight. Once it is over they will be given a stoppered jug of sacred water by the newtling, something that will 'ease their thirst at a critical time'. Then they will walk on and soon see a group of EWF style Heortling farmers, who spot them at the same time – and greet them warmly.

Stage 4 - Air

Pavis showed that he was as wise and brave as Orlanth when it came to dealing with dragons, and tamed a dragon that had been terrorizing the city.

The farmers lead the party into a range of hills that remind PCs of the hills of Pavis County. None of the standard signs of habitations exist. In fact even when they gain some height behind them, Pavis is only a small settlement (Robcradle Hill) with the rest under construction, though a vast field of tents and camps spreads around the construction. At the end of a rocky trail, the farmers will stop. They express gratitude and awe, and are very reverential.

At the end of the long and winding trail is a large rocky bluff, at the base of which are three caves. Outside one of the caves sits a weird-looking woman with a dragon tattoo. (She tells them that the dragon is already vanquished and there is nothing they can do about it. However, when injured, attacked or seriously threatened, she turns into the dragon.)

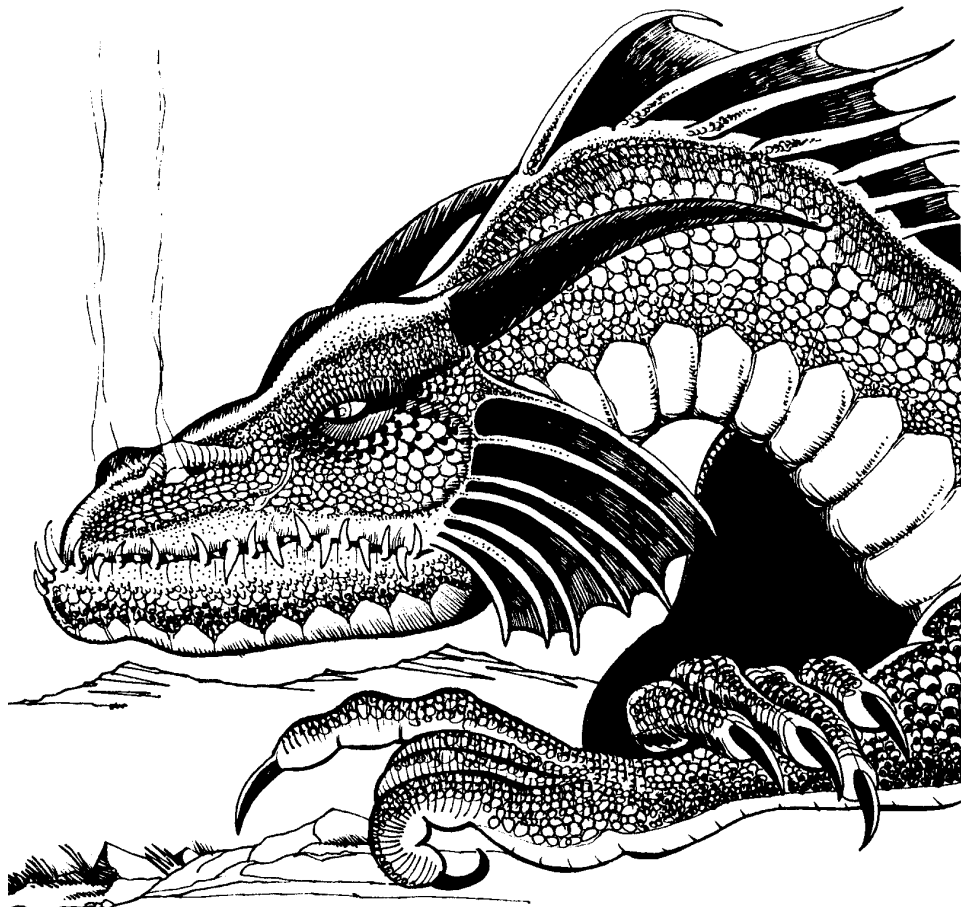
In the true myth this woman is a Dorasing shaman, thus she is NOT Yenzel when they meet her. They can question her, and she says she is here to sacrifice herself to the dragon in the hopes that her purity of heart will drive it away. She can tell them that it has been here for months, mostly sleeping, sometimes taking livestock, occasionally people disappear too, that sort of thing.

Problem

The dragon will emerge, and will be bold and conceited, and ask them what they want. It does not attack straight away. Not only that, it will ignore minor attacks and actually say "Hey, can we talk. I don't get to have a lot of conversation!" Pavis convinced the dragon to leave at this point, by proving he was on a par with the dragonewts. (He used draconic philosophy.) If the PCs attempt to do this, Yenzel will manifest in the woman and suggest that the PCs are NOT good enough and that the dragon should challenge them. The dragon likes her (due to Lunar myth-meddling) so will brush off any ideas that she is lying.

Solution

Drinking the magic water will preheal them from dragon fire. There is sufficient for three drafts. Or it can heal someone who is injured by dragon fire. Or the water can be used to seriously damage the fire-drake. Either they convince it with philosophy (it will give them a chance), or a fight ensues. It may devour people here.



Dream Dragon

Mundane Abilities: Claw and Bite 18w2, Fly Fast 2w, Haughty 10w, Hear Intruder 8w, Large 12w, Spot Prey 2w, Strong 1w2, Tail Lash 16w, Tough 8w.

Magical Abilities: Breathe Fire 8w2, Resist Magic 15w.

Common Magic: Healing 13w, Ignite 13, Protection 15, Spirit Shield 15w.

Languages: Auld Wyrnish 10w, Firespeech 10w, Old Pavic 1w.

Weapons and Armor: Teeth and Claws +6, Tail +5, Scales +6 (+14 on head and forelimbs).

Treasure: (In HQ terms, enough to increase the Wealth of every party member by 2).

Tactics: Augments Claw & Bite 18w2 with: +3 (Large) +2 (Protection spell) +6 (Scales) +4 (Strong) +5 (Tail) +4 (Tail Lash) +6 (Teeth and Claws) +3 (Tough) = 11w4.

He will also spend Hero Points to improve his odds. This creature is used to fighting in a cave at close quarters, but the Narrator may be justified in imposing a -10 penalty on the combat ratings of others (especially if the details here otherwise leave this creature less imposing a combatant that you would like). If this beast can back into a tunnel and face attackers only from the front, his grotesque bony skull and forelimbs make him very difficult to hurt here. (He can no longer use his Tail Lash attack but gains +8 to his combat bonus – no overall change to final combat skill).

Contest: Avoiding the Fiery Breath

Appropriate Abilities: Dodge or Jump (both at -10 due to the confined space), Resist Fire, Small (-10), Tough (-10) any Weapon and Shield Combination (-15)

Resistance: 8w2

Modifiers: +10 vs. Darkness Creatures – Trolls are prime examples

Any Full Victory: The target avoids or endures the deadly fire: apart from slightly singed eyebrows/boots/whiskers.

Marginal Victory or Tie: The target takes a level of wounding and will have to put out minor flames on his clothing.

Marginal Defeat: Target takes two levels of wounding.

Minor Defeat: Target takes three levels of wounding.

Major Defeat: Target takes four levels of wounding.

Complete Defeat: Target is burned to a crisp.

The local farmers arrive after the dragon is dead, and cut out its eyes to present as spoils to the slayer.

Stage 5 - Darkness

Pavis used the power of Issaries to beat Argan Argar at his own trading temple, but lost more than he bargained for in the process.

Once the fight with the dragon is resolved, one of the caves is clearly the way forward. Use of the eyes as lamps really helps them pick their way through this maze. They travel deep down into the earth, eventually coming out of a cave at the base of a huge cliff. At first they are in the Underworld, but as they stride forward they realize that the rocky landscape is in fact a moonscape. They are on the moon – describe the weird change of perspective, the lozenge suddenly floating above and behind them, and the strange vegetation and creatures now around them. Ahead is not Argan Argar's Palace as they would like to see, but the tent of a Lunar noble. Around this tent are camped his retinue (including the enigmatic Tala Errio), and various strange moonbeasts. The PCs are now subject to the powers of the moon and every ability they have drops by half, except an Illumination or Mysticism skill (if appropriate) can be used as a base for anything, and augmented. The noble (who has Darkness and Moon Runes) will invite them all to dine and drink before trading. This is all drugged, and the idea is that they are to be trapped forever on the heroplane. If all of them partake of this food, the station will be lost.

Problem

Alamav (who is the mystic lurking behind the façade of the noble) is not only now highly resistant to their magic (due to the support of linking this part of the myth to the Moon after their long months of myth-meddling), but is also supported by his mythic (and yet still powerful – because they are the myth manifestations of Lunar heroes) retinue. When he reveals himself or if revealed by a HeroQuest challenge he will manifest some clear and horrible, but not massive or ridiculously grotesque chaos features – as if this is his true nature that normally goes hidden]. He will condescend to talk to the PCs, explain what is going on, even arrogantly congratulate them on overcoming the traps his juniors set, and even explain/confirm part of what the conspirators intend to do. They intend to merge chaos, darkness and Moon elements into the wedding, a process that he has planned and masterminded with the help of his main assistant Piers Bolde.

Alamav says that he respects them, and offers them the chance to join the Lunar Way, and if they refuse has them arrested as enemies. Then they will be thrown into a weird cell of energy lines out here on the Moon's surface. Alamav will again offer them conversion, explaining that the bats will come later and devour them. It is possible that any PC of potentially unclear allegiance might divert him here. In the playtest this was the Ulerian PC, who used her wiles to distract him.

Solution

The characters have small chance to overcome him with their regular powers. If they try, Lunars will blast them with lune-rays, and the beasts will also attack. Surrounded, the PCs will have to surrender. Disarmed they will be put in the 'cage'. The solution is to act as Pavis would, and best Alamav with intelligence. Since the basis of this station is for them to win two contests/negotiations and lose one, they can challenge him to a mystical debate or any kind of communication contest with three stages. Providing they win the first two and let him win the last, although technically it looks like they have lost this will in fact disrupt the quest back to the way it is supposed to be. The adventurers will be expelled from the Moon and plummet back towards the ground (or so it seems) but will actually end up in the Underworld. Alamav has not thought of this possibility.

Failure

This station is maybe the hardest and most abstract, and success depends on the players being lucky and smart, and on one or more characters having the Illumination skill, some kind of mysticism (which remember the Ulerian will have), or being well-versed in Pavic philosophy. It also depends of course on how many augments they have picked up from the mundane quest and previous stations. It is possible that they will fail. If they do, they will be in the cage as they watch Alamav laughingly fade away, his retinue with him. Let the PCs know that they have failed, but congratulate them on doing so well. They again will then suddenly plummet up out of the cage, and down from the Moon. Move straight to the Failure option for the finale below.

The True Station

If they have succeeded, the adventurers may now go across the underworld to Argan Argar's Palace, where they may bargain with this great Uz Lord. However he drives a hard bargain, and they may lose. Either way, at the end of the encounter, they are shown to a door, on the other side of which is a glowing haze. If they totally stuff up, the priest whom they rescued from the Hero Plane (during the adventure of the 'Fifth Element' where a similar station was encountered) pops up out of the troll host. This man passes them some magnificent trade item (or pretends he is their delivery person bringing it along – perhaps they recognize one of the Uz Mercantile leaders [TT9] or the Pavis Priest responsible for Darkness).

Scene 4.3 - The Wedding Ceremony

Failure

If the character's failed against Alamav, as noted above they plummet from the Moon, falling down through uncomfortably real air and space. Magic will not work (presumably because of the disruptive effects of having been thrown out of the HeroPlane. Although it looks like they are at first falling somewhere above Dagori Inkarth, some kind of force is pulling them east towards the Zola Fel. Fortunately this is also a strong force, and they can see Pavis as a small dot far away. It gets closer, and fortunately for them, whatever force is pulling them is strong enough to bring them within the full grasp of the city's magic for the last stage of the fall.

Option 1: They flash past the top of the New Pavis temple of Pavis and are rudely plunged into the waters of the Zola Fel just inside the Rubble. All PCs manage to haul themselves to the shallows, although any handheld or loose objects might be lost. Such things are more or less forgotten with the image of events on top of the temple of Pavis burned into their retinas. On top of the temple the crowds are fleeing from a hideous scene – Tala Errio has grown to triple her size, grown numerous tentacles and has picked up the unfortunate Benderri and is ripping him apart. Both Lunar and Pavic magic is assailing the beast as the mystics are trying to defend her and themselves. Afterwards the PCs learn that almost everyone attacked the Chaos Beast and its mystic allies, all of whom were eventually slain.

Option 2: The adventurers hurtle towards the New Pavis temple of Pavis, and catch a glimpse of a horrendous sight: the crowds are fleeing from a hideous scene – Tala Errio has grown to triple her size, grown numerous tentacles and has picked up the unfortunate Benderri and is ripping him apart. Both Lunar and Pavic magic is assailing the beast as the mystics are trying to defend her and themselves. Once she has finished with Benderri she turns on Alamav, and the rest of the mystics scatter in disarray. The adventurers may force their way in the opposite direction to the crowds (or even just hold their ground for a few seconds until most have fled. A few powerful Lunars and Pavisites stand fast, aiming their magic and weapons at the mystics and their beast, and several Dorasing heroes fly or leap up from amongst the crowds below. Bendorath may lead the PCs in a charge against the mystics in an attempt to slay the enemy scum once and for all. The action is over quickly, but the PCs have the chance to be involved here at the kill. The mystics all look utterly surprised at this turn of events. Down below Piers Bolde will take the opportunity to disappear into the crowds, and will leave Pavis with a Lunar guard the next morning if not stopped now.

Aftermath: Loss of life in this incident was high, and anti-Lunar feeling is now at its strongest ever. Even the normally diplomatic Pavis Priests have refused to hear Lunar proclamations. (Except for Cyrilius Harmonious if he survived.) Fleeter Nemm declares himself new head of the Pavis Cult and issues strong demands to Draxius, including requesting a full explanation of the Lunar link with this obvious chaos manifestation. Any violent actions by Bendorath are claimed as totally understandable reactions to the slaying of his High Priest, and Bendorath is totally vindicated by his own cult. The PCs will eventually learn from Bendorath or Fleeter (in confidence) that they believe that Pavis himself somehow channeled all of the hidden chaos of the mystics' magical machinations into the unfortunate Tala (who was after all the focus of the ceremony). The priests have (ever since the Lunar invasion) played down the fact that Pavis is an intractable enemy of Chaos, and this has been the greatest underestimation that the mystics made. In fact it was their failure to seriously consider the mythic power of Pavis (and the danger of meddling in Green Age energies) that brought them

down low at the moment of their triumph. Other consequences of failure at the quest unfortunately mean that Draxius declares martial law, and Pavis becomes a hell-hole of Lunar domination.

Success

The characters appear out of the Hero Plane on top of the Pavis Temple, in the roles they assumed for the quest. (IE nobody recognizes them, since they appear to be 15ft tall mythic figures.) Tala Errio appears with them, initially looking rather confused, but is still able to fight and use magic. (Formidable!) She immediately attacks the Ulerian in the PCs party, clearly insanely angered and trying to kill her rival. She manifests various horrible chaotic features.

Only Lunar and Pavic heroes up here are able to act – everyone else flees in terror or is simply unable to move. Gim-Gim, Piers, and Draxius also attack the adventurers, attempting to assist Tala in her frenzy. (BUT remember that the PCs are all powered up as heroes, these people are just regular, and so the chance to 'get even' presents itself). The Governor will be protected by champions, but GG and PB are only aided by some special agents and assassins (however the assassins desert and flee – Bolde calls angrily after them.) All others (and all of the bystanders) are frozen in a stupor, appearing to act way too slowly to be really able to do anything – emphasize that the PCs are operating at another frequency. (In fact the Pavis Priests are largely just pretending, and could act if they wanted to, and may clandestinely do so in the confusion in order to help the PCs.)

Down below in Temple Court, the rest of the mystics stumble out of the Seven Mothers temple, screeching, injured and dying. From the corners and alleyways Dorasing and Pavic Heroes charge at them and hack them to pieces, chopping also through the soldiers that try to protect them. Many of these heroes are slain, but they achieve their objective.

If they quickly defeat Tala, allow the PCs a few rounds to wreak whatever righteous retribution amongst the other Lunar attackers that they think is appropriate. Although if the PCs attack Cyrilius, then Fleeter Nemm and Bendrath (perhaps surprisingly) will leap in to protect their comrade. Likewise they will act to prevent Draxius from being killed (though may act 'oh just too late' when it comes to saving Bolde and Gim-Gim from any coup-de-grace). But in any case even the 'heroed-up' PCs cannot easily defeat these arch-enemies, and once the cause is lost GG and PB will put escape as a top priority. In the fight remember that GG reveals his chaotic connection as he manifests various chaotic abilities and features. After the Lunars are defeated, time gets a bit more regular, though no-one seems to recognize the PCs as exactly who they are; and all stand reverently aside.

Although all is pandemonium in the square, and various lesser Lunar heroes try to approach Benderri and the Ulerian, green energy separates these two from all except the heroes and the Pavis priests. Benderri flawlessly heroforms Pavis, and the Ulerian character flawlessly heroforms Santrella. Somehow they suddenly are all back in time, at the heart of Old Pavis when it was Pavis City. Describe the majesty of this occasion as an old priest recites the final vows. It is all rather magnificent, and all Old Pavic folk are shouting and happy. Then it is over as quickly as it began, and the PCs appear back at the shrine that they started the Quest from. The Ulerian is not with them.

The supporters are all still here (apart from Bendrath who was politically required to be at the wedding) and festivities are awesome. (Describe in lengthy detail, so that the PCs are involved with great religious revelry that hails them as Old City heroes of the highest order.) News soon arrives from New Pavis with the details of what happened. Nobody knows who the Pavic heroes were who manifested, but the Lunars have nonetheless posted a massive reward for information leading to their capture. The mystics are all dead, as are many Dorasing and Pavic heroes.

Aftermath: Benderri and the Ulerian are transported to Pavis' rooms in his temple in the Old City, and the Pavis Cult publicly deny that the Ulerian is ever seen again. (In private she is smuggled out of the city in the early hours of the following morning.) Benderri dies that night in circumstances not fully explained, but apparently not before announcing Fleeter as his successor; and at least he dies happy and gets a state funeral. The Lunars accuse the Pavis Priests of sabotage, which they deny. Fleeter Nemm accuses the Lunars of allowing chaos agents to co-ordinate the wedding attempt, to which no official reply is forthcoming. Stalemate is reached, and Draxius continues his oppressive regime, although he does not put the city under martial law. In the weeks following the wedding, renewed growth of trees and vegetation in the Old City and surrounding farmlands under Pavis or Dorasing ownership increases exponentially, dwarfs somehow are able to treble their building works aboveground, and all zebra mares in the county and old city give birth to healthy twins (not those owned by Lunars). Invent other beneficial side-effects as appropriate. The Grey Company PCs are still outlaws hiding out in the Rubble, but may now be taught deep secrets of the Ancient Measure. Each one should have some greatly increased (or new) skill as a result of (and reward for) their HQ exploits.

Watch Out also for the second half of this finale: The Liberation of Pavis