

CHRONICLES OF YZRA THE CROW

A Player's Campaign Accessory

CREDITS

Design: Joshua Raynack
Editing: Heather Raynack
Web Production
and Development: Ryan Rawls
Graphic Design: Ryan Rawls
Joshua Raynack

'd20 System' and the 'd20 System' logo are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and are used according to the terms of the d20 System License version 6.0. A copy of this License can be found at www.wizards.com/d20.

d20 Modern, Dungeons & Dragons, and Wizards of the Coast are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. in the United States and other countries and are used with permission.

All Alea characters, character names, and the distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks owned by Alea Publishing Group.

This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction or unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of Alea Publishing Group.

©2005 Alea Publishing Group
All rights reserved.
Made in the U.S.A.

This product is a work of fiction.
Any similarity to actual people, organizations, places, or events is purely coincidental.



Requires the use of a Roleplaying Game Core Book published by Wizards of the Coast, Inc.



INTRODUCTION

I am Ysra the Crow. It is due to providence and my lord's wishes that I detail flora and fauna, strange beasts and monstrosities, the fabled and supernatural.

In accordance to Lord Havisem of Willshire, my lord, he gave me leave of my humble property in Harold's Lot to seek out and record the known and unknown to the best of my ability. The words written herein are gathered through greatest peril and dedicate themselves to the general known world. I take great care to honor my lord's request and keep accurate descriptions of what I see. Though I cannot read or right, my memory is sharp and full of wit. I oversee the scribes that write each word and testify to their authenticity.

-Ysra the Crow -952 C.E.



VERVIEW

I live in a land lit with inquisitional fires fueled by heretics and their undying beliefs, where feudal lords rule the day and untold horrors fill the night. This is the land of Nod.

Look around you! Those that you brush against in the crowded market, your neighbor whom you have toiled the same land for years, or those you are fortunate to travel with could be the doorway for demonic entities to command us all. **L i s t e n !** This is the land of blood and sweat, of war and crusades, a shadow of the culture that once was as peasants and lords alike struggle precariously to forge a future not as dark as its present.

This, with all the horrors and wonders that dwell within, is my home: Terra. It is a mysterious and brooding land filled of unspeakable monstrosities that victims wish never were and all of the shadows in every dark ally have ears and whispering voices.

Should anyone try to convince you we live in

age of enlightenment—ha! Fools! We live in a dark age of a once glorious past—filled with true heroes and epic quests. Truth be told, young adventurers, that suspicion and superstition are the true rulers of mankind leaving feudal lords and peasants alike powerless to their ambitions.



ERRIAN CULTURE

Although the world is bedeviled by war, inquisition, and shadowed influences of greater civilizations, it is not a world without those struggling to regain a semblance of culture. Terra is teeming with many humanoids of every nature as each holds a distinctive way of life and philosophy. Despite racial diversity, I find that there are seven comprehensive groups of societies: the townsfolk, the villagers, the merchant guilds, military orders, tribesmen, gypsies, the seafarers, and hermits.

Many of the cities, sprawling across the land, hugging the snaking rivers, bastions of mankind, were built upon even greater monumental places left to us by the ancients and their immediate descendants. Smelling of garbage and raw sewage, each is a dangerous den ripe for the greatest of all consuming fires. They are crowded with impoverished souls and mouths with their begging ringing forever in your ears.

Within the center, fortified by a castle or great manor house, sits either a feudal lord, a council of feudal lords, or a merchant house disguising themselves as noblemen. They surround themselves with scheming bureaucrats, lesser nobles, avaricious clergymen, and eager inquisitors. These individuals lay claim over the city and its inhabitants in the guise of benevolent warrior-kings.

The villagers fair worse as they toil each day for their lord while trying to keep a small garden for themselves. They grow vegetables to sell at market in an attempt to advance their meager lives. Serfs are tied to the land, their cottage belonging to their forbearers for untold generations. Each finds joy in thick mead (it is more nutritious than the water and a safer method of drowning gruel and porridge), each other, and, ironically, in the local parish. These peasants are reminded each day that they are sinners brought upon this earth to suffer intolerable drudgery, famine, and plague, for eternal salvation in the afterlife.



It must be said, however, that some of these poor wretches have acquired great wealth and established vast merchant empires by delivering to the feudal lords and the pious the unattainable riches of the south—the Hill Lands—salt, spices, silk, exotic meats, and other rarities. They are the second to transcend the barrier of bloodlines and establish a political voice with the power of wealth. With a network stretching hundreds of miles from the great merchant families that pull the sophisticated hierarchy of strings, these guilds are rising to the point of challenging kings and could upset the feudal system.

However, their vast wealth has only garnered the hope of establishing themselves within the very system that their ancestors escaped. Their power, political clout, and monies, captures the attention of impoverished nobles with land and titles to sell. They bind their daughters to a marriage of convenience tied to legal jargon rather than love.

It is with this wealth, the dynastic merchant houses employ the pious military orders for protection of their trade goods from the Turcomen tribesmen and barbaric orcish people that roam the southlands. Each established with good intentions, many now question their existence as rumors spread of their nefarious arcane dealings, consolidation of manpower to claim land from the feudal lords, and their strong connection with the church.

All across the lands of Terra, there are tribesmen of one sort or another; whether they be the scattered peoples known as the Turcomen in the southlands, the wildmen that scavenge the various unknown lands, the barbarians of the northlands, or that of the orcish peoples that dwell in the forgotten realms of our ancestors. Those that are on the fringe of civilization usually resort to raiding and violence to support themselves while others deep in the unknown, the lands with no name, respect the power of nature and have learned to reap its rewards.

Another grouping that either holds reverence for the land or for what they can take from others is the gypsy peoples. They too, like the tribesmen, live on the fringe of civilization, constantly on the move as nomadic merchants, thieves, entertainers, horsemen, and raiders. A gypsy caravan offers any

visitors a taste away from the mundane as long as you thrive on danger, passions, and the exotic.

Needless to say, the seafarers too thrive on adventure and a love for the treacherous sea unknown to any who farms the land. They delight in the call of sea maidens and are able to calm nightmares into visionary wonders each night while navigating the Ocean of Dreams. With a dagger in their boot and a hearty guffaw as a response to the notion of falling off the ends of the earth, they are always ready for action. However, like most within the grasp of a feudal lord's yoke, they too suffer a harsh life of malnutrition and mostly resort to raiding crusaders and merchants—eating their fill until ready to raid once more.

Hermits, for various reasons mostly known only to them, have withdrawn themselves from civilization all together. Either alone by choice or by persecution, they are eclectic individuals scratching out a meager existence in the most desolate areas of the world. In all likelihood, you might never come across the same path as a hermit for they avoid most strangers. Be that as it may, I advise utmost caution for each is capable of defending themselves should the situation arise and will not think twice when a man's life hangs in the balance.



MAGIC

In one form or another, the supernatural is upon us as man and other humanoids struggle to obtain and harness power beyond their means. I simply refer to the three natures of magic: the divine, arcane, and that of the mind.

I have heard in the most reliable of sources (a loremaster, for obvious reasons, I will not name) claim that the arcane and divine are one in the same. Though at first it seems an unlikely myth, I have seen proof that some ancient prophets and saints wielded magic not powered by divinity.

It was explained to me in this context: "the early church saw no difference between the miraculous and the arcane. However, as the church grew in power, they needed to separate themselves from pagans and charlatans using the arcane arts. To give the magical healing powers more creditability to the church, they claimed them divine. Others that did not fall within the church were told that they actually wielded arcane magic—magic fueled by demonic entities rather than godly spirits of man."

Needless to say, the point where these two magical powers may have once conjoined are now lost to the ravages of time. However, I hear of venerated totem priests, who still practice the old ways, hold the secret knowledge within their various nomadic libraries.

Of each of the supernatural paths, I feel the one that frightens me the most is that of the thought readers. Psionics, as the Calderians call it, grants them to seek the inner soul of those around them. They claim this power is wielded without professed love for a deity or without complex arcane rituals. It is a subtle power that without a trained eye, one would never realize that their will might not be their own. My lord bade me to travel eastward and into the baronies of Calderis, a place where culture embraces this power of the mind, but I fear such a place where my thoughts are suspect, so I have not gone. I even hear of the existence of mental inquisitors—the thought shudders the soul.



RELIGION

The land is ripe with religious fervor as each man knows what is righteous deep within their rotting soul.

Only those lost cultures or savages on civilization's fringe are polytheistic. They worship old gods such as Odin, Zeus, and the like. Even older still, loose tribes almost completely devoid of culture worship giants and titans.

However, civilized man is more complex creature—ah, how things were simpler when one could sacrifice a mountain goat to appease the gods. Now, everyone hungers for your soul and its continuous downward spiral into damnation. I know I am damned, so I will speak the truth!

Once a faith of many gods, like the pantheons of yore, the church has since been unified under one faith: the Eternal Spirit of Man. Those gods of good virtue, the god of the sun, of retribution, of valor, and the like, have no place in the new faith as gods, but as saints. They are considered to be normal men and woman that once walked the earth, as I speak these words to you now. However, current church doctrine delineates that there were remembered as gods by ancient peoples and have thus reinstated their status as once mortal, and bestowed sainthood upon each. Paragons of virtue for all to admire and strive to become.

Those gods of questionable moral character,

such as the gods of rogues, strength, roads, and the like are a bit more muddled with this growing situation. Some of their followers have accepted their patrons' role as saints rather than gods. Thus, these followers are gladly accepted as brethren into the church. However, those that still claim these figures as gods are hunted down within the reach of a civilized sword and are butchered, burned, or worse.

The followers of gods with no moral fiber, that of the gods of slaughter and tyranny, constantly hide themselves in dark, foreboding forests, distant farm houses, or within the dark underbelly of society, for they are indeed the hunted. Though church inquisitors ruthlessly track these villains, I believe nothing gives them more thrill than converting a wayward soul or lost lamb.



Nearly fifty years ago, the then church leader Popa Milis, called for crusades to the Hill Lands to rid the countryside of vicious orcs and pagan Turcomen tribesmen for settlement of the faithful. These were a great success, but in turn it also had foul results. The various orc tribes have united in loose confederations to handle the constant threat of crusading armies. A major leader for the orcish peoples calls itself the Orc Seer Tree.

The Turcomen have also united. Once rival bands of tribesmen on the brink of religious civil war themselves, they gather together under a banner of truce until both the crusaders and pilgrims are expelled. Though treated as barbarians, they have a complex religious worship and are highly civilized in thought. Some worship, what they consider prophets rather than saints, while others worship only angels.

Unlike these tribes of the south, the northern barbaric tribes are uncouth, chaotic, and uncivilized: they are the embodiment of nature with all its glory

and savagery. Their old religions are muddled as they worship a pantheon of old northern gods and those left by the encroaching Romus armies centuries ago; which they themselves were once influenced by the gods of the Grece peoples.

The dwarves worship these gods as well: Odin, Ymir, and the like, claiming themselves their first descendants. One would believe the Church of the Eternal Spirit of Man and the Holy Reformation of the Spirit would hunt these creatures too since they proudly display such heredity. But to the contrary, the church only has concerns with souls of men and not what they consider foul creatures. I must say though, that I encountered on rare occasions, a dwarven priest of the Spirit or (even rarer still) an elven maiden (I believe her to be half-elf or some other fairy-kin) taking the vows of a nun. As I said before, the religious machinations of man is highly complex.

Although I tried in earnest, I have no detailed record of the religious base of the dwarven peoples save for what I have previously written. Even more so, I have no record of elven worship or that of fairy-kin. These are two mysterious and elusive cultures. I hope to learn more about them and their mythical nature in a future chronicle.



MONSTERS

In my travels, I encountered many startling beasts and sadly lost some of the henchmen you provided. They were either brave souls who perished or cowardly ones whom fled out of fear.

But it is those that survive that are the true chroniclers, for without them, my presence would be naught.

The good monks that pen this chronicle as I speak tell me of their diligent classification of monstrous creatures. The brothers garnered such knowledge from self-study or from copied lore masters' treatises. A few classifications are worth mentioning within these pages.

Aberrations: These come from the foul minds of mad magicians or failed experiments to create magnificent beasts. They are found in deep dark places fueling the constant nightmares of those that witness such abominations.

Constructs: Another initial creation of a maddening magus, it is no wonder why the church

Illustration by Gustave Doré

hunts such self-proclaimed wielders of magic. Needless to say, the practice is more ancient than that. The little I know of dwarves, they have a history of creating such iron men for the old gods.

The ancients too have a hand in our eternal salvation. I speak in reference to the *lawbringers*—three constructs of old, with minions mirrored in likeness, that hunt transgressors of ancient law. Many churchmen and feudal lords are aware of these laws in one form or another using them to their advantage against enemies. I will speak no more of this matter, for fear has my throat.

Outsiders: Some scholars make mention of creatures that fit this classification, however most doubt their existence save for those that are angels, demons, and devils. Even to that extent they are seldom seen unless in some human disguise manipulating man for some purpose or to those of extreme religious favor.

Personally, I spoke to one traveler whom claimed to see other places of existence in which these creatures were plentiful. My companions and I took it for jest, but truthfully to think of entire fields filled with demonic entities is terrifying to say the least.



THONIAN GEOGRAPHY

The heart of the world, at least as it is known to me, is the lands of Cthonia. Though it is not my heart that longs for it, this is a region of petty feudal lords

clamoring for more prestige and land that they could pass off into hands of a hundred heirs. Save for my lord, whom though considered minor for the little land or soldiers that guards his manor house gate, has great lineage of the one true queen of us all: Julia the Red.

Hundreds of years ago, Julia the Red expelled the encroaching armies and settlers of the Romus Empire and tamed the wild lands that is now Cthonia. She, in turn, united the tribes under her banner and forced other to their knees that refused to pay tribute. Chieftains become warrior-lords, then knights, then the feudal lords that plague the land today. Only if she listened to her savage heart and remained a woman rather than becoming a lady what a land this would be!

But I digress, my lord, for I go beyond my duty. I shall continue what you bade me to do; be a chronicler.

The Dominion of Darcadia and the Hill Lands lie directly south of the heart of Cthonia. To the west, the uncivilized lands of my people. The rest of this great nation is to the east and also that of the Eastlands: a small collection of baronies. But it is this glorious land of Cthonia that I am to document.

GROVES, WOODS, AND FORESTS

I ventured into many of the wooded lands of this region, or at least stood at their edge. I also collected rumors or in some cases dispelled beliefs.

Black Grove

Of all the wooded areas, this brought me the most dread. Against the wishes of one of my guides, I elected to move off the heavily traveled road between Caldor and Arden, known as the High Road, and go into the grove's heart.

The grove is a collection of dead trees that refuses to rot or decay. No animal life inhabits the grove and the soil is no longer able to support new life. The peasants that live near its edge claim that



AHNGRIN

SHADKHANIM

MOUNTAINS

CTHONIA

SOMBER
WOOD

WOOD
OF THE
FORGOTTEN

ASHEN

RIVER

ARDEN

FOREST
OF
WOE

BLACKBURN

KALDOR

BLACK
GROVE

OAK AGES

DRAY
WOOD

TALKING
TREES

SHADOW RIVER

CALDOR

SORROWFUL GARDE

LOST
WOOD

RAVEN'S
DEN

SHADOW PEAKS

ELTON

WOODMEN'S
HALL

ARDOR

BORDER
KEEP

ELOE
CASTLE

BURROW
GLADES

SILENT
WOOD

JOURNEYMAN'S
REST

TOWER OF
CAEL

TROLLFORD

STRONGHOLD OF
THE ONE

RIVER
BOTTOM

SEVEN
ARROWS

ASH

BOG OF BONES

FEN
GROVE

HOWDEN
MOOR

MOUNTAINS

SHIELD
TREE

TOLLBRIDGE

the dead trees continue to stand because it is a graveyard for dyrads and other fey that rest in the heartwood of each tree.

They further claim that a pagan group, known to them as Black Grove priests guard the area from graverobbers. I must say that I did not see any black-robed pagans, but we all felt as though we were watched. Furthermore, I believe none of us even snapped a branch without a bead of sweat forming from the anxiety. It is a foreboding place indeed.

Burrow Glades

This too is a silent place, save for the occasional child-like laughter that echoes when someone makes a fool of themselves. My guide contributes this to gnomes that live beneath the tree roots. The quiet people of Elton also claim this and often leave bowls of extra milk at their stoop for these creatures.

I talked to many people in this area to gain an authentic description of a gnome, but none save for the village idiot has every saw one of the elusive dwarf-kin. However, we did have several pairs of shoes stolen from us as we slept.

Dray Wood

This forest is so named from the amount of wood that was once was hauled from the region by way a drays: large, sideless carts. The wood actually extended to the edge of Shadow River until piles of large bones were discovered and the harvesting ceased.

Many believe these bones to be that of dragons, but I think they mistake giant draconic claws for tusks of elephants. These dauntingly huge creatures were used by the Romus and other ancient empires of the south.

It is not only from stories of my peoples that ascertain this assumption, but that of the Talking Trees. They are bewitched oaks hundreds of years old and claim to remember such things. These ancient beings did not speak to us directly, but through a pagan priest we found that tends their druidic circle.

By placing his hands upon their bark he heard their voices and relayed the information to us. I believed the information gleaned, whether it was from a charlatan or a heartwood voice.

These trees claimed the olifant that sat ever present in their center was made from a draconic tooth. When I asked the purpose for the great horn, they fell silent refusing to speak to us further.

Fen Grove

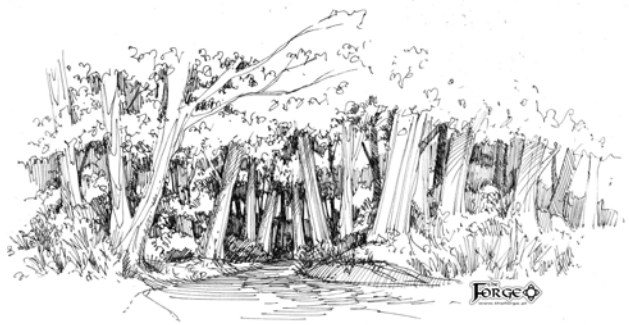
This wooded area mainly comprises of a swamp and bog trees. The land is marshy filled with poisonous snakes, gases and plants. Also, it is the home of outlaws, assassins, cultists, and dark magicians. All of whom know how to remain hidden from prying eyes. Needless to say, we only glimpsed the grove from a distance.

Lost Wood

We passed through the wood via the Lost Road onward to Elton and Raven's Den. Like that of our travels in the Black Grove, we did not linger here long. Though we encountered nothing out of the ordinary and game was fair, some, including myself, swore we heard whispering voices.

According to those living in Elton, a band of thieves once roamed these woods hampering trade between Ardor and Caldor. They were said to evade the soldiers of Border Keep well enough due to their leader, a rogue known only as The Jade.

On my account, we passed through and onto Elton safely with our coin intact. But many heard the whispering voices while traveling in these woods and thus travel to Elton and Raven's Den eventually dwindled. However, I do not think either village minds the loss of trade.



Forest of Woe

The Forest of Woe is a chronicle in and of itself! It contains many mysteries and even more unanswerable questions. An old and dark castle, known as Sorrowful Garde by many questing knights, looms on top of Shadow Peaks; the great Woodman's Hall remains devoid of activity at the forest's edge; the Oak of Ages, its wood as hard as stone, was once said to give council to fairy-kin; and the most wondrous legend—the forest is said to be the birthplace of the elves.

The most wondrous creature encountered was not that of myth but of reality: humans—whether

they be the axemen of Raven's Den harvesting the ancient trees or druidic pagans that wars against the former. Either way, much blood is shed making this a dangerous place to roam.

Silent Wood

Aptly named, nothing here seems to make a sound. Though our hunters found good game, it often proved difficult because none of the inhabiting animals even made a sound whether it was a grunt or hooves prancing upon dead leaves. The only sound we heard was that we made ourselves.

We encountered an ancient ruin—a lone stone tower that floated about ten feet above a dwindling stream. No apparent entrance into the tower was seen—not even a window or arrow slit. The base of the tower looked as though it was ripped from a castle wall.

Our guide suggested to leave the place when smoke began to rise from a chimney stack. We took his advice.

Somber Wood

This place has no lingering mystery about it. It was called North Wood until the plague afflicted the villages that lived within nearly ten years ago. The ghostly villages that once thrived and grew are a constant reminder of the deadly disease that threatens all walks of life. Entire hamlets disappeared within a matter of hours once the black death swept through by way of a diseased wind.

The feudal lords of Blackburn are beginning to investigate the area and take a census of those that survived. Finding those willing to undertake such a task is proving difficult. It is slowly becoming a safe haven for poachers, escaped serfs, and thieves that are brave enough to risk sudden death in lieu of debtor's prison or the gallows.

Wood of the Forgotten

Like the Forest of Woe and Dray Wood, this too is an ancient weald. Scholars of the old kingdoms have even made note of the ominous obsidian pillars guarding peaceful glades.

Standing within touching distance of this ancient stonework, I spied humanoid forms seemingly sleeping. They appeared human with ebony skin—the monks inform me that the Egyptian script describe these creatures calling them simply the Ancients. A brother further informs me that these obsidian pillars also are numerous within deep recesses of the Malsara Desert to the south.

I must say, these pillars intrigued me enough to spend time until the evening studying them until one of our own became glossy-eyed and thrust himself upon me with sword in hand. Our guide managed to strike swiftly dispatching our friend. We left that instant leaving his body to the wolves.

RIVERS, STREAMS, AND BOGS

Many rivers snake their way through the heart of Cthonia. They serve as the lifeblood for animals and people alike as well as important trade routes between towns and villages.

Ashen River

Not as well traveled as Shadow River, it remains in fair use for merchants coming from Ahngrin. It drags dark fertile soil from the Wood of the Forgotten southward providing rich farmland to those of Kaldor. It is aptly named for it also brings ash from a smoke plumed volcano located in the Shadkhanim Mountains.

Bog of Bones

Many a knight errant or questing knight lay rotting in the shallow waters of the Bog of Bones. We hired a guide from Tollbridge to take us somewhat into the interior.

We soon discovered the unsettling sound of bones crunching beneath our feet with each step we took. Our guide informed us this place was once a fertile bowl where an ancient sacrifice took place. The bones trapped water from Shadow River and the bog formed.

He also told us of that he pointed many men of iron toward Shield Tree: a great swamp oak where a plethora of knightly shields hang. Each shield



Illustration by Arthur Rackham

represents a felled knight at the hands of a coven of hags that toil the area. It originated as a warning, but grew to represent a quick path to glory. To retrieve a single shield from the tree would bring fame to any brave knight.

Howden Moor

A misspelling by an early cartography led to this place to be called Howden Moor instead of its original name: Hoyden Moor. The former name seems innocent enough and many mistake the peat bog as such.

The latter reveals its true danger to men that travel the area. Many are drawn to the bottom only to drown while trying to chase down fairies, sirens, nymphs, will-o-wisps, or other falsely alluring creatures that live on or under the various patches of heath.

River Bottom

A small river that draws water from Trollford enriches the coffers of Tollbridge where it splits. A heavy toll is required to cross either river and enter into the debauched town.

River of Good Faith

Named by the many missionaries that travel westward into the Wildlands to convert pagans dwelling there, this river parallels an ancient Romus road that merchants and barbaric raiders alike use to travel in and out of the Wildlands.

Shadow River

The main river that serves as a border between Cthonia and the Wildlands. It begins in the Shadkhanim Mountains and empties into the Bog of Bones.

MOUNTAIN RANGES

There are three major mountains in this area, all of which are dangerous to travel often due to strange creatures, sharp slopes, and an unforgiving climate.

Ash Mountains

Also called St. George's Mount, it is the site where the only known destruction of a great red wyrm took place in a titanic battle of mythical proportions. The conflict is said to have ended with the deaths of both St. George and beast Drul'ven Rac, to which the latter spewed hot, gray ash from its mortal wound.

Shadkhanim Mountains

The Ahngrin road is the only path piercing through these mountains. It is an ancient road named by the Romus after the dwarf-speak word *shadkhan* meaning *old with great lineage*. In recent times, with the growth of Ahngrin, the road was renamed to fit its purpose while Shadkhanim now refers to the mountain range.

Shadow Peaks

Named so for the ominous shadow that darkens the surrounding forest below, Shadow Peaks offers a great vantage point of the Forest of Woe. Perhaps this is the reasoning for the great undertaking in constructing the beautiful, yet somber, castle of Sorrowful Garde.



UINS

There are several ruins in this region. The most prominent three are Sorrowful Garde, The Stronghold of the One, and the Tower of Calel. I plan to detail each in further chronicles as soon as I find

companions ready to make the journey.



ITIES

The small villages and hamlets are too numerous to mention here. The cities, though few in this region, also need great detail to satisfy my lords wishes. Therefore, I will reserve the information I gathered in a future chronicle as well. So do not disparage,

my lord, as I will be in frequent contact.



ERSONAL NOTE

I give praise, as so shall you, to the monks of Newood Abbey considering that their main source of income relies on bees and honey rather than copying books. Hopefully my journey will take me to those

that are as willing to help me chronicle my tales as

those of Newwood.

I head to Border Keep next to find some stout and uncouth warriors that will journey with me to the ends of this earth to accomplish the task you set before me.



WELCOME ADVENTURERS AND STORY TELLERS!

Players and Game Master alike, welcome to the world of Terra and all of the other elements that make up the *Feudal Lords Campaign Setting*TM. With each step in this blossoming world, you will find political intrigue, uncover mysteries, and rediscover ancient myths.

In this section of our free campaign primer, you will find many new physical features the Feudal Lords products will take as well as a brief look behind what to expect from the setting itself. So let us begin!

LAYOUT

Perhaps the first thing you discovered is the layout of this e-book. This is designed to be printed, put together, and stapled down the middle, to produce a physical book easy to handle and hold.

This pocket guide design enables you to print a full color book without using much ink. When printed it will be only eight physical pages and when put together and folded turn into thirty-two pages to flip through anytime you want. For those that want to conserve more ink, we have the printer friendly version.

Many future Feudal Lords products will be made up of a traditional screen version and a print version (color and printer friendly) similar to this layout. Books that contain too much information to be placed in a book of this size, we will instead fill the pocket guide with the juicy bits that you would use at the game table.

In the end, you will have several choices on how you want to handle the printing of your e-book: print the full screen version (color or printer friendly)

or as a pocket guide (also color and printer friendly).

SIMILARITIES TO EARTH

Also, you might notice that there are many earth-like references: Egyus, Grece, and Romus Empires (Egypt, Greece, and Rome) ; Turcoman (Turcoples); even Terra is another name for Earth. These are all intentional.

One of the things we had a problem with other settings is that to really explore new regions and cultures, experienced and creative Game Masters aside, a product was needed to keep the flavor of the setting. With these similarities between Terra and Earth, a Game Master need only to go to a local bookstore or library to learn more about most of the cultures we present.

Furthermore, Players are able to mentally connect their inner-eye when Game Masters describe an ancient temple of the Egyus Empire. Also, it is easier to imagine a city and its inhabitants with ties to Romus-like traditions.

CHANGES TO THE CORE RULES

Our intentions are to present a campaign setting rather than requiring Game Masters and Players alike to purchase numerous books to play in the world of Terra. Therefore, our changes to the core rules are minimal as you will see below.

Races

All of the races in the core books are acceptable and fit well within the *Feudal Lords Campaign Setting*. There only a few minor changes on how they are presented.

Elves and Half-elves

These are actually considered sub-races of humans with varying degrees of fey blood. Both are commonly called fairie-kin and are generally accepted with suspicion. Actual elves are more earth-like in mythical tradition and less Tolkien-like.

Core Classes

The core classes, as a whole, remain fairly unchanged. However, there are a few exceptions.

Clerics

The clerics presented in the core rulebooks are more

in the tradition of a crusader or warrior-monk. They play as is except that they no longer spontaneously cast *cure* spells. Furthermore, they no longer have any *cure* spells to their spell list.

They will have other abilities to offset this loss—such as providing bonuses to pious followers and spontaneously casting domain spells.

Most human clerics worship the same pantheon—the Spirit of Man. Each cleric devotes their worship of that faith to an individual saint. Each saint has its own selection of domains that a cleric can choose from. Characters can continue to worship most gods presented in the core rulebooks as saints within the Church of the Spirit.

However, clerics of a evil or chaotic alignment usually worship their divine patrons as fully-fledged gods rather than saints. These clerics are seen as misguided by the Church of the Spirit and are regularly hunted.

Sorcerers and Wizards

Although the Feudal Lords setting is presented as a low-magic campaign, there are no restrictions on either of these classes or the magic they wield. Instead, we added elements that would naturally keep these magicians at bay. A united church often hunts such transgressors and those rebellious to the divine, while the new summoner core class offers many challenging situations for an arcane caster.

Paladin

The paladin is no longer a core class. It will be presented as a prestige class.

ADDING TO THE CORE RULES

Products supporting the Feudal Lords setting will add to the core rules and other books rather than trying to replace them. For instance, the upcoming dwarven guide will be exactly that: a guide. It will present rules that will add a twist to the already existing mountain of dwarf books rather than rewriting old material.

Feudal Lords

The lifeblood of the feudal system lies within the veins of the manor lord. Whether inherited or newly granted for exemplary service, the gift of nobility rules the lands of Terra.

There will be numerous ways for a Player to have a noble character and eventual rise to become a feudal lord themselves. Some of these include noble

bloodlines, backgrounds, Heraldry bonuses, and the Feudal Lord prestige class. We want characters to shape the world, rather than just live in it.

New Core Classes

Besides the summoner and possessed core classes, most new classes introduced will have the feel of a traditional medieval setting: Household Knight, Merchant, Astromancer, and the like.

New Rules

We will offer new rules such as Piety and Heraldry to heighten the feel of a truly medieval world ruled by feudal tyrants and powerful clergy.

So begin your journey into the *Feudal Lords Campaign Setting* with its first released product: the Household knight core class. Also, look for future articles in the *Poor Gamer's Almanac* about Terra and its inhabitants.



A household knight bears the title and noble trappings of knighthood, but is landless. Therefore, most household knights live in residence with the lord they serve.

What's Inside

- A fully detailed 20-level character class: the household knight
- The 10-level epic advancement for the household knight
- 15 commands (special orders aiding allies of the household knight)
- Rules on Heraldry (arrange meetings with lords and kings, gain fiefs, or impress ladies-in-waiting)
- Rules on Alliances (cement an allegiance to help progress and consolidate your power)
- 4 epic feats and 2 normal feats
- 2 fully detailed household knight NPCs (5th and 10th level)
- A comprehensive table to create NPC household knights from 1st to 20th level.

Feudal Lords

OPEN GAME LICENSE Version 1.0a

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc ("Wizards"). All Rights Reserved.

1. Definitions: (a)"Contributors" means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b)"Derivative Material" means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other form in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) "Distribute" means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d)"Open Game Content" means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity. (e) "Product Identity" means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) "Trademark" means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor (g) "Use", "Used" or "Using" means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content. (h) "You" or "Your" means the licensee in terms of this agreement.

2. The License: This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.

3. Offer and Acceptance: By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.

4. Grant and Consideration: In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.

5. Representation of Authority to Contribute: If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License.

6. Notice of License Copyright: You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder's name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.

7. Use of Product Identity: You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title and interest in and to that Product Identity.

8. Identification: If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.

9. Updating the License: Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.

10. Copy of this License: You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.

11. Use of Contributor Credits: You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.

12. Inability to Comply: If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.

13. Termination: This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.

14. Reformation: If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.

15. COPYRIGHT NOTICE

Open Game License v 1.0 Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

System Reference Document (draft and final versions) Copyright 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

Chronicles of Yzra the Crow, Copyright 2005, Alea Publishing Group.

The Open Game Content

*Chronicles of Yzra the Crow*TM is done under version 1.0 of the Open Game License and the draft version of the d20 System Trademark Guide and System Reference Document by permission of Wizards of the Coast. APG's intention is to open up as much of this game enhancement as much as possible to be used as Open Game Content (OGC), while maintaining Product Identity (PI) to all aspects of the Alea Publishing Group intellectual property.

However, publishers who wish to use the OGC materials from this game enhancement are encouraged to contact either cguill@aleapublishing.com or jraynack@aleapublishing.com if they have any questions or concerns about reproducing material from *Chronicles of Yzra the Crow* in other OGL works. APG would appreciate anyone using OGC material from *Chronicles of Yzra the Crow* in other OGL works to kindly reference *Chronicles of Yzra the Crow* as the source of that material within the text of their work and if so used, must bear the COPYRIGHT NOTICE: "*Chronicles of Yzra the Crow* Copyright 2006, Alea Publishing Group." Open Game Content may only be used under and in accordance with the terms of the OGL as fully set forth on the previous page.

DESIGNATION OF PRODUCT IDENTITY: The following items are hereby designated as Product Identity in accordance with section 1(e) of the Open Game License, version 1.0: Any and all Alea Publishing Group Logos; any elements of any Alea Publishing Group setting, including but not limited to artifact names, capitalized names, characters, countries and empires, geographic locations, cultural information, organizations, documents within the game world, quotes from characters or documents, stories, storylines, plots, creative and thematic elements, "flavor" elements, examples used to explain rule information, and dialogue; and all artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, illustrations, maps, cartography, and graphic designs, except such elements that already appear in the d20 System Reference Document and are already OGC by virtue of appearing there. The above Product Identity is not Open Game Content.

DESIGNATION OF OPEN GAME CONTENT: Publishers are encouraged to write to either cguill@aleapublishing.com or jraynack@aleapublishing.com for a free APGSD of this document. In addition, the following is OGC: Subject to the Product Identity designation above, the following are designated as Open Game Content. All elements to the SRD, except for information previously designated as PI.