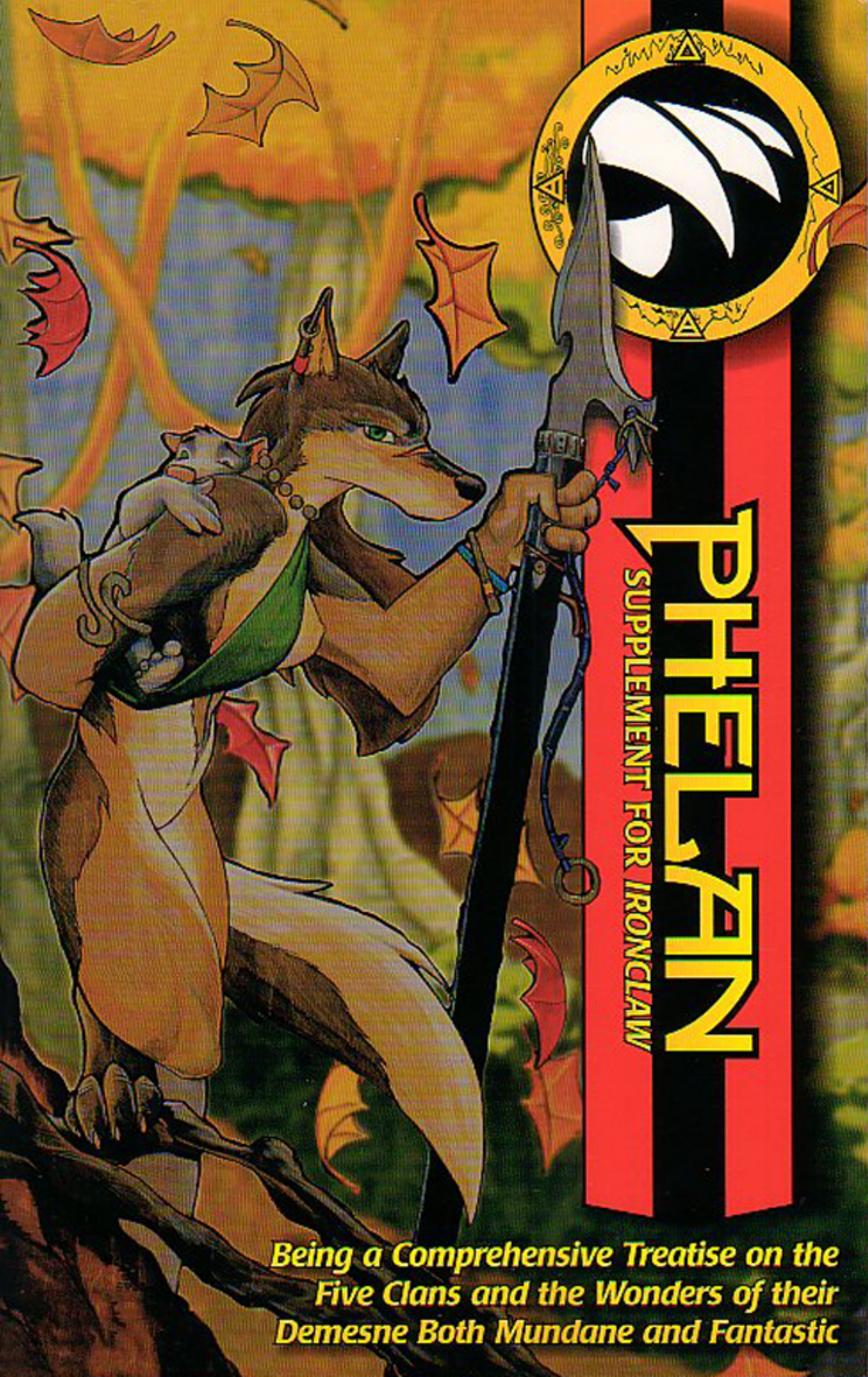




PHIELYAN

SUPPLEMENT FOR IRONCLAW

*Being a Comprehensive Treatise on the
Five Clans and the Wonders of their
Demesne Both Mundane and Fantastic*



I sound my barbaric yawp over the roofs of the world.

— Walt Whitman, *Song of Myself*

PHELAN

Being a Comprehensive Treatise on the Five Clans and the Wonders of their Demesne Both Mundane and Fantastic

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Dedication

To Karen Whedon, who taught me a thing or two about business.





I, Miranda Devoisier, write these words. I testify that within this book is my complete manuscript entitled "On the Phelan of Calabria," a study of this much-maligned and misunderstood people. Now that my long journey has ended, I am given pause to reflect upon what I have witnessed and the records I have made. . . .



Still vivid in my mind are the rolling green hills so endemic of Phelan demense. Is it any wonder these people continue to live in such rural simplicity?

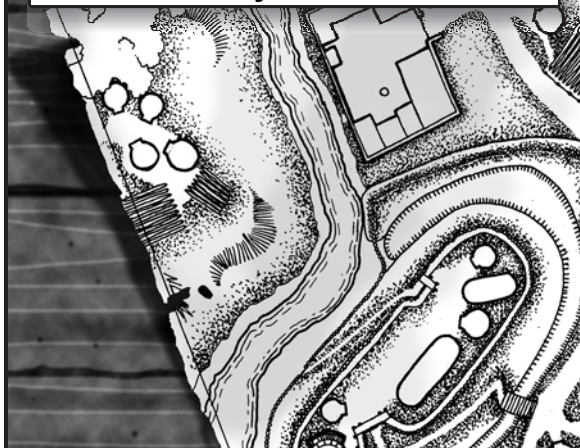


Like all peoples in this world, the Phelan have their differences, their altercations and their feuds.



Rather than fences and walls, their standing stones mark their borders with grim solemnity

Rather than simply provide a map to locations of note, I have striven to describe the complex society that has served these people for what has been a thousand years or more.



The Phelan are not one race of people, but five: the Reeoil, Iargul, Oirthir, Deasaich, and Cell.



The differences between the clans are subtle, and a wary traveler would do their best to know them.

This historian would like to give special mention to the Wizards of the Phelan, the mysterious Druids.



In some places, the counsel of the Druids bears so much weight, they are as lords of their demesne.

Perhaps it was their fear of the Druids and the old laws that created the noble house of Bisclavret.



Will the Bisclavret inherit the rule they desire? Or are they doomed to collapse while the ways of their savage cousins persist for another thousand years?

In the end, it is the neutral judge of history that changes who is the

OH, BOTHER.
THIS IS HARDLY A
GOOD SIGN...



ALL HANDS!

ALL HANDS
ON DECK!!

HELMSMAN!
WATCH FOR
ROCKS!









THE HISTORY OF THE PHELAN

Being a Factual Account as Gathered by Learned Personages

The Phelan were among the first inhabitants of Calabria. When exactly they arrived is up to some debate, but it was at least over a thousand years ago, possibly before the Rinaldi. The Phelan must have arrived in boats with square sails, or ones rowed by themselves or by slaves.

As their legends tell it, when the Phelan first landed on the island, they found a lush paradise of green-covered hills, thick forests, and rich fields for farming.

Unfortunately, the land was infested with monsters: goblins, specters, and all sorts of frightful creatures. The musicians know countless songs of this time of legends when brave souls defeated the monsters of the land through battle, through cleverness, or through other means. Separating the factual history from the exaggerations of generations of storytellers has proved a challenge for many a historian. Another aspect that makes chronicling difficult is that the Phelan do not have the same concept of “time” that other folk do — many folk-tales have characters wandering from one era to the next, sometimes hundreds of years apart, forward or backward in time.

Lurking shadows and mist greeted the first of the Phelan settlers, whose longboats scraped ashore in Calabria over a thousand years ago. They were a desperate group, those of the *Recoil*, the first clan of Phelan that had taken flight from their homes after being burned out of their homes on faraway shores. They brought with them what little they had in the hopes that they would someday return with cries of glory. Their long lost homeland was now only a memory in the oldest ballads and songs, with only the storytellers and the druids who remember the *Tír ná Fadadh-cruíachr*, the “land of many colors.” Historians have guessed that this place was a group of islands far west of Calabria, where the ocean spray often forms tiny rainbows.





The War with the Goblins



Calabria was a hospitable place; the rocky coast gave way to a green and rich interior, and colonizing was simply a matter of staking a claim and defending it. While their numbers were few, the early Phelan settlers had a strong sense of camaraderie to work together against this untamed wilderness. They organized farmland and hunting parties for the benefit of all, much as they are today. Game and land seemed to be for the taking. This warmer, friendlier country appeared to be a paradise made real, at first.

Then the horrors began. Children disappeared — at first only one or two at a time, later in larger numbers. One dreadful moonless night, the village of Páirceanna was burned to the ground. All the inhabitants were found impaled on stakes that formed a giant ring around the village. Only then did the Reeoil realize that they were not alone.

The villages armed themselves and watches were set. At first suspicion was cast upon each other, turning upon one another looking for a villain. Soon it was realized that there was an evil afoot in the land. The first Morrígná was sighted as it tried to escape a scouting patrol — a monstrous thing, half again as tall as a man, coated in feathers as black as night. It took the might of all four scouts to bring it down and then only with a lucky throw of a spear. With stealth borne of fear, the scouts pressed on to find an encampment of the creatures, an obvious preparation for war.

The Morrígnai attacked less than a fortnight later, but the Reeoil Clan was ready. An alert system of howling wolves known as *Ululants* had been set up as advanced scouts, ready to cry havoc when the enemy was seen. Weapons were made and distributed, and circular bulwarks of earth were dug and built around each village. As fate would have it, the first battle took place at Cathair Raithnéachean, with the dreaded beasts assaulting in random bands, nearly silent despite their massive size. The tales say that one fool was stricken with the “falling sickness” — he fell over and drooled, paws clutching weakly at the air, as he recounted that these beasts were the Shadows of a long-lost race of Autarchs, a darkness given substance so that they would serve their masters for war and conquest. The Morrígnai showed no quarter, no pity, and no remorse as they sieged the wolves.





However, while these monsters were fierce, they lacked the tactical skill of the Phelan people. Séamas, the Reeoil Clan Chieftain who suffered the burden of command that dreadful night, first lit the fires as the signal that his Ululants were to fly from their posts and to journey within howling range of the neighboring villages, so that they may send as many warriors as they might spare. When the Morrígnai charged into the village limits, they discovered that trenches had been dug and filled with tar and pitch, covered by enough dirt to trick them into thinking it was solid ground. Séamas ordered the trench put to flame, and the first wave of Morrígnai burned as their feathers caught and exploded. Some lunged from the flames seeking to postpone their deaths, only to be met with the spears of angry Phelan seeking justice for their lost children. For every Morrígnai who met its end in the trenches, four leaped over the flames, using their fallen comrades as springboards. They met the Reeoil warriors who waited near the outer bulwark, with their massive swords cutting through the brave. All the while, the Morrígnai swung their great-swords without a sound, the only noise being the cries of brave Phelan as they fell before the monsters' blades.

Séamas then sent out a howling call to his masters of magic, the mysterious *Druids*, and their cousins, the mocking *Fools*. Accounts of the battle vary as to what happened next; the most complete account is recorded in the saga *The Song of Conas Mac Gadhar*, which describes the effects of a spell known as *Ní Ruathar Ag Cathairt ná Noi le Bathairt*:

"As per the righteous king's order, the Gifted Ones [that is, the Druids], gathered in a circle of nine, being the number needed to call upon the power. In their midst was the humble *Óinnseach ag Gaoil*, sky-clad and painted in such a way as to either incite revulsion or pity in all that would see her.

"With her loudest voice and her most vulgar gestures, she hurled her insults at everyone and everything. She insulted the warriors of the Phelan, that they were so unfit so as to fall so easily before the debased and monstrous. The warriors moaned and cried in their suffering and anguish.





“She cursed the Gifted Ones, that they were so unknowing and ignorant so as they would not have augured the goblins and the way to defeat them. The nine Gifted Ones fell before her and cried, in base admission of their own failing, that they were not worthy to call upon the power that might save them.

“Finally Óinnseach decried the world itself, that it would visit such a holocaust upon the Wolves that they would die by the hands of monsters. Óinnseach mocked the elements themselves — she howled louder than the loudest thunder, she whistled shriller than the fiercest wind, and she spun quicker than the fastest breeze. In this way did she dare that the world could not do as she did, that the Gifted Ones were less powerful than a mere fool.

“And the world did hear, and the world answered the call so that the righteous wolves would not fall that day. A wind swept down upon the goblins, so that some were dashed against the ground, their bones broken and their bodies sundered, while others were drawn high into the air above the highest clouds, spinning faster and faster until their limbs were rent from their bodies.”

Regardless of whether this spell was cast or if it was this powerful, all accounts agree that this effort was not enough. Whenever one Morrígnai fell, another would take its place — their apparent strategy was to make one great assault and to eradicate everyone in the settlement at once. It was not to be; the call of the Ululants brought mighty Atavists and skilled warriors from all around the region. When the Phelan numbers were replenished, they fought as wolves do, with one mind. This triple onslaught of fire, magic, and arms eventually routed the disorganized Morrígnai, for even though the goblins took four lives for every one that they lost, and though the day was won for the wolves at great cost, the Phelan celebrated their victory.

Council was called and it was decided to maintain and increase the fortifications of neighboring Tamhnachean. Outlying settlements were pulled in toward the fort in the event of another attack. Scouts were then sent out to determine the extent of the threat. The Phelan learned many things that year, including how to evade even the worst of the monster patrols. Then when spring set in and preparations were in order, the Reeoil set out to drive the Morrígnai from the forests. As the stories say, after more than a dozen frightful battles, the wolves succeeded in driving the Shadows of the Autarchs away from their own lands. The Morrígnai gave King Séamas five swords as terms of peace, and since then the monsters have not dared leave their forest-haunts for fear of Phelan law. To this day, mothers still frighten children who misbehave by threatening to let the Morrígnai take them away in the middle of the night.

The Challenge of the Gifted Ones

With the times of war behind them, the Tuath ná Reeoil began to grow. The forestlands northwest of their landfall were greatly hospitable and rich in game. Many of the smaller lizards were hunted. Of the larger lizards, the *cumal* was domesticated and became a primary source of meat for the Phelan. More farmers and herdsman fostered more communities with a connection to the land. The wolves were no longer strangers in this land.

Seasons passed, a half-score Chieftains ruled, and the Reeoil began to move away from the old ways as they bickered over land and livestock. Upon the death of the great Queen Aedammair, a radical sect of the Druid council demanded audience. They were known as the *Aos Daoine ná Iargúl*, and they were to put forth their own successor to the throne of chieftain, a *tanist* of their own choice, in the hopes that he could lead the people back to the ways of old. A rival faction of landowners, afraid that the Iargúl might eventually call for a return to the homeland, put forth their own *tanist* and rallied behind his banner.



The time of appointment drew near and the two factions were still bitterly divided. In fear that the Iargúl would win the Chieftainship, the landholders ambushed their tanist's caravan, killing him and his family. The Iargúl, from their stronghold of Cathair Murias, retaliated by visiting a magical blight upon the crops. The landowners loyal to the Reeoil held their ground, and thus began a war that was to last twenty years. Eventually, both sides could see no resolution to this conflict, and it was decided that the clan of Reeoil had grown too large and too divided to be ruled by one chieftain. The clans separated into two — the Tuath ná Reeoil of the east, and the Tuath ná Iargúl of the west.

The landscape was kind to these two warring clans. Though they frequently brought arms against one another, their numbers increased and gradually another clan arose, a motley of Reeoil and Iargúl who had fled south in hopes of escaping the worst of the border-wars. Over many seasons, they learned to live with one another. They were led by *Finias Cantaireachd*, a man who (as the legends tell) was the greatest howler who ever lived. His dirges would bring a tear to the eye and move the soul to strong passions; his cries were so loud as to smother all others who would seek to command the chorus. The strife between the two older clans was pointless to these southerners.

Despite his charisma (or perhaps because of it), Finias met a gruesome end. The lore is that Finias was too beloved of the ladies and that he often dallied with the wives of others. Eventually a gang of jealous husbands accosted him and cut off his head. However, Finias' song was so great that his head continued to sing. The people took this as an omen, and they founded a city upon the site of his death and named it Cathair Finias in his honor. His head was buried underneath the royal hall, and after the funeral was over the southerners declared themselves a new clan, the *Tuath ná Deasaich*. When their nobles petitioned the other chieftains to be recognized as their own people under the law of Fénéchas (see page 18), neither Reeoil nor Iargúl could refuse them — both recognized the power of Finias' song and the strength of the Deasaich, and the cost of defying their claim to sovereignty was one they chose not to pay.



The Strife with the Doloreaux

Even though there were three clans of Phelan, the folk were still very spread out. The forests around their new homes were large and apparently without end, though reports of great rivers and mountains had begun to be heard from the far-wandering scouts. As the clans spread out, smaller landholders began to organize their own areas — many lords began to have hopes for true power. Their holdings grew, they began to vie amongst each other for land, and once again there were skirmishes and feuds amongst one another to assert their claims.



Among the small warring families, one in the far eastern forest had a leader of great strength: those under the banner of *Lady Briana ag Gáire*. Her decisive leadership and keen wits served her well as she enforced the letter of the law upon her fellow Phelan. It was because of Briana's reputation as a wise and just leader that when the trouble brewing behind the horizon came to bear, the people sought her out to see them through the times of war. With their common franchise and common language, these particular Phelan were known as the *Oirthir*, or "Easterners."

The Phelan had traversed too far east, and they had encountered the other settlers of Calabria. The mountains were the demesne of the surly and xenophobic Chevernaise. With these folk, the Phelan had little trouble as long as they kept to the valleys and the forest and left the goats alone.

The Doloreaux were a different story. Thwarted by the entrenched Chevernaise, this noble house sought to expand westward as their knights sought more land. Refusing to recognize any claims of the Phelan, the Doloreaux lords expelled people from their claims by force. In kind, the *Oirthir* had little patience with these strange foreigners and their baseless claims. Rumors circulated amongst both the boars and the wolves of the barbarous habits of the other — that they sacrificed children, that they were cannibals, etc. Lady Briana would have no truck with rumors; she demanded facts. By her orders, several Doloreaux were captured and interrogated, and she learned the truth that these were not a supernatural monsters but another race of men and women much like themselves.

As time drew on and the war continued, Lady Briana realized they were not going to be able to drive out the Doloreaux the same way they had with the *Morrígnai*. The goblins of the forest, while strong and fierce, had no tactics or coordination and thus could be defeated by superior strategy. The boars were very much the opposite — their soldiers had strong discipline and meticulous training, and when they charged it was in organized lines with spear-points three ranks deep.

Briana turned to the *Deasaich* for help. At first, her requests were rebuffed. Angered, Briana demanded a hearing before the head of *Finias*, as the law of the *Deasaich* gives the right to request such a hearing to all Phelan in time of trouble. Once before the barrow-mound she pleaded her case. A silence fell upon the group ... which was split by a spectral howl of agreement from the mound. Realizing this as an omen condemning them for their negligence, the *Deasaich* reluctantly gave their aid to the battle.

Did the Doloreaux have sophisticated spies? Or did their oracles read the omens to tell them that the Phelan were preparing for a full-scale war? What is known is that on the first night of winter, the Doloreaux mobilized their forces for a pre-emptive attack upon the *Oirthir*, before the full strength of the Phelan could be brought to bear. The Phelan settlement of *Gorias* was the prize the boars sought after: it was at the head of the most fertile river valley in all of northwestern Calabria, near the great canyon called the *Gates of the Ruther*. It is here that



the river joins with the Storvindeln River to pass through the mountains, and thus it would provide the Doloreaux with water transport and good farmland.

That snowy night was split with screams and howls for assistance. The modest huts of the Oirthir were set ablaze, and those that tried to flee the scene were either put to spear-point or were captured and sold into slavery. The Phelan warriors fought as bravely as they could, but faced with superior numbers and superior arms, they had no choice but to abandon their homes.

Gathering at a secret moot within the woods, the surviving nobles of the Oirthir decided that even with the help of their Deasaich cousins, they would still need more warriors. Their next course of action was to ask King Iucharba of the Reeoil for assistance — in exchange for his help, they would be to ask the Reeoil for assistance, and to offer three hundred cumalaí as a tribute. But Lady Briana was very careful in the way she worded her oath of fealty to this powerful clan.

At this time, the Phelan spoke their own language, the Bérla Féini. When Briana was granted audience with King Iucharba of the Reeoil, she asked that she be introduced as “Briana Rígh-bean.” Iucharba mistook this to mean “Briana Ríghinn,” or “Briana the young lady.” But the literal interpretation of “Rígh-bean” is “female king.” Therefore, by recognizing Briana with such a title, King Iucharba was tacitly naming her as Queen of the Oirthir!

The combined might of the three Phelan clans met the Doloreaux army upon the cliffs known as the Walls of Calabria. The seasoned warriors of the Phelan came up on the Doloreaux army before the dawn, on the silent paws of seasoned hunters. After the first strike, the Phelan retreated to higher ground, and they used their superior speed to break up the dense formations of Doloreaux spears. The losses were great on both sides, with nobles and commoners alike either slain where they stood or driven from the Walls to drown in the River Granvert below.

Many years of fighting persisted, with neither side gaining the advantage. On the offensive, the Phelan had their near-invincible atavists and the dire magics of the druids. On the defensive, the Doloreaux had their formations, their devastating cannons, and the protection of their spirits. The Phelan could not advance without great cost in lives, and the Doloreaux tactics were too conservative to gain ground.

Stubborn to the last, the Doloreaux pulled back their stragglers from the western border, and they spent the next few months working on counter-measures. However, eventually the Chevernaise saw opportunity, and they pressed their advantage on the northern front. Rather than lose the ground they had fought so hard to gain, the Doloreaux entrenched their forces and built fortifications and defenses.

Secure in her sovereignty, Queen Briana declared herself ruler of the Tuath ná Oirthir, and her people claimed their farms and villages behind the Ruther, out of range of the Doloreaux cannons upon the Walls of Calabria. This stalemate persists even to this day, interrupted occasionally by sorties on both sides that are either very brave or very desperate.

As many had perished in the war, both boar and wolf, the farmlands were left empty, open for the taking. The Walls of Calabria marked the eastern-most line of Phelan demesne — instead, the people moved north and south. Most of the veteran warriors settled in the colder forests of the north. To the south, far away from the mountains and the strife, the more peaceable folk occupied the lands formerly held by the Rinaldi, whose fields had lain fallow as their control dwindled. As the seasons turned to years, and the years turned to decades, the Phelan grew more numerous.





The Night of the Seiscethir

Ambitious Phelan were not the only ones to stake their claims — many other minor tribes also attempted to claim their niche. With some people, the Phelan made peace, such as with the elk of the Keylljeyder. With others, such as the feline Screeberagh, the compromises were less amicable. And with a few, hostility remains even to this day, such as the long-standing enmity between the Phelan and the skunk race of Feòcullan.

The Phelan were anything but a complacent race. As tribes grew larger, each chieftain had difficulty collecting taxes and asserting their authority. The Doloreaux consulted the omens and maintained networks of scouts and spies — anywhere they spotted weakness, they schemed to take advantage. Roving gangs of bandits stalked the southern coast of Calabria — some were gangs of bandits who preyed on any weaker than themselves; others were pirates who landed on the coast and sought to supplement their wares with goods and slaves before setting sail for faraway shores. With their strong sense of family loyalty, the households fought back, and the bond they felt with themselves grew stronger than the ones with their estranged kings and queens. Over the course of a hundred years, it became apparent that the Phelan had spread out too far to be governed by only the four Chieftains of Reeoil, Iargùl, Deasaich, and Oirthir.

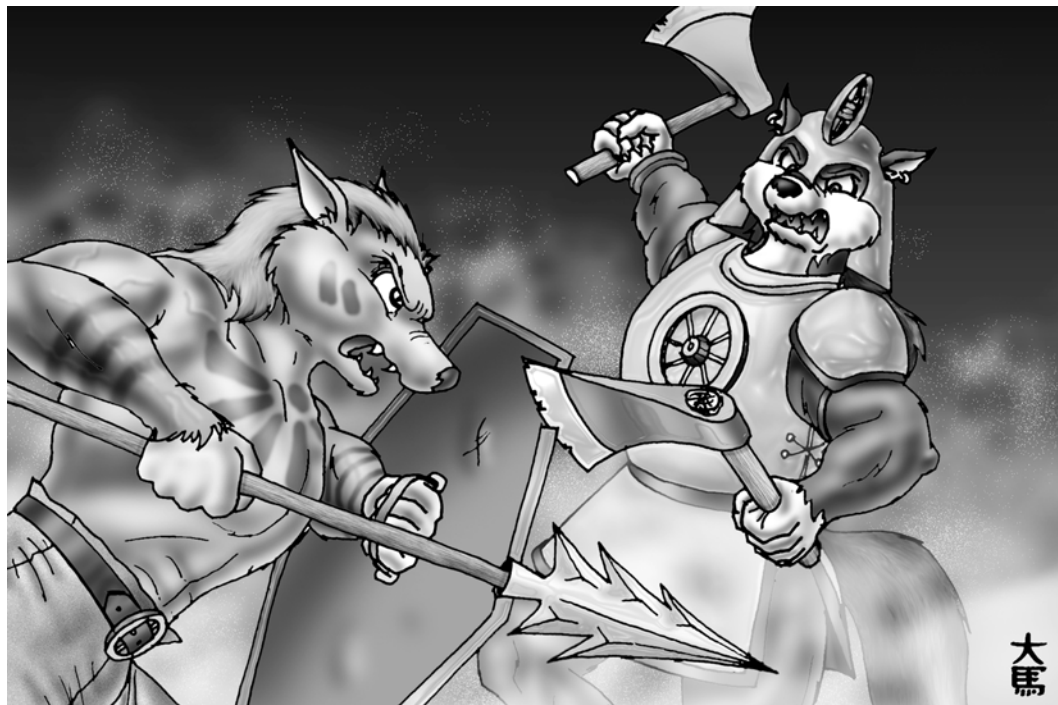
On a dark Imbolc night, the four chieftains summoned four Brehona, the judges of the law, before them. Their task was a daunting one — to compose a map of all of Phelan demesne, such that it might be decided how to divide the land and to decide if and where a fifth clan might be declared. The four Brehona were chosen not just because they were wise but also that they were honest, lest they let dishonest folk bribe them or sway them from reporting what they knew to be the truth. They were given but one year to complete this task.

In the interim, many ambitious nobles wondered who would rise to the honor to be the fifth chieftain. The Phelan are notorious for their bragging and their infighting, and it is said that during this year, a hundred and fifty nobles lost their lives in duels of honor. (Many historians debate this figure, as “three times fifty” is the Phelan expression for any number too large to be measured.) As the months rolled on, it became apparent that there were two people most likely to rise to the rank of the fifth chieftain — either the strong *Foirteamhail*, descended from the heartiest of the northern stock, or the crafty *Gaoistean*, who had rose to power in the southern regions by various promises and schemes.

When the Brehona returned the day before the next Imbolc, they were greeted with solemn anticipation. They refused to disclose their findings to anyone before the night of the festival, even to the Chieftains themselves. As the legends tell it, first *Foirteamhail* attempted to intimidate them into revealing their decision, to no avail; then *Gaoistean* tried to trick them into giving it away, but they were too quick to fall for his verbal legerdemain.

Thwarted in their efforts, the two ambitious nobles turned their attentions to each other. *Foirteamhail* blustered and howled at *Gaoistean*, hoping to intimidate him into leaving with his tail between his legs. *Gaoistean* in turn first mocked *Foirteamhail*’s suitability to rule, then explained to him all the administrative and boring duties he would have to fulfill as a chieftain — surely it wasn’t something he wanted to do. The two snarled at each other and parted ways until the evening, each intent on finding some way to oust the other.

When the sun set and the fires of Imbolc were lit, only then did the Brehona recount their journeys, each in turn telling of his adventures, mishaps, and discoveries. After their tales were told, they revealed their judgment: Phelan demesne had expanded so great that it was impossible for four chieftains to control it all — by the Fénechas (see page 18), which governed noble and commoner alike, it was necessary to divide Phelan lands into six clans. The northernmost folk were to be named the Tuath ná Cell; the people along the southern coast were to be named the Tuath ná Bianfáel. Both *Foirteamhail* and *Gaoistean* were awestruck — each would be sent back to their homelands as a king. Perhaps it was fate, or perhaps it was a political maneuver by the Brehona to prevent civil war. The day of that judgment was to be known henceforth as the *Seiscethir*, which translates from the Bérla Féini as “six out of four.”



The *Charte du Bisclavret*

By Phelan reckoning, “three times fifty” years went by, thus once again frustrating historians who would prefer accurate dates. Many chieftains came and went, clans rose to prominence and then dwindled again. The Phelan enjoyed peaceable, if sometimes strained, relations with the other races of Calabria.

The Phelan with the greatest interaction with the other races were the Bianfáel. The Rinaldi paid them tribute to allow their people to pass through the main roads, the *Via Salutis*, without being raided by ambitious Fianna. Doloreaux were known to hire Bianfáel mercenaries to use in their assaults against the Avoirdupois or the Chevernaise. Pirates landed on the southern coast with slaves to sell. The Bianfáel looked upon these well-crafted goods, these wonders from foreign places, and as they assimilated the customs and ways of foreigners, the more they felt that future was not in the old ways, but in the new ones.

Many of the Bianfáel nobles felt that the old ways were holding them back. For example, when a noble died, their estate was not guaranteed to pass on to their children; rather, it would be meted out amongst all the clan. Also, there was not always a clear line of succession from chieftain to chieftain — the practice of *tanistry* allowed rule to pass to a “worthy successor.” Thus there was no clear legacy of power from one generation to the next. Phelan lords were unlikely to amass the great wealth and empires that the kings of the Noble Houses of Calabria aspired to. The Bianfáel had seen the hints of a changing world with green eyes.

It took the other clans of Phelan by surprise on the fateful day when King Riddock Déanamh-Gaisce, together with his nobles, attendants, and other vassals, met on a dark night for the signing of the *Charte du Bisclavret* — the Charter of the Bisclavret. This proclamation declared that King Riddock Déanamh-Gaisce was now to be known as King Riddock du Bisclavret the First, Greatest among the Bisclavret people. It later delineated the roles of all people in the government, from the king himself to the serfs below. The Bianfáel were no more.



The *Charte du Bisclavret* tells a lot about the Phelan because it specifically makes illegal many of the Phelan practices and the Fénechas code. The Bisclavret immediately arrested all Brehona. Some were sent away; some were put to the sword; a few were sold into slavery. Druids were forced to swear to only preach the doctrine of S'allumer, or they would be hanged. (Many did swear but continued to practice their rites in secret.)

When the news of these transgressions reached the ears of High King Naoise of the Reeoil, it was said that his howl of his anger could be heard throughout all of Phelan demesne. He declared that this Bisclavret race was no longer Phelan, that they were a “broken people” and thus beyond the protection of the law. Other chieftains followed suit. Many ambitious Phelan, mostly Fianna eager for wealth, thought that they could take advantage of the disenfranchised wolves to the south, and they assembled small armies for conquest.

What they found in Bisclavret territory surprised them, as King Riddock had prepared his forces well. Foreign engineers had built the fortress of Harrowgate, with high walls and sloping roofs specifically designed to thwart the tactics of Phelan warriors. With their superior arms and armor, the Bisclavret held their own against Phelan invaders.

The Bisclavret went on to build their own mills, their own forges, even their own forts and encampments. The Bisclavret were later to challenge the Rinaldi and sue for a charter granting them land rights to the southwestern coast. In these modern times, the Noble Houses of Bisclavret is considered by both the Avoirdupois and the Doloreaux to be a stronger foe and a greater threat to their sovereignty than the Phelan are.

The Phelan no longer consider the Bisclavret as part of their race, believing them corrupted by “false ways.” The fact that the Bisclavret have risen to such heights of power and technology in such a short time carries little weight with them.

The Phelan Today

It has been more than two hundred years since the Phelan and the Bisclavret divided, and the Phelan are none the worse for it. The five clans still thrive, still till the land the way their great-grandfathers have.

The Avoirdupois have sent emissaries to the chieftains of the Phelan, to open diplomatic relations. The two have relatively little in common: they are of different religions, different technologies, and different systems of government. All they do have in common are their enemies: both the Avoirdupois and the Phelan are in constant conflict with the Doloreaux and the Bisclavret that are buffered between them. The other Noble Houses maintain a network of spies to be watchful if any alliances are forged.

Many Phelan have left their homeland and settled elsewhere in Calabria. Some seek adventure; others flee their enemies. Most of these travelers are Atavists, who use their command of primal energy to gain employment as mercenaries, scouts, and bodyguards. Rare is the Druid or the Fool who leaves the homeland, but such folk can often make a place for themselves because of the novelty and strangeness of their craft. Ironically, the second-most likely place to find a Phelan is in Bisclavret territory, where many are employed as swords-for-hire, and their social differences are overlooked for the sake of material gain.

The Doloreaux are still distrustful of outsiders, and they are even more xenophobic towards the Phelan. Any such wolves that tread into Doloreaux demesne wear out their welcome very quickly.

The once-proud house of Rinaldi has fallen from its grand control. Many Oirthir have made farms on land formerly owned by that Noble House. A few Rinaldi employ brutish Phelan Atavists for the novelty or amusement value. And if the Phelan remain largely a mystery to other Calabrese, the Chevernaise are even more of an enigma. The Phelan have little interest in the mystery of the goats of the mountains, and vice versa.



"I am of the opinion that the Phelan are amongst the most honest, hard working, selfless, violent, unpredictable and passionate of people in all of Calabria."

— Fyodor Yenot, in a private letter to the Emeritus of the College of Dunwasser

THE DEMESNE OF THE PHELAN

Being an Overview of Their Customs, Ways, and Classes

To the eyes of most Calabrese, the northwestern forests of Calabria are beyond the ways of civilization. There are no castles and few fortifications; what few roads exist are poorly-maintained dirt paths through meandering stretches of empty countryside. Rivers lack adequate fords or bridges. Many people speak an obscure language, when they speak to strangers at all.

From another point of view, the Phelan are rich in culture and tradition. They brought their way of life with them from their foreign origins, and it has remained unchanged for over a thousand years. Their code of law has equanimity for noble and commoner alike. The Phelan see themselves as the pinnacle of civilization, and that others would do well to follow their example.

The rolling landscape of the Phelan has many unexplored regions, and the other races that inhabit their territory are quite unlike others found in Calabria, or even other places in the known world. The game the wolves hunt sometimes hunts them in return! And deep in the darkest of the forests and the bogs are secrets of the past, haunted by goblins and ghosts of bygone ages.

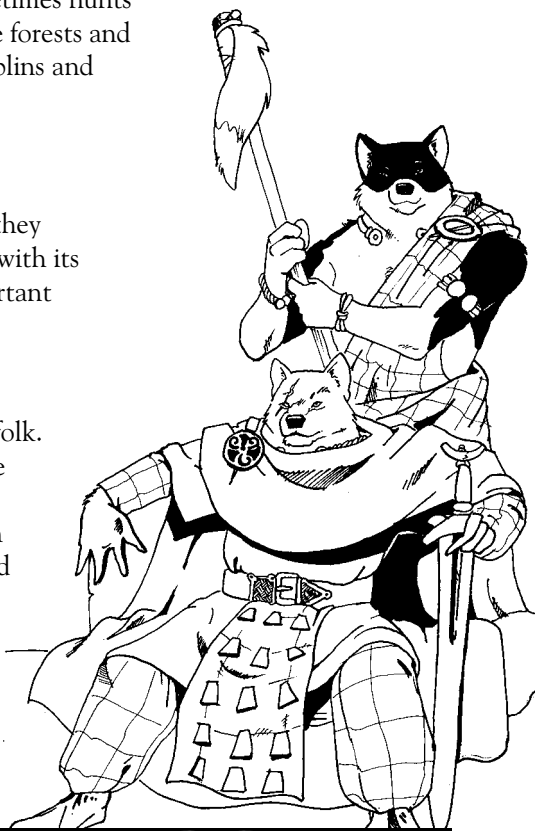
The Phelan Way of Life

When the Phelan first arrived upon Calabria, they brought with them their particular way of life, with its own laws and religion. Some of the more important points are discussed here.

Customs

The name "Phelan" is what outsiders call this folk. In their own language, they call themselves the *Faéla*, or simply "Wolves." The Phelan are actually five distinct clans, or *tuatha*, each with their own king or queen. They are not a unified people — even the clans have their own disagreements, skirmishes, and even episodes of war. The only thing that really brings them together is their dislike for all *other* folk.

Since the Phelan's oral histories go back hundreds of years and detail stories of





terrible monsters, a few Phelan have reasoned that they are the only “real people” in this world, and that all other folk are somehow descended from degenerate beasts. The insult “mee-ghooghysagh” is sometimes used by the Reeoil to refer to outlanders.

Government

To themselves, the Phelan way of life is ideal. Their ways have not changed significantly in almost a thousand years, and they have a reasonable peace with their neighbors. Everyone knows their place, from the chieftain on down to the slave, and for many, life is harsh but simple. To outsiders, the Phelan leadership is remarkably different from the feudalism that is generally accepted elsewhere.

The Law of the Fénechas

Despite their savage reputation, the Phelan crave order — someone has to answer to someone else. It is this love of order that gave rise to one of the most comprehensive codes of law known in the world: the Fénechas. This body of law is so large and so comprehensive, it is a full-time career just to interpret it (see “Brehon,” p. 47). In addition, all people are considered beholden to the letter of the law, be they noble, commoner, or serf, including outsiders who wander into Phelan lands! Ignorance of Phelan customs is no excuse.

The Fénechas has yet to be written down. Some scholars have erroneously reported that the reason it remains unwritten is that the Phelan have a prohibition against writing anything down. These scholars are confusing this code with that of the Blessed of Lutara (q.v. *Doloreaux*). The Phelan have not written down their code of laws for two reasons: they are largely uneducated and illiterate; and the Fénechas has not been translated from the ancient language of Bérla Féini, the “lost” language of the Phelan — and this is a language with no known written form.

It is no small wonder that it takes a full-fledged Career to understand the Phelan laws. The *Brehona* (see page 47), or “judges,” preside over criminal cases. The Phelan even have their own lawyers — the *Dálaige* (see page 47).

The ancient and most basic law to all peoples is the “law of retaliation,” also known as “an eye for eye, a tooth for a tooth” — every person or every family that was injured might take their direct revenge on the offender ... usually in the form of violent feuds, often resulting in homicide.

In the interests of keeping the peace, this code was replaced by the “law of compensation” — that the injured party may sue the offender, in proper form, presided over by a Brehon who would judge the law fairly and impartially. The penalty always takes the form of a fine to be paid by the offender to the person or family who was injured, minus a fee paid to the Brehon.

Distress

Sometimes an offender will refuse to pay their fine, or they may even refuse to submit their case before the Brehon in the first place. Or a tenant may fail to pay their rent on time. Or someone may fail to pay a debt for any reason.





In such a case, the creditor, by law, would then invoke the right of *distress* — they could seize the livestock or other personal effects of the debtor. First, the creditor goes through the form of seizing the property. The debtor then has an *anad*, or “stay” of one or more days to reconcile the debt ... before the creditor removes the property. Traditionally, the creditor “holds on” to the property as collateral until the debtor finds a way to scrape up the payment. If the debtor finds no way to settle the case, the creditor kept the items or sells them. The value of property for debt resolution is, of course, set by the Fénechas.

Fasting

Sometimes, instead of the process of distress, an injured party might resort to other means. After serving due notice, the plaintiff went to the house of the defendant to sit next to the door ... and to remain there, without food — the custom of *fasting*. The defendant was also obligated by law to go without food, too. A debtor who cannot pay off their debt while someone fasts at their doorstep loses face in front of the other clan members ... and a debtor who refuses to honor the fast in kind will be held in absolute disgrace.

Errick

Bodily injury, up to and including homicide, is atoned by an *errick*, or fine. When a Brehon judges the value of an errick, they take into account all sorts of circumstances — the grievousness of the injury, the rank of the parties involved, the intentions of the wrong-doer, whether the injured party provoked it, etc. Like any lawyer, a skilled Brehon relies not only on the interpretation of the law, but also on personal judgment and diplomacy. The errick is then paid to the victim or (in the case of homicide) the victim’s family.

If the wrongdoer does not pay, or runs away, then their family is liable for the damages. If the culprit refuses to even come before the Brehon for judgment, or they and their family fail to pay the errick, then the criminal’s life becomes forfeit — they can lawfully be killed.

Other Forms of Punishment

Jails are unknown among the Phelan — every crime has a fine associated with it, and someone will pay it, be it the criminal or their family. Those who cannot pay the fines are sold into slavery. Corporal punishment, such as flogging, mutilation, or sentences of death, is not a providence permitted to Brehona under Fénechas.

By technicality of their rule, a king may claim the right to put someone to death, but this privilege is only exercised for the worst of crimes.

Also, as a rule the Phelan are a people quick to act and eager for justice — it is not unknown for an unruly mob to deal out their own penalties to those who offend them. While it is the custom that even outsiders are bound by Phelan law while on Phelan land (and may thus submit themselves to the Brehona for judgment), most folk are unaware of the customs and laws and angry Phelan usually do not pause to explain it to them. Popular punishments include blinding the culprit, or setting the culprit adrift on the open sea in a boat until a fine is paid for their “release.”





Social Classes

Most of Calabria is governed by the system of *feudalism*, where land-owning *lords* rule over their *vassals*. The lord is usually male, and when he dies, his office passes to his eldest son, a practice known as *primogeniture* (“first-born”). The first-born son is called the *heir-apparent*. Ambitious sons who are third, fourth, or later in line to the throne, knowing that the likelihood they will be the surviving heir is slim, often pursue other callings for social advancement, such as the Clergy of S’allumer or as freelance knights.

Because the seat of power goes to the male heirs first, this kind of feudalism is often called a *patriarchy* (“rule by the fathers”). Since it is very important to know who one’s first-born son is, a lord is expected to marry a suitable bride to “carry on his name.” Children born out of wedlock are known (not kindly) as *bastards*. A first-born son born out of wedlock (or worse, to someone other than the lord’s wife!) can still claim, by right of primogeniture, to be the heir-apparent — of such things are scandals and intrigues made. Also, if the lord dies before the heir-apparent is of age, someone must rule instead, often the lord’s wife or someone appointed to the role of *regent*.

The Phelan are ruled by *tribalism*. The *chieftain* presides over the clan, and they may be a man or a woman (which, by Phelan law, could be anyone seventeen years or older). The chieftain serves the role as “Leader in War,” as general in pitched battles, as peacemaker and reconciler after the strife is done. They also are responsible to uphold the law, tempering justice with mercy.

By Phelan law, the chieftain must be “free from defect” — no disfigurements or crippling injuries. Many chieftains are bound by *geisa* (see page 44) that forbid them from participating in battle, although this may be a convenient excuse made by the Druids to keep the chieftain from suffering an injury that would depose them.

Even the chieftain is bound by the Fénechas, as are all good folk, and thus is either an accomplished Brehon in their own right or has one or more Brehona in their court.

The chieftain is expected to appoint a successor, the person who will inherit the throne when they die or become unfit to rule. This successor usually comes from the *derbfhine*, the chieftain’s close relatives (I.E. those that can be traced from a common great-grandmother). Since lineage is traced along the lines of the mother, the Phelan have a *matrilineal* system of succession.

This sort of transfer of power is known as *tanistry*; the chosen successor is called the *tanist*. While the tanist is usually male, it is not unknown for a woman to be appointed to the office. Under this system, there is always an able-bodied chieftain on the throne — the idea of a “regent” who rules temporarily is laughable to the Phelan.

Tanistry is not without its problems. Sometimes there is infighting between competing claimants to the throne. The practice of tanistry is a specific objection mentioned in the Bisclavret charter. (See page 15.)

Two clans often seal a pact of peace by “exchanging brides,” where one or more women of the first clan marry the men of the second, and vice-versa. After all, it is harder to go to war with your nieces and nephews. This custom also encourages diversity of both the bloodline and of the culture.

Those Who Rule: The Chieftain, Flatha, and Aires

The absolute leader of the clan is the *Chieftain*, though he does not rule with “absolute power” — even he must obey the code of the Fénechas. Technically, the Chieftain owns all the property of the entire clan, and that the lower ranks of nobility have what they have by the Chieftain’s largesse.



After the chieftain, the highest rank of nobility are those who own land, and who do not pay rent to anyone, known as a *Flaith* (plural *Flatha*), also known as a “prince” or “princess.” The rank of a Flaith is directly proportional to their wealth; simply put, the more land one has, the higher their standing.

Flatha mark their land-holdings by the use of standing stones, elaborately decorated, and all are marked with the written language of the Phelan, the *Bérta Galláneah* (see page 115).

A step below the Flaith is the freeman who pays rent, but who also owns his own property — the *Aire*. The property often consists of “moveable goods,” such as *cumalaí* (see page 29), jewelry, special weapons, or other rare items. To be entitled to the rank of Aire, one must rent a certain amount of property as laid out in the *Fénechas*.

If an Aire can prove that they pay no one else any rent, and that they are renting twice as much property in value as the bare minimum required to be a Flaith, and they can comply with certain other conditions and formalities, then they may be entitled to become a Flaith.

The Chieftain, Flatha, and Aires represent the noble classes of the Phelan. These nobles make up the government of the Phelan, serving as administrators, excise-men, policemen, magistrates, military leaders, and even tanists. As a symbol of their rank, they are permitted to wear a *flesc*, a bracelet around the arm. (Phelan will often mistake any outsiders who wear a *flesc* as nobility ... and they may take insult at anyone who dares wear one and is not!)

Those who Fight: the Fianna

In most of Calabria, there is a strong distinction between the lord and his knights — “those who fight” — and the peasants who serve their land — “those who toil.” A lord is expected to be proficient in the arts of war, and to maintain one or more knights to serve in times of strife.

The Phelan have their own groups of fighters.

Warriors who distinguish themselves on the field of battle may be admitted to the *Fianna* (singular *Fiann*), or “soldiers” of the Phelan.

The Fianna live in their own community. Many are simple farmers with a penchant for the arts of warfare. Some are fierce Atavists whose hearts quicken at the prospect of bloodshed.

A Fiann can be recognized by the collar, or *nasc-niad*, which is given as a rite of admittance.

Anyone of seven years of age who can hold a spear by the right end is welcome to run with the Fianna ... but they may not call themselves as such until they earn the right to wear the collar.

Thus any band has one or more prospective members hanging around with them, all too eager to prove themselves in battle — which is one of the many reasons that roving bands of Phelan warriors are feared by outsiders.

Some historians have called the Fianna “knights” or “knights-errant,” but the knights of Constantin di Rinaldi’s book *On the Discipline of Chivalry* (q.v. *Rinaldi*) are not the same as the wolves of the western plains. A knight is expected to perform numerous duties such as collecting taxes. The Fiann does not. A knight, by the right of





franchise, is above the “low justice” of commoners and may only be tried by their peers; conversely, they may also preside over the court of their lessers. The Fianna have the same rights as others in the clan; it is the Brehona who interpret the laws. Knights have a complicated system of *heraldry*, with different colors and symbols created with rigid rules to discriminate one from another. The Fianna have only their collars, which differ in only the most basic ways and by no common rules.

Others have compared the Fianna to armed gangs of savage bandits, roving the countryside and preying on the weak, proof of the uncivilized, lawless nature of the land. In practice, the Fianna are much like other armed folk in Calabria — they attack strangers who are unlikely to be avenged by local relatives. Luckily, most Fianna are more concerned with showing off how brave and skilled they are, rather than wanton killing. (After all, it is hard to spread stories of your glory if most of the witnesses are dead.) The Fianna are more likely to “shake down” travelers for their money and goods and send them on their way than to kill them. Some Fianna are less scrupulous and will make slaves out of the defeated.

Those Who Toil: Féine, Fudir, and Slaves

In the laws, the stories, and the minds of the Phelan, the most important folk are those who till the soil and farm the land, known as the *Féine*, or free tenants. The *Féine* enjoy all rights of the clan: they are permitted to use both the land of their clan and the Commons-Land and they enjoy all civil rights. (The body of Phelan law, called *Féinechas*, translates as “the law of the *Féine*.”) The *Féine* own little or no property of their own, and they must remand a portion of their goods to the Aires they rent their land from. The *Féine* do not hold positions in government, and are generally beholden to what their “betters” have to say for them.

In theory, any *Féine* can rise to the rank of Aire simply by acquiring enough personal property or plot of land to call their own. In practice, the competitive nature of one’s neighbors and the strength of the Aires above them make this a difficult task. *Féine* who fail to pay their rent on time will be subject to distress (see page 18).

Lower than the *Féine* are the *Fudir*. Not necessarily slaves, the non-free enjoy rights under the law ... but they are not permitted to any part of the clan land. Sometimes, under the watchful eyes of other clan members, they are permitted to till part of the Commons-Land (which is often the worst for farming in the first place) for mere subsistence — and they could be evicted at any time. Their social standing varies from place to place, sometimes as near-equals, other times denigrated to mere slaves. In Phelan society, the *Fudir* are largely of races other than wolves.

As a spoil of war, the Phelan often take *Slaves*, folk who are forced to labor under the watchful eyes of overseers, who own no property themselves save their own hide. A Slave may be a *Fudir* or lowly Phelan who “sold” oneself into slavery to pay off some debt or for some other reason. More often, Slaves are “spoils of war” — outlanders captured and stolen away from their homeland, taken to a place with alien customs and language where hope of escape is a lost cause. Slaves work the worst jobs, such as mining salt or rowing war-ships. However, under the code of *Féinechas*, a Slave is still entitled to be “free from cruelty” — slave-owners who abuse their slaves may be called before a Brehon and forced to pay fines to their abused Slaves ... which usually means freeing them. While Slaves are entitled to own property, since they work the poorest jobs and are unskilled labor it is very unlikely they will accumulate anything in their lifetimes. Slavery is not hereditary — the children of Slaves become *Fudir*.

The lowest of the low are the *Broken Men*. These folks have committed some heinous rime or unpardonable sin and are thus “without law.” They are not permitted to own land or property, and thus they must beg for a living, or turn to a life of crime. They are often marked with a scar, a brand, or some other disfigurement.



The Measurement of Wealth

The Phelan do not recognize the denarii of Triskellian, the fibulae of Bisclavret, or any other such coinage. Almost all trade is done through the barter of rare goods. Naturally, the Fénechas, or Brehon Law, codifies the rules and regulations of not only what the values of transactions are, but also of what may be traded.

Most Féine are too poor to own their own cumalaí, and sometimes even too poor to own the tools that they use to farm the land. Aires may allow Féines to use their equipment and livestock by the custom of “stock on hire,” which (like almost everything else) is regulated by Brehon Law.

Every tenant and every tradesman must give their Chieftain *tribute*, a sort of tax that outsiders would call “excise.” Tribute may be asked for yearly or half-yearly, depending on the custom of the current Chieftain. Some tenants may be obliged by the custom of *coinmed* — where the Chieftain and immediate retinue could “move in” with the tenant for a while, and the tenant must provide food and other amenities. (The custom of *coinmed* is rare but easily abused by a greedy or rapacious Chieftain.)

If a tenant proves unable to pay their landlord, they may be subject to distress (see page 18).



Rising to Power: Owning More Land

Perhaps, in ancient times, all folks were equal and the land was free to all. That is certainly not true today — there are rigid laws and royal decrees to show who owns which parts and parcels of the landscape. Land-ownership is a universal measure of wealth among all the Calabrese ... but without money, entitlements, and other technological advancements, land is the *primary* measure of wealth among the Phelan, and as ambition stirs in many hearts to rise to positions of power, the question is, “How to get more land?” By Phelan law, there are six ways:

- *By becoming the Chieftain.* The portion of clan land set aside for the Chieftain is called the *mensal land*; it belongs to the Chieftain for as long as they hold that title. A Chieftain could assert their right to take more away from the Nobles ... if they do not mind the unpopularity that results, and the challenges to their throne.
- *By inheriting the land from your family.* Many Nobles keep their land-holdings through several generations.
- *By inheritance.* When a Féine dies, the land does not go to the immediate children. Instead, the whole of the land is measured and re-divided amongst the entire adult Féine, a process known as *gavelkind*. The private property owned by Nobles and the Chieftain is, naturally, exempt from *gavelkind*. Because Féine do not automatically pass their land along to their children, there is little incentive to make “permanent” improvements such as sturdy stone houses, mills, and the like ... which may be the reason why Phelan land is free of the “urbanization” of the rest of Calabria.



- *By renting the land.* All Nobles, from the Aires to the Chieftains, may sub-let their land to the Féine. The common lease lasts for seven years.
- *By having a parcel of the clan's land meted out by the Nobles.* The largest part of the territory of a clan is the “folk-land,” sometimes called the *Folc*, which is not owned by any one person, but by the clan in general. Every free person has a right to a share of this land. By custom, the Nobles meet to redistribute the land holdings from time to time, usually every three to four years. Other factors, such as untimely death, transgressions against the law, or gavelkind (see above) may change which Féine are permitted to till what soil. Naturally, the Féine may try incentives with their local Aires to keep “in their good graces” and to sway their decisions when it comes to dividing the *Folc*.
- *By tilling the Commons-Land.* Rocky mountains, thick forests, and dank bogs — the “waste land” portions of a clan’s territory are called the *Commons-Land*. Every free member of the clan is permitted to use the Commons-Land for their purposes, such as cumal-grazing, chopping wood, hunting and fishing, etc. However, the Commons-Land is also the worst parcel of landscape within the clan’s territory.

Religion

To the Phelan, the world of the mystic and the world of the mundane are the same — everything around is an expression of life and creation. While the Phelan are apt to speak of “gods and goddesses,” these terms have a different meaning for them. Gods do not have faces or images — they are personifications of natural forces and coincidence. The icons of folk such as the Doloreaux or the Chevernaise are alien to the Phelan, who usually see such things as crass and missing the point.

As the world is full of omens and spirits, it is necessary for someone to work as an intermediary between the mundane world and the supernatural one. This role falls upon the *Aos Daoine*, also known as the *Druids*. Trained in secret ways by oral tradition, the Druids take note of the omens that the uninitiated may miss. It is commonly accepted among the Phelan that folks are often born with a kind of destiny known as a *geis* — see page 44 for more details.

While the Druids believe that there is a “life-force” to the world, like the Penitents of S'allumer do, they do not agree that one needs to eschew material goods and passions to “rise above” needy concerns, nor do they acknowledge an after-life or ascension. The Phelan believe that one lives in this world and in no other — some may reincarnate and live again, but most folk will not. Their religious festivals are a mixture of righteous awe in the face of nature and vivacious passion for living — see page 119 for details on these.

Armed Forces

Despite the union of the clans, warfare among clans and *derbfhines* (see page 20) is all too common. Bandit gangs of Broken Men, outlanders, and foreign tribes roam the landscape, striking from surprise and then disappearing into the wilderness. As a result, nearly everyone in the Phelan demesne is trained in the arts of war. By Phelan custom, any child of seven years or older may be trained in the use of weapons.

The Phelan maintain a sophisticated network of long-distance communication through the art of Howling. The nuances of their cries can communicate to others via a secret code. For more details on this art, see “Bérta Sgairneach,” page 115.





Relations with Other Folks

As can be expected from the details explained on page 14, there is no love between the Phelan and the Bisclavret. Currently, the Bisclavret have concentrated their efforts to diminishing the strength of the other great Noble Houses than to wage war on their cousins.

The Doloreaux see the Phelan as an obstacle. In their eyes, the methods of Phelan farmers are painfully inefficient and their rolling landscape would be better suited to be under Doloreaux rule. Occasionally an ambitious lord will strike out against the Oirthir in an attempt to claim new territory, but only rarely are such efforts successful.

The Avoirdupois are separated from the Phelan by many leagues, and by the house of Doloreaux. They have small opinion of the Phelan and rarely concern themselves with their happenings.

As far as anyone can tell, the Chevernaise do not like anyone else ... but they probably *dislike* the Phelan the least. Rumors abound of bandit gangs comprised of both goat and wolf, but there is no concrete evidence.

The free city of Triskellian is open to all folk. The Phelan have strong ties to nature; the rampant urbanization, the gaudy trappings of S'allumer, and the decadence of the rich do not appeal to them. The rare times a Phelan would visit the city would be to obtain the rare goods that simply cannot be found in their own lands, such as plate armor or guns.

There are other noble houses which coexist in Phelan demesne — see page 39

Other Points of Interest

Commerce

The Phelan do not have a standard coinage. For the most part, trade in the countryside is done in terms of barter, such as food for livestock, etc. If anything could be described as “money,” it would be the *bunne-do-at*, or “open gold ring,” a form of jewelry decorated with swirling patterns, worn either on the hand or as an earring. These rings are usually only honored at the Phelan Cathairs, as country-folk and the like have little use for these rings.

The coinage of Triskellian, the *denar*, has no value in Phelan lands. The only people likely to accept it would be armorers, who often rivet the metal disks into their leather to make the “Reinforced Leather” that is popular among warriors.

Measurement

As in many places throughout the world, the Phelan measure the wealth and standing of a person in terms of the land they control. The standard unit of land is the *tir-cumaile*, which translates as the amount of land it would take to support three cumalaí. As laid out in the Fénechas, the *tir-cumaile* is 518 paces long by 259 paces wide. One can apply to become a Flaith once one can demonstrate that they own at least one *seisrech*, defined as four *tir-cumaile* worth of land.

For long distance, the Phelan use the *magh-space*, which is rather loosely defined as “the maximum distance where one can hear a bell or a howl.” Naturally, this distance varies, but is never more than three leagues. For shorter distances, the custom of using hands and paces works well enough for the Phelan.



The Minor Tribes of Other Races

While mostly populated by wolves, the Phelan lands are home to other races as well. While some till the land for Phelan masters, a few command enough respect to be declared tribes in their own right.

Keylljeyder

In the Phelan epic poem, *The Song of Conas Mac Gadhar*, the hero Conas is prevented from crossing a bridge by a white elk who wields a spear pointed on both ends. After some debate, the elk agrees to let Conas pass if he can beat him at a race from there to “the edge of the world” and back. Conas agrees, and the two of them dash off over hills and through the forest, in a contest that is described for many stanzas. They reach the end of the earth by nightfall, but as they run back, Conas becomes lost in the morning fog, and he must wait until noon for the weather to clear up. By then, he has lost the race. Being an honorable warrior Conas congratulates the elk and returns the way he came. He gives the elk the name of *Ceo laoch*, “Warrior of the Fog.” The Phelan claim this is where the Keylljeyder got their name, and that it was winning this contest that gave these elks the right to the lands they currently own.

Today, the Keylljeyder dominate the Wildenlands on the northern part of Calabria. Little is known about their way of life, as they do not mix with outsiders. They enjoy peace with the Phelan as their territories do not overlap, and they have no open relations with any other folk.

They do not mark their territory with carved standing-stones as the Phelan do, but by marks made in trees. The Keylljeyder speak a dialect of the *Bérta Féini*, though a few have learned Calabrese. Their religion has little in common with the Phelan — in fact, their beliefs have much in common with the Old Faith of the Doloreaux (q.v. *Doloreaux*). There are Keylljeyder who know the Blessed Paths, though they do not acknowledge the goddess Lutara and her pantheon.



Fiach

The Fiach are a tribe of ravens who claim to be descended from the *Morrignai*, or war-goblins. With their ability to fly and their lack of arms, the Fiach live very differently from other folk of Calabria. They build their houses in high tree branches, and their farms look more like gardens.

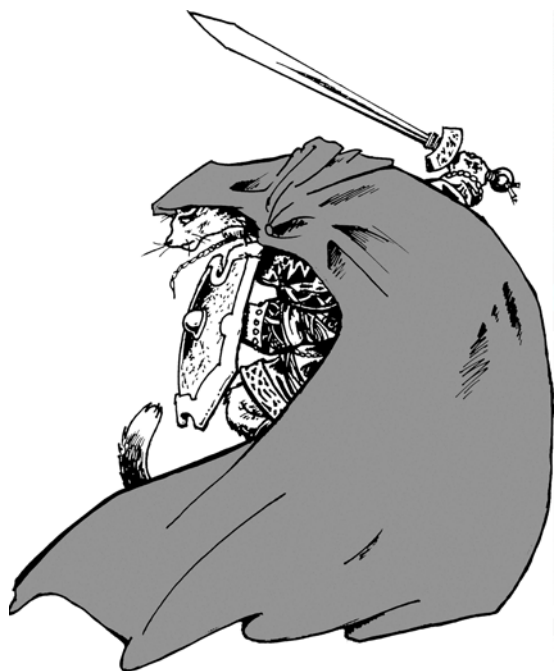
The Fiach enjoy rights as “freemen” or *Féine* under Phelan law. Their needs are modest, and they serve valuable roles in the community, as their mobility makes them excellent messengers. As per Phelan Law, all Fiach must respond to the summons of a Druid by means of the spell *Call Raven* (see page 55).



Feòcullan

Possibly the strangest folk of all Calabria, the skunks called the Feòcullan are the oddest of all. What technology they have is even more primitive than the Phelan — they know no forges or metal armor, using only pattern-folded iron spearheads and tree-bark for clothes. They speak a guttural language unlike any other. Sometimes the Feòcullan paint themselves up with blue dye and stage bandit raids against the Phelan or other folk, ambushing with their skunk-spray, then disappearing as quickly as they appeared, running off with whatever booty they can make away with. The Phelan dislike them intensely and have not attempted to get to know these strange neighbors. The Feòcullan would probably have been exterminated by now if they did not make their homes in the bogs and swamps of the western Muire Forest, where no one else wants to go.

Screeberagh



While the Keylljeyder enjoy good relations with the Phelan, the Screeberagh are under constant suspicion. A conglomeration of wild cats of assorted breeding and races, the Screeberagh live under a code of laws simpler that owes more to the Phelan way of life than they would like to admit. Over the centuries, the Screeberagh have been pushed out of Phelan lands by threats and by open warfare. Today their scattered holdings are on the border of the Phelan and the Bisclavret territories, within the South-eastern Muire woods — in fact, more than one Screeberagh clan lives on land where they swear fealty to a Bisclavret lord. Some cats worry that they are losing their culture and becoming pawns of the Bisclavret; other Screeberagh get drunk on whiskey and curse the Phelan and all they stand for. In any case, the Screeberagh folk are on the wane.



Bestiary

Around the “civilized” lands of the Great Noble House of Calabria, the landscape has been largely tamed by the concerted efforts of many hunters and farmers. The rolling landscapes of the Phelan are quite another matter.



Bethrach

Constant threats to the Phelan rancher are packs of *bethrachanna*, fearsome lizards that use sophisticated tactics of surrounding their prey and then taking it down. The docile *cumalaí* lack adequate defenses to deal with these predators. The Phelan often organized *bethrach*-hunts to rid themselves of these beasts. Trappers, however, have a hard time with them, as they are notoriously clever. The leather of the *bethrach*’s hide makes for excellent clothing or armor.

Body d8, Speed d12, Mind *none*, Will d6

Bethrach d8 *Weapons:* Claws, Teeth *Habitat:* Plains *Sense Tests:* Spot, Smell

	Skills (<i>with Favorite Use</i>)
d8	d8 Brawling (with teeth)
	d8 Hiking
	d8 Observation (for prey)
d8	Sixth Sense
d8	d8 Stealth (in the plains)
d8	Tactics (bringing down prey)

Gifts: Night Vision

Flaws: Skittish

Armor: None (Soak d8)

Weapons: Claws & Teeth (To Hit d12, 2d8; Damage d8 & d6)

Size: 8 stone **Dash:** 12 **Stride:** 4

Comhach

The trappers and hunters of Phelan lands busy themselves with the assorted creatures known under the generic heading of *comhachanna*, the name given to the smaller lizards to be found. Most are no greater than five stone in size. They inhabit all corners of the land, from the treetops to the bushes, from the rivers to the swamps. A seasoned outdoorsman could lecture in detail about the differences between one *comhach* and another, but in game terms they are all pretty much the same.

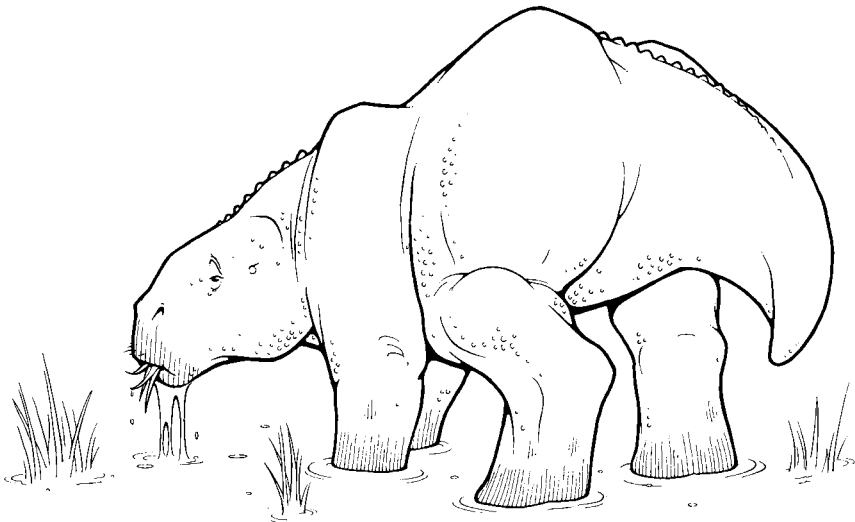




Body d4, Speed d10, Mind none, Will d4

Comhach d8 Weapons: Claws Habitat: Forest or Plains Sense Tests: Listen, Smell

	Skills (with Favorite Use)	
d8	d4	Camouflage (avoiding predators)
	d8	Observation (spotting predators)
d8	d8	Stealth (avoiding predators)
Gifts: All-Fours (add Race Trait to Dash)		
Flaws: Skittish; Weak		
Armor: None (Soak d4)		
Weapons: Claws (To Hit d10 & d8; Damage d6)		
Size: 3 stone	Dash: 18	Stride: 4



Cumal

Domesticated many years ago, the *cumal* (plural *cumalai*) is a staple of the Phelan economy. An herbivorous beast, the cumal will eat almost any vegetative matter. Cumalai lay their eggs once a year, and the Phelan celebrate the occasion as one of their festivals (see page 119). While they can be used to pull plows and carts, they are unsuitable as riding animals. (In game terms, they are carrying 14 stone of Corpulence, leaving only 1 stone free for Lift.)

Body 3d12, Speed d4, Mind none, Will d4

Cumal d8 Weapons: None Habitat: Plains Sense Tests: Smell

	Skills (with Favorite Use)	
d8	d6	Herbalism (for tasty stuff)
	d6	Observation (for food)
d8	d6	Weather Sense (when in the forest)
Gifts: Quadruped (add Race Trait to dash, double normal size)		
Flaws: Corpulence -7 (doubled to 14 stone due to Quadruped); Skittish		
Armor: None (Soak 3d12)		
Weapons: Trample (To-Hit d8 & d4; Damage 3d12)		
Size: 78 stone	Dash: 12	Stride: 4





Uadh-chrith

While the bethrachanna are considered nuisances, the *uadh-crithean* are the stuff of nightmares. A distant cousin to the Rinaldi destrier, the *uadh-chrith* can grow to a hundred stone in size or more. They are far-ranging, solitary hunters, and every now and again one wanders from the wilderness into Phelan lands. Their hides are tough and they are notoriously impervious to pain. It is considered prudent to bring at least a dozen men and one Wizard when dealing with such a monster.

Body 4d12, Speed d8, Mind none, Will d8

Uadh-chrith d8 Weapons: Claws, Teeth Habitat: Forest Sense Tests: Spot, Listen, Smell

Skills (with Favorite Use)		
	d8	Brawling (with teeth)
	d8	Observation (for prey)
d8	d8	Resolve (when hungry)
d8	d8	Stealth (in the forest)

Gifts: Extra Hit Point +1; Quadruped (add Race Trait to move, double Size); Robust +1

Flaws: Wrathful

Armor: None (Soak 4d12)

Weapons: Claws & Teeth (To Hit 2d8; Damage 4d12 & d6)

Size: 84 stone **Dash:** 16 **Stride:** 4



“At no time in the journey did we mount our steeds, for the trees stood about so thick that their separation one from another oft afforded less than an arm-span of passage. We walked, noble and bondsman alike, along a path hidden to our eyes, but known to our brutish Screeberagh scout. Her kind has a skill for this work, for smelling passages and hearing trails. Each night, we saw lights in the treetops a half-league distant. Some claimed these as spirits and some as a kind of witch-fire like which lights the masts of a doomed galleon. I pressed the guide as to their nature. She flattened her ears and spat ‘Feòcullan.’ She would say no more, though threatened with the whip and brand.”

— Bisclavret account of a diplomatic mission sent to Tuath ná Cell

GAZETTEER

Being a Description of the Five Clans and Places of Note

The Northern Clan: Tuath ná Cell

The youngest of all the Clans, the Cell earned their status during the night of the Seiscethir, when King Foirteamhail was sworn in on a dark Imbolc night. (See page 13.) While the lands of the Iargúl and Reeoil enjoy lush countryside and plentiful game, the forests of the Cell run colder, and their plains are sparse and unforgiving. Perhaps the result of their isolation from other peoples of Calabria, the Cell are the most distrustful of outsiders and the most practiced in the older ways of howling and Atavism.

By Phelan law, the chieftain must be pure of body, mind and spirit, without any physical deformities, crippling injuries, afflictions of madness, or unforgiven crimes. The Cell take this law very seriously... and since they prize the arts of battle above all else, it is hard to find someone who has not suffered some disfigurement at the hands of others. *Queen Morfessa* currently sits upon the Cell throne, as she has not only proven her skills to lead in many campaigns against their foes, but as testament to her ability she is unscathed by the horrors of the battlefield.

There are those who say that nowhere else in the world can be found warriors more dedicated and skilled than the assembled forces of the Cell. People who think that the Aos Daoine are the “gentler” class of folk have never seen the gifted folk of the Cell, assembled with bravest



Fianna in the front lines in their finest arms, with their Fools who goad the troops into a battle-frenzy, and with their Druids raining down fire and ice to smite their enemies.

Cathair Falias

Sprawling across the hills, bristling with earth-works and walls both wood and stone, this fort is the seat of the Cell throne. Many princes send their sons and daughters here to train them in the arts of battle; it is also a custom of tribute that the princes send some of their able-bodied warriors to protect and serve the king. Since Falias is far from the battlegrounds of the Bisclavret, Chevernaise, and Doloreaux, the warriors of Falias spend a lot of their time training and building new fortifications ... and over the centuries, the cathair has become a daunting bastion of impregnability.

There is a rumor that the Cell Druids possess a magic cauldron. When water is boiled in it, corpses placed inside will emerge whole and alive again! If this were true, the Cell would be unstoppable in battle, so naturally most folk believe this to be superstition... but another tale tells that a Cell prince who, angry with the king, threw himself into the cauldron and pushed it apart from the outside, breaking it into three pieces. Perhaps if one could find the three pieces and re-assemble the cauldron, they would have the power to raise the dead.

The Southern Clan: Tuath ná Deasaich

Founded many years ago by Phelan who were fleeing the strife between the Iargúl and the Reeoil. Under the charismatic leadership of Finias Cantaireachd, a new clan was formed by folk too young to inherit the distrust and enmity of their ancestors. The Deasaich have had the most exposure to the rest of the Calabrese, and thus are the most likely to be understood and to have good relations with the rest of the islanders. The Deasaich are cousins to the Bisclavret, although they do not like to talk about it — many years ago, the Bisclavret declared themselves a Noble House outside of Phelan law. For more information, see “The Charte du Bisclavret,” page 14.

Recently, the Bisclavret have been building coastal towns at the mouths of the minor rivers that drain from the Deasaich lands and into the sea. While the Bisclavret have eyes on moving northward, the Deasaich's defenses would make a military victory costly but not impossible. Instead, the Bisclavret spend their time building ports and sailing ships, which is still more profitable.

The methods by which the Phelan choose their heirs may be different, but succession among the Deasaich is stranger still. When the king or queen is no longer fit to rule, a great Singing Contest is held, wherein all Deasaich are eligible. Each singer performs an original song, which is then judged by the other princes, and the composer of the song that is ruled to be “the best” is appointed king. (Or so the story goes — more likely, the nobility vote on whom they think will be the best ruler, and the song is a formality.) Twelve years ago, *King Uscias* played the lyre, won over the hearts of the nobles, and claimed the throne.





It is hard to go anywhere in Deasaich lands without meeting a musician or a wandering Bard. Farmers hum to themselves in the fields, smiths whistle while they work, and even the grim warriors sometimes sing out their battle cries.

Bisclavret spies claim that warriors and Fianna are to be found everywhere, behind almost every bush and tree. In truth, Deasaich has the least able-bodied warriors of any of the Phelan clans, and lazy Bisclavret nobles are trying to justify their high taxes.

Cathair Finias

Rumor has it that many years ago, in their grandfather's grandfather's time, there was an Ululant named Finias who may have been the greatest howler who ever lived. It was also said that Finias' voice was so charming to behold, that all the women in the village fell in love with him. Their jealous husbands murdered him and decapitated him ... but Finias' head continued to sing even after death. The head was eventually buried on the summit of the tallest hill in the valley, and a cathair was built upon that spot.



Shenn Charnane

Hidden deep in the Muire Forest is the *Shenn Charnane*, its location only known to a select few. Descriptions differ — some say it is a small “cairn” or burial mound, others say it is a temple to forgotten gods, dating from the time of the Autarch wizard-kings. Many an adventurer has gone off seeking the Shenn Charnane, braving the quicksand and other possible dangers. A popular pastime among outlanders is to sell bogus maps that supposedly show its location.

Lake Coire

While the Bisclavret would claim this lake as theirs, it is very much in possession of the Deasaich. Folklore tells of a musician named Fedlimid who once found a lute floating in the



lake, which when played had the most melodious tune ... unfortunately, whenever he told a falsehood, a string would break. Fedlimid is the protagonist of many a silly story.

Muire Forest

Called the *Frith Maoir* by the natives, this forest covers the landscape, from a few isolated trees, to growth so thick that the leaves block out the sky above. Hills and furrows are common, and the notorious bogs of Phelan lands are present in the dim shadows — it is not wise for the unguided to wander around the Muire at night, especially in darkness.

In many places, the Muire has been clear-cut to make room for farmland. Despite the markers clearly declaring which prince owns which part of the forest, poaching is rampant, both from scofflaws among the Phelan and from outlanders who use the River Nith to ferry their loot to the coast.

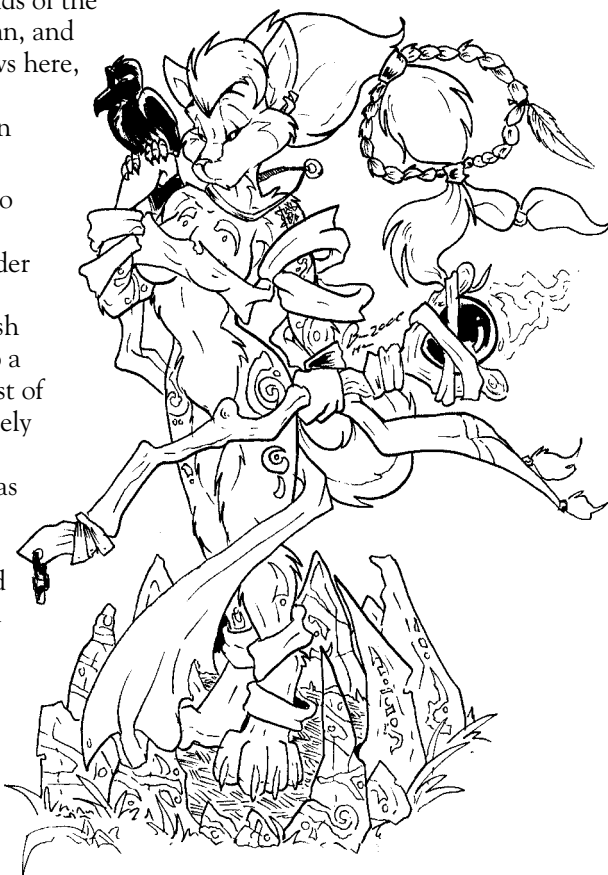
The Western Clan: Tuath ná Iargúl

Spreading across the west coast, the lands of the Iargúl were the first settled by the Phelan, and thus the oldest. Roads have deep furrows here, surrounded on one or more sides with earthen bulwarks as the roads have been repeatedly dug out.

Many a Phelan has taken a pilgrimage to Cathair Murias to stare off the cliffs, to meditate on the endless sea and to ponder their humble origins. Iargúl's western coastline is not gradual — rather, its lush greenery and exposed stones right up to a sheer drop before a rocky shore. The rest of the landscape is a mixture between closely guarded farms and forsaken bogs and “broken land.” The dense population has largely exhausted hunting and game animals in the area. However, there is no lacking for meat, as the *cumalaí* bred here are largely agreed to be the best all around. Drays, rouncies, and coursers can also be found (q.v. *Rinaldi*), though they hardly have the quality of Triskellian mounts.

For hundreds of years, the Druids of Iargúl have held counsel not only with the king of their clan, but with all the Phelan people, serving in almost every learned capacity: as doctors, historians, Although the Brehona are still regarded as the voice of law, the people of Iargúl will often consult a Druid for spiritual advice before seeking out legal advice.

Most of the people of Iargúl are trained in the fighting arts, but they are far removed from the constant strife that plagues the Oirthir or the Cell. However, the Druids have magicks well suited for the art of war, and any war party would have at least one with them, often two or more.





Cathair Murias

The largest and oldest of all hill-forts, Murias sits atop a hill near the cliffs on the western shore. The age of the city is readily apparent from the sheer number of stone buildings all kept in good repair. The landscape around it is dotted with standing-stones marking the holdings from one family to another. Murias is the only city that has all the services one would expect from a modern city — a smithy, a mill, a tanner, a tailor, and for many an adventurer, the true sign of civilization, the inn (see below).

1. Palisade

A bulwark of dirt surrounds the whole city, with a wooden wall built on top, known as a *palisade*. Timbers are constantly being replaced. There are three gates: the Cachliadh Deiseil (south gate), Cacchliadh Siar (western gate), and Cachliadh Anoir (eastern gate) — this is mostly important to folks who will refuse to use certain gates due to *geisa* (see page 44).

Each gate is watched by one or more nobles during the day, and the gates are closed at night; they will screen those who would come inside to make sure they are not obviously dangerous or *persona non grata*.

2. Royal Hall

The seat of the Chieftain of the Iargúl, the Royal Hall is a large, walled compound on the highest summit of the Murias plateau. A low trench surrounds part of the hill, spanned by a wooden bridge that is constantly watched by two Fianna, who will turn away any persons not of noble blood and who have no business in the hall.

Some wonder whether *King Semias* is the real power behind the Iargúl ... or if the Druids really exert their influence behind the throne, with their “readings of omens” and their “*geisa*” or divinely inspired prohibitions on royal conduct. It is obvious to all that the Druids exert their greatest influence here.

3. Watch Tower

The signature feature of Cathair Murias, this stone watch-tower is patterned after the Sen-Chormac’s Tower of Cathair Nefenhir (see page 41), and outlanders have been known to confuse the two. However, this tower was built years later and is shorter.

4. Innmhe Ollúna

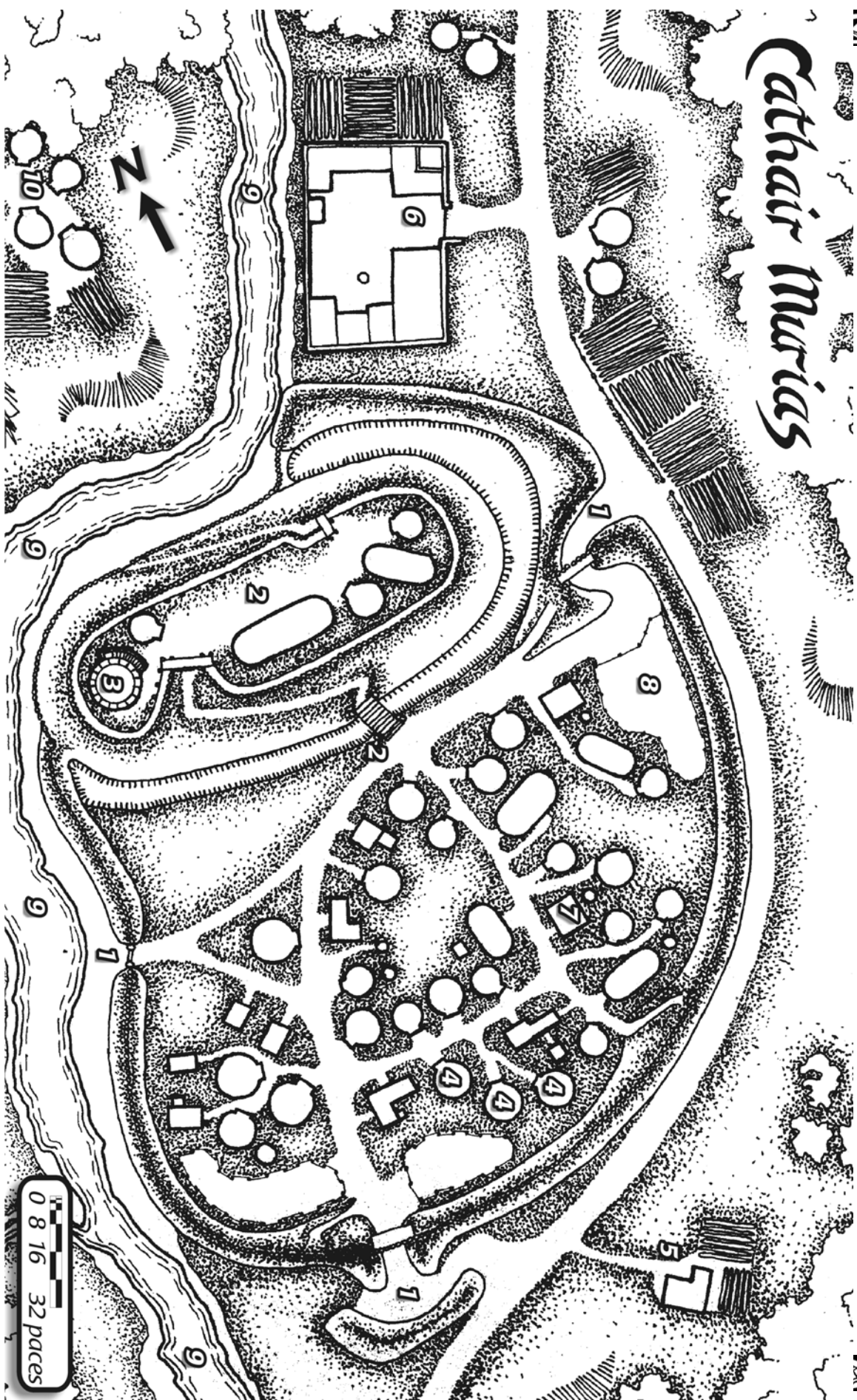
In Phelan society, Druids are always treated with deference. The respect is only greater in the lands of Iargúl. These three buildings belong to the three Ollúna (singular Ollamh), the highest-ranking Druids in all of Iargúl, who go by the names of Ollamh Árachdach, Ollamh Denmne, and Ollamh Gusmhar.

5. Mission

Near the Cathair is a small stone chapel that houses Master Cleric Phillippe and his apprentices. The building is remarkable in many aspects: it is made of stone instead of wood; it has a high steeple marked with the “octagram of creation,” the eight-pointed star that is the symbol of white magics, and it contains the only clock to be found in all of Phelan lands.

A highborn horse from the Avoirdupois lands, Master Phillippe has taken it upon himself to bring the word and the light of S’allumer to these people who would otherwise never know its glory and salvation. He is a tolerant sort, however, hoping to win the local folk over through patience and “living by example.” Phillippe “bought” his land from the previous owners by performing “miracles” of White Magic to save their crops and children.

Cathair Múrias





Outlanders from Calabria or elsewhere are welcome to stop by the mission. Master Phillippe and company will be eager for news. To smith brass and steel, one needs raw ore. The cliffs and hills of Iargúl also have the oldest mines of the Phelan demesne. The miners are largely slave-gangs of outlanders captured in Fianna raids on border-territories.

6. Thie Oast Muriais (Inn)

Simply known as the “Inn of Murias,” this tavern looks similar to the great hall, being one large common room around a large fireplace. It is owned by Ellatig One-Eye, a worldly sort who enjoys hearing the stories foreigners have to tell. This inn is one of the few places where denarii can be spent.

7. Céardcha Muriais (Smithy)

Easily identifiable from a distance because of the thick smoke that pours out, this blacksmith shop is the only place to get swords within a howl’s distance of Murias. The master-smith is Gabha Uá-Teine, a Phelan woman of 16 stone, and her three apprentices. Gabha knows that she can gouge outlanders looking for metal goods for all they’re worth – while she will accept denarii, she will charge double the suggested prices in the *Ironclaw* book (subject to Haggle Tests, of course – *Ironclaw*, p. 137).

8. Margad Muriais (Marketplace)

As a rule, the Phelan are not a people given to commerce. The few booths or set-ups here look ramshackle compared to the splendor and variety of Triskellian. Apply at least a –1 Penalty to all Availability Tests (*Ironclaw*, p. 129). Few people here will accept denarii, and those that do will probably charge double.

9. Abhainn Nathracha (River Nathrad)

The river runs past the city at a speed a bit faster than most boatmen would prefer. Riverside is a constant flurry of activity – fishers cast their nets; folk wash clothes, blankets, and even themselves; servants throw garbage and empty chamber-pots.

There is no bridge that spans the river – the water moves too quickly and the banks are too far apart to build a simple structure, and it is doubtful the Iargúl would call in outside engineers.

10. Dúr Gilroy’s Estate

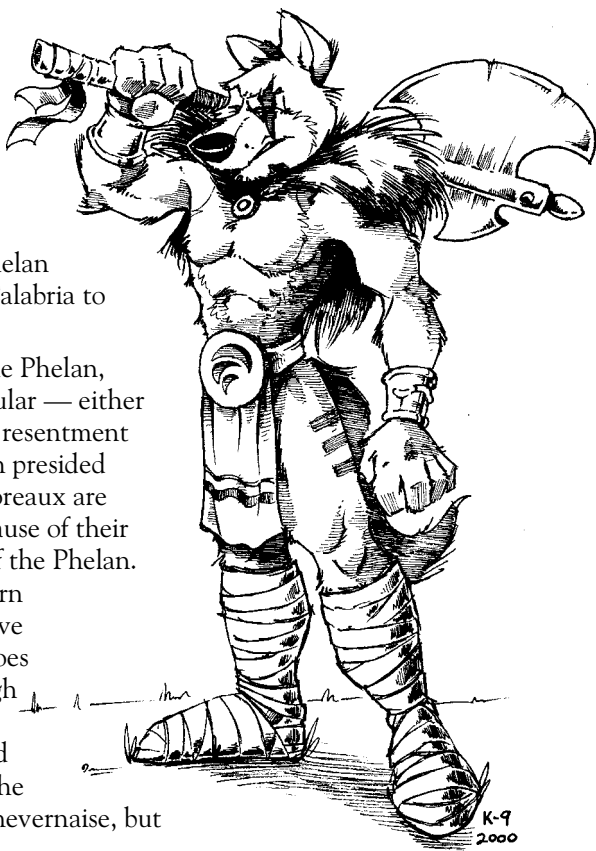
One of the richer Flatha of the Iargúl, Dúr Gilroy’s farmland is right near the city itself. One of the more colorful locals, Dúr Gilroy takes a heavy hand in political affairs and makes a point of meeting everyone of note.



The Eastern Clan: Tuath ná Oirthir

The Oirthir have settled the furthest inland of any of the Phelan, since the Bisclavret declared themselves a separate people. All Phelan agree that the territory this clan controls is the most fertile in their entire demesne. Many outsiders agree, too, and as a result this land is witness to most of the border-skirmishes and battles that the Phelan must fight against the Noble Houses of Calabria to defend what is theirs.

When the Bisclavret openly denounce the Phelan, they are referring to the Oirthir in particular — either it is the frequent border-raids, or it is the resentment that such good land “goes to waste” when presided over by the “primitive” Phelan. The Doloreaux are only slightly less belligerent, possibly because of their empathy with the pantheistic practices of the Phelan. The folks of Triskellian only rarely concern themselves with the Oirthir, since they live many leagues away. Even more seldom does any of the Avoirdupois venture far enough west to have an encounter with the Oirthir, or any Phelan at all. It is rumored that the Oirthir are on good terms with the Doloreaux’s long-standing enemy, the Chevernaise, but nothing has been proven.



Of all the lands controlled by the Phelan, the lands of the Oirthir are the most desired. Proper drainage of the landscape means there are less bogs and more farmland. The forests grow thick and lush with stout wood, next to fish-stocked rivers. Indeed, the people who live here might enjoy an easy life ... were it not that they were bordered on the northeast by the Doloreaux and on the southeast by the Bisclavret, two noble houses eager to expand their territory.

By his keen wits and his skilled advisors, *King Esras* holds dominion over the Oirthir as did his father and his father’s father before him. His greatest difficulty is keeping the large population of Fianna in line — in theory, these warriors represent the standing forces to keep out the foreign warriors; in practice, when left to their own devices they form bandit-gangs and prey on outlanders. Like any good king, Esras stands behind his subjects. When strange nobles come to his door to protest the roving bands of Phelan who rob their border-towns and carriages, he is quick to deny any knowledge of such activity ... and then is quick to add that he has clear proof of outlanders attacking his own “peaceful” subjects.

Nowhere else in Phelan lands can one find greater evidence that these wolves believe that “the gods are everywhere.” Standing stones, carved trees, and revered wells can be found everywhere. Perhaps it is the lushness of the Oirthir’s territory that has inspired them to give so many offerings to the spiritual world. Despite all these trappings, Druids are rare. The few that are present are usually from other Clans, as the Oirthir devote little time to “academic” pursuits.

Oirthir has the largest standing army. Most are Militia — farmers who train in the arts of war when they can. Many are Fianna, the “warrior-knights” who are full-time fighters — and since they do not support themselves with much “honest” work, they often turn to banditry.

Oirthir lands are some of the most choice in all of Calabria. Frequent rainfall keeps the land green and lush. The summers are often nice, although high humidity is not unknown. Warriors of Oirthir have been known to use the fog of the valleys to mask their numbers.

Cathair Gorias

Not so much a city as a large defensible fort, Gorias resides on a small plateau in the middle of a large flat valley. While a small village lies outside, the people are constantly ready, night or day, to heed the howling call to summon them inside Gorias’ walls should a foreign army attempt a siege.

Olm

Olm is a typical Phelan settlement, lying about three leagues northwest of Cathair Gorias. A few scant acres of crops planted between tree stumps surrounds the village, which consists of a dozen stone huts with thatched roofs, a wooden stable, and a stone forge. Amenities are few here, and outsiders are looked upon with justified suspicion, especially if they arrive after dark. Most tired visitors can hope for a spot of dry hay in the stable, unless they can bribe or cajole the locals into letting them sleep in a hut. The noisome and smoky interiors of these structures might convince them that the stable is a good idea after all. If the residents are befriended, they will make loyal, though resource poor, allies.

The Central Clan: Tuath ná Reeoil

The noble Reeoil lay claim to a large patch of land, more or less in the middle of the Phelan territories. From here their king holds sway over the lands extending eastward nearly to the shores of the Storvindeln Lake (known as the *Grannos* to the Phelan) and westward towards the coast, ending a few leagues from the ocean at a roughly-defined border with the Iargúl clan who hold sway over the actual coastline.

Their northern border is much more definite — trip of barren land that separates the Wildenlands from the rest of Calabria, known alternately as the Giant’s Road and the Scar. These lands are not quite as wild and desolate as those of most of the other clans, though still untamed by

the standards of Triskellian and Bruges. Small clearings dot the woods, providing a home to several small villages. Many of these have marked paths leading from them to their closest neighboring settlement. It is still easy to get hopelessly lost in foul weather, but one may blunder on in the hopes of stumbling across a village in a few days.





Cathair Nefenhir

Located at the northernmost end of the River Nith, Cathair Nefenhir is the seat of power for the mightiest of the Phelan Kings, *Sen-Chormac*. His court is suitably grand in the eyes of the Phelan, though pitifully dank and primitive to eyes of outsiders. Nefenhir is the only Phelan settlement populous enough to earn the title of town.

Travelers to the settlement generally arrive by boat from Harrowgate. The journey across Lake Coire and up the Nith takes two to four days, depending on season and state of the river. This easy river access makes Nefenhir the Phelan settlement most open to the outside world. Daring merchants and missionaries hoping to make a profit or gain souls in the wilder lands generally stop here first. The town is kind of a “last chance” stop for supplies, weapons, and civilized comforts.

More than this, Nefenhir is the gateway to an older and more mysterious world. It is not simply a frontier town or a primitive outpost; it is an introduction to the Phelan way of life. Young nobles and adventurers should quickly realize that the rules are different here. Their rank and reputation are meaningless.

Physically, Nefenhir is a haphazardly constructed place. There are no planned roads or town squares. Residents build where they please, how they please. Semi-permanent hide-walled tents jostle for space with low, square wooden buildings. The majority of the dwellings are single-room square stone huts with thatched roofs but here and there, one can see the plaster and wooden structures that mark the dwelling of an outsider. A three-pace tall wooden palisade surrounds the portions of the town that do not face the river. This barrier is intended more to keep out wildlife than to stop a determined assault.

Nefenhir is dominated by a three-story artificial earth hill, surrounded by steep earthen walls that are surmounted by a thick wooden palisade. On top of the hill are a two-floor stone tower and some wooden out-buildings. This is the fortress of King *Sen-Chormac*, and it lies in more or less the center of Nefenhir. Just south of the walls is a narrow spit of earth that slopes gently upwards to a flat, square area that measure 8 paces by 8 paces. A wooden bridge extends ten paces from the top of this slope to a gate set in the top of the earth-works that surround the fortress. Visitors to this citadel must climb this slope and cross the bridge before finding themselves within the citadel proper.



Sen-Chormac's Tower

Once atop the hills, they will be able to clearly see the glory that is Sen-Chormac's palace and fortress. A haphazard, but firm, stone tower is the most imposing part of the structure. A beacon fire glows from the top of this tower day and night. It serves as the personal residence of the king, and his final bulwark in the event of a siege. The wooden buildings that surround the tower act as his public court. None is more than a single floor tall, and they are constructed of heavy wooden planks.

Inside, the palace is smoky and dark and smells of stale mead and urine. This is a functional place, not a show-piece of noble grandeur. Even so, an open-minded visitor may find beauty in the elaborate carvings that adorn the ceiling supports.

The main hall and throne room is slightly better lit, but even more noisome than the corridors and rooms that surround it. A wooden throne stands at one end of a roughly-hewn, long plank table. This is where the mighty Sen-Chormac receives visitors and holds court.

Reve de Triskellian

Famous as the last truly civilized establishment north of the Granvert, the Reve de Triskellian is a three-floor inn and tavern that caters to rich visitors, located in the north end of the town. The accommodations are superb, and a variety of services are offered to please all needs of the patrons, from the high to the low. The Reve, as its regulars know it, seems a world apart from Nefenhir. Certainly, the prices are astronomical. Food and lodging here cost five times the prices listed in the Main Ironclaw book.

The owner is a tall, slim canine man in his mid-thirties named Congreve. He is of low birth, but affects high-born manners and an aristocratic attitude that would put the most fastidious of Rinaldi to shame. While residing here, visitors are expected to publicly maintain the dignity of a Triskellian manor home — no fighting or crude behavior. Of course, what they do in the privacy of their own room with the Inn staff is a private matter, provided they are discrete.

Docks

The “docks” at the south end of the town are hardly that. They are more a collection of shallow places where river boats run aground, and passengers are forced to wade ashore. Several local taverns and businesses cater to the river traffic, though none is of especially high quality. Adventurers looking for a bed will likely find themselves sharing a room with ten others around a central fire pit.





ROLE-PLAYING IN PHELAN LANDS

*In Which New Rules are Presented for the
Benefit of Player-Characters*

Making a Phelan Character

Here are some suggestions on how to make a character that hails from the Phelan territory. Options presented in roman type are from *Ironclaw*; options presented in *italic* type are in this book.

<i>Design Choice</i>	<i>Suggestions for Phelan Characters</i>
Traits	High Body and Race
Race	True Phelan who can become chieftains are all Wolves. However, Badgers, Cats, Dogs, Deer, Elk, Foxes, Mice, Porcupines, Rabbits, Raccoons, Rats, and Skunks are also found in these lands, as well as the occasional and mysterious <i>Raven</i> .
Gifts	<i>All-Fours</i> ; Extra Hit Point; Keen Eyes; Luck; <i>Nobility (see below)</i> ; Prodigy; Robustness; Strength; Sure-Footed
Flaws	Foe; <i>Geis</i> ; Heroic; Honorable; Overconfident; Poverty; Rivalry; Superstitious
Careers	Ascetic; Bandit; <i>Bard</i> ; <i>Brehon</i> ; <i>Dálaige</i> ; <i>Druid</i> ; Farmer; <i>Fiann</i> ; Fisherman; <i>Fool</i> ; <i>Gasraidh</i> ; Herdsman; Homeopath; Hunter; Laborer; Mercenary; Messenger; Ostler; <i>Ovate</i> ; Pit Fighter; Ranger; Robber; Rustler; Scout; Slaver; Soldier; Trapper; <i>Ululant</i>
Skills	Acrobatics; Animal Handling; Augury; Axe; Bow; Brawling; Camouflage; Climbing; Diplomacy; Dodge; First Aid; Fishing; Hiking; Intimidation; Jumping; <i>Language: Bérla Féini</i> ; <i>Language: Bérla Sgaimeach</i> ; <i>Literacy: Bérla Galláneath</i> ; Leadership; Observation; Oratory; Resolve; Shield; Sixth Sense; Spear; Stealth; Survival; Tactics; Thrown Weapon (Spear); Tracking; Weather Sense; Wrestling

In addition, there are some new options presented here that are appropriate for Phelan Characters.

New Gifts

All-Fours (Personal Gift: 2 points)

You can drop to your hands and run on “All Fours.” To do this, both of your hands must be empty. When running on All Fours, add your Race Trait to your Dash, and $\frac{1}{4}$ your Race Trait to your Stride.

Example: Glaisne has a Speed Trait of d10, a Race Trait of d8, and the gift of All-Fours. When he drops to the ground, his Dash improves to $(10+8=)$ 18 paces, and his Stride becomes $(18/4)=$ 4 ½ paces.

In addition, you can now Dodge while “lying down” with no penalties. You can still be “knocked down” and be sent Reeling from failing a Resolve Test (q.v. *Ironclaw*), in which you will have a penalty to defend due to being “off-balance.”

Beak (Racial Gift: 1 point)

All Ravens have a sharp Beak that they can use as a Natural Weapon. A Beak strikes for d6 Damage, with no minimum Lift Bonus, and is always “Easy” and Ready. When a Special Hit is scored, apply the following rule:

Beak Special: Impale. Your beak has struck at a weak point in your opponent’s Armor. Before your target rolls their Armor Dice, *remove the lowest die.* (For example, if your opponent has Armor of d8 & d4, remove the d4.) Soak Dice are unaffected. If your opponent has no Armor at all, there is no effect.

Nobility (Social Gift: 1, 2, or 3 points)

The ranks of nobility are slightly different for Phelan characters.

Noble Blood: You are directly descended from a Flaith, or you yourself are a Flaith. You cannot be summoned by commoners to court unless they can get enough witnesses (which varies depending on the offense, but no more than a dozen.) You cannot be called out or challenged by commoners; if you refuse a challenge from a commoner, you lose no honor. **1 point.**

Prince / Noble: You are a Flaith in full name. You can take up arms freely, and you may administer quick justice on scofflaws and commoners without summoning a Brehon ... although you *can* be called to court if you are accused of false judgment, yourself, as one of Noble Blood. **2 points.**

Matriarch / Patriarch: You are the undisputed leader of your derbfhine. Everyone in your family must do as you say. You may claim coinmed, a form of hospitality, and thus you can stay indefinitely at any of the households of your derbfhine. This is the highest level of nobility permitted to a starting *Ironclaw* character. **3 points.**



New Flaws

Broken Man or Woman (same as “Scofflaw,” *Ironclaw* p. 97; Uncommon, Strong, External; -3 points)

You are beyond the protection of Phelan Law. You have been branded or marked in some way, such as a scar, tattoo, or you may have even been De-Clawed (*Ironclaw*, p. 94). For other Phelan, taking your possessions is not theft, taking your life is not murder. You can never hold any rank of Nobility.



Geis (“Mystical Prohibition”; varies)

The Phelan put strong stock in omens and oracles. Many have a strong belief in Fate, that there are things folk are destined to do and not to do, and that if these “rules” are not obeyed, tragedy will result. The Phelan call such things *Geisa*, or “mystical prohibitions” on one may do or not do.

In game terms, a character may take an Internal Flaw that prevents them from doing something. Some suggested *Geisa* include:

- Never take a life. (“Pacifism,” *Ironclaw* p. 101)
- Never refuse to aid the downtrodden. (“Soft-Hearted,” *Ironclaw* p. 103)
- Never play anyone false. (“Honorable,” *Ironclaw* p. 100).

A few *Geisa* are too minor to be considered worth a full -1 in Points. At the Game Host’s discretion, you may make a character with the Flaw of *Superstitious* (p. 104) to cover three or more “minor” prohibitions, such as the following:



- Never listen to the music of birds.
- Never dine in the company of thirteen persons.
- Never be lying in bed when the sun rises.
- During the summer, never enter a house through the door.
- Avoid mutilation and remain in perfect health. (Many chieftains have this *geis*, because they may not keep their throne if they suffer any crippling injuries.)
- Never use a sword.
- Never wear the color blue.
- Never return home without some trophy of victory.
- Never enter a building without permission.

Geisa can be as random and as disadvantageous as the Game Host and the Player want them to be. Use the rules in the *Ironclaw* book under “Making Your Own Flaws” to determine the value of even wilder prohibitions than the ones listed here.

Sometimes, a *geis* can take the form of a task that the character must perform, such as finding the lost harp of Finias or to save the life of an important person. In game terms, such a task would probably be a Duty (*Ironclaw*, p. 99). The Player should put the Duty in their Self-Improvement list and as they perform tasks related to absolving the service, Experience should be committed to “buying off” the Flaw.

No Hands (Personal Flaw; Common, Extreme, External; -5 points)

You have no hands. You may have been born without them, or perhaps you have been crippled in some way. You cannot use any weapons or tools that require hands. If you have Prehensile Feet, you may still be able to perform feats of dexterity with your toes.

Small (Esoteric Flaw; Common, Moderate, External; -3 points)

Requirement: a Body trait of d4

You are a very tiny creature indeed. Your size is only ¼ normal. You may *not* have a Body Trait of more than d4.



Example: Ro-Thrir has a Body of d4, and the Flaws of Weak and Frail. Normally, his size would be 2. However, he also has the Flaw of Small, so his size is only one-fourth of 2, or ½ Stone.

You have one less Hit Point than others. Fill in the first circle on the character sheet. (Unlike the Flaw of Failing Health, you *can* buy Extra Hit Points.)

For any rules concerning Size, such as the cost of Flight in Points (and Stall speed), the weight of Armor, etc., treat any Size of less than one stone as 1.

Example: Ro-Thrir gets a suit of Chain Mail. Even though his size is only ½ stone, he still reads the “1” column from the Armor Table. His Chain Mail weighs ¾ stone.

Normally, this Flaw is only for Ravens, but with Game Host permission, other characters may take it.

New Special Traits

To have a Special Trait, you must take the Gift of Extra Trait (*Ironclaw*, p. 79). Only with special permission from the Game Host can you earn a Special Trait with Experience.

Birach-derc (“Evil Eye”)

Requirement: *the Flaw of One Eye*

One of your eyes is sight-less; it is discolored, either grey or white, and it may be slightly larger than the other. You may or may not have the Flaw of *Ill-Favored* (q.v. *Ironclaw*), at your discretion.

Your dead eye is actually a *birach-derc*, or “Evil Eye.” It has the power to thrill folks with supernatural fear. Using the power of your Birach-derc is a special Maneuver.

Maneuver	Ranks of Initiative	Move	Defense	Action
Gaze of the Birach-derc	First	Stride	Normal	Force a Group to pass a Fear Test using Mind & Will

You may affect multiple targets as a Group (q.v. “Magic Scope,” *Ironclaw*). The targets you gaze upon must roll a test of their *Mind & Will Trait Dice vs. your Birach-derc Trait Dice as a Fear Test* (*Ironclaw*, p. 134). You may *only* test a target once per Scene — pass or fail, that target need not make any more tests until your next encounter (that is, in a different Scene).

The target must be able to see your gaze to be affected — they must not be Blind and you cannot be in total darkness. Any target may declare that they are not looking at you and thus cannot be affected by your gaze — but any target that does so is assumed to have “turned their back to you” and you may strike them from behind with a +1 Bonus To-Hit (q.v. *Ironclaw*).

Past Life

The Phelan do not believe in an afterlife; one lives their time on this world alone. However, it is not uncommon for someone to “reincarnate” and live again, either as a Phelan, as another race, or as something all together different. Scholars and other wordy folk call this belief *metempsychosis* — a passing from one body to another after death. The Phelan’s belief differs from the Old Faith of Lutarism; the Doloreaux believe that *everyone* reincarnates and lives again, in some form or another.

With permission of the Game Host, a Player may build a character with a Special Trait of “*Past Life*.” The Past Life can be of almost *anyone*, from the great and historic to the lowly and unknown, even someone of a different Race, or gender! The Past Life Trait should be



matched to a “secondary Career,” as usual — a “calling” that the character’s soul is destined to follow. In addition, at the Game Host’s discretion, the character may call upon Know Tests to “remember” things that the previous life will have known. (If appropriate, the Host may let the character use the Past Life Die to call upon the previous life’s Racial Skills, if they were different, too.)

Example: Maoltuile’s mother is at her wits’ end. Her son has trouble doing chores and is often found staring off into space, claiming that he “hears songs in his head.” She consults with a local Druid, who tells her that her boy is a reincarnation of Gallgaidheal the Poet, who composed over a dozen popular odes. The Druid reasons that Maoltuile is destined to complete many of the famous poet’s unfinished works. The Game Host allows Maoltuile to use his “Past Life: Gallgaidheal” to make Know Tests to know things about the poet and the areas where he lived, and for Performance Tests to recite Gallgaidheal’s poetry.

The disadvantage of a “Past Life” Trait is that the Character may sometimes forget who they are, and revert to the mannerisms, and even personality, of the previous incarnation. The Character may sleepwalk at night, going through the motions of the previous life’s chores. When the Character suffers a strange change in Mental State, such as becoming *Confused* or *Terrified*, the previous life may “come to the front” and “take over” the body for a time — minutes, hours, or even days.

Green and Purple Wizards (*Ironclaw*, p. 224) often take particular interest in folks who have Past Lives. The spell of “Thought-Reading” can be used to delve deep into one’s soul to find the Past Life. And when in a Mesmerized state, a person’s previous self can often be brought “to the front” through frequent uses of the Psychology skill.

New Race

Raven (zero points)

Requirement: Body Trait of d4

Racial Gifts: Beak (1 point); Extra Move +2 (2 points); Extra Trait: Magic Resistance d4 (3 points); Extra Trait: Second Sight d4 (3 points); Keen Eyes (1 point); Flight (1 point*); Prehensile Feet (1 point)

Racial Flaws: Frail (-2 points); No Hands (-5 points); Small (-3 points); Weak (-2 points)

Racial Skills: Disguise, Dodge, Flight

Racial Weapons: Beak

Racial Habitat: Forest

Racial Sense Tests: Listen, Spot

**Since all Ravens have a Body of d4 and the Flaws of Weak, Frail, and Small, their size is only ½ Stone, which means their cost of Flight is 1 point. (See page 44.)*

The Ravens are a breed apart from all other races. Instead of fur, their bodies are covered in thick black feathers. Unlike bats, they lack manipulative hands to use on the ends of their wings. The Raven has a sharp, black beak.

Some legends say that, when the world was created, the Ravens attempted to steal fruit from the gardens of the gods, and thus were punished by having their hands removed. Other historians believe that the Ravens were created by the Autarchs to serve as messengers and spies. Some experts on Phelan lore believe that the Ravens are a degenerate race related to the Morrígna (q.v.).





Whatever the case, the Ravens are very much a people who live on Calabria. Their small size prevents them from many tasks possible to larger folks, not the least of which are the arts of warfare. They are also famous for their vocal ability — specifically, their ability to mimic voices of others (represented by their Disguise Racial Skill).

All Ravens are affected with insight into the supernatural world (the Special Trait of Second Sight, q.v. *Ironclaw*) and a personal removal from its effects (the Special Trait of Magic Resistance, q.v. *Ironclaw*). Like all Extra Traits, at character creation the Player may exchange these d4 with other, larger dice in the “starting pool.” (See “Extra Trait,” q.v. *Ironclaw*).

New Careers

Brehon

Requirement: *the Gift of Local Investiture (1 point)*

As far back as anyone can remember, the Phelan have had their code of laws, known as the Fénechas, or “law of the free land-tillers.” These laws are still in the original, ancient language of Bérla Féini. It is the duty of the *Brehon* to learn the language, to memorize the laws, and to interpret them justly. The *Brehona* also moderate property disputes and place the standing stones that mark property lines.

The legal rules within the Fénechas are very complicated, with a battery of technical terms, specific penalties and injunctions, and lots of exceptions, clarifications, and descriptions of special circumstances.

Brehona have to be very careful; if they deliver false or unjust judgments, they may not only forfeit their fees but also be liable for damages themselves.

Include with: Lore: Fénechas, Language: Bérla Féini, Literacy: Bérla Galláneah, Psychology

Dálaige

Going before a *Brehon* is not for the faint of heart. It is not just the facts of the case that are being questioned, but the character of the people involved, the intentions of the parties involved, and whether someone is the sole support of their eight starving children. The *Dálaige* is a sort of professional “pleader,” the Phelan equivalent of a Solicitor (q.v. *Ironclaw*). A good *Dálaige* knows how to prepare a case, how to coach witnesses who will plead for their client, and how to persuade a *Brehon* to their own side ... and will do so for a modest fee.

Include with: Diplomacy, Fast-Talk, Lore: Fénechas, and Oratory

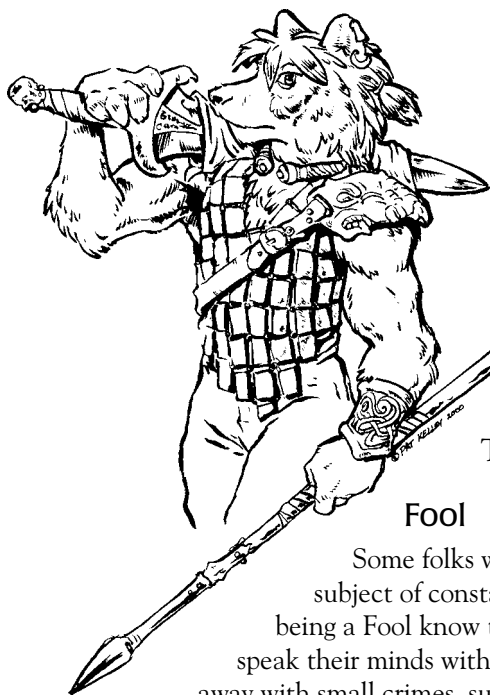
Druid

Serving as spiritual advisors and interpreters of the omens, the *Druids* preside over matters beyond those of mundane world. Similar to the Bard (see below), the *Druids* must memorize all their knowledge and methods, since literacy is a rare skill; however, while the *Bards* record history, the *Druids* learn about the secret forces that move this world, how to read the omens and even how to affect them.

The wizards of the Phelan, the *Druids* serve both their Chieftain and the natural world. Like their scholarly counterparts of Triskellian and elsewhere, most *Druids* are interested in bolstering their own personal power and understanding of the supernatural world. Many *Druids* have a second career.

Include with: Augury, Lore: *Druids*, and Meditation

This Career also grants you the ability to cast the spells of *The Way of the Eces* (see page 54).



Fiann

A class of warriors unto themselves, the *Fianna* (singular *Fiann*) declare themselves the arms of their clan. This career represents both the true *Fianna* who have distinguished themselves in battle (who likely have a d10 or better Career Trait) and those who hope to rise to such an honor (most likely with a mere d4 or d6). See page 21 for more details.

Include with: Language: Bérla Sgairneach, Spear, Spear-Throwing, and Tactics

Fool

Some folks wonder why anyone would want to become the subject of constant ridicule ... but those who make a career out of being a Fool know that the job has its advantages. Fools are free to speak their minds without worrying about losing face. They can often get away with small crimes, such as theft or eavesdropping.

In the role of Phelan society, the Fool's job is to keep folks humble by making light of hubris and overconfidence. In times of war, the Fool serves as a "cheerleader" of sorts, stirring up the troops and raising their morale.

Include with: Acrobatics, Dodge, Goading, and Mockery

This Career also grants you the ability to use *Fool Powers* (see page 76).

Gasraidh

More often found outside of Phelan demesne, the *Gasraidhean* are the mercenaries that play upon the rumors surrounding them to bluff or intimidate others. A successful *Gasraidh* may be an Atavist, or they may be pretending to be an Atavist, snarling and whooping regularly in a sham display. The more affluent ones will carry the best arms and armor they can afford.

Include with: Acting, Intimidation, Resolve, and Shield

Militia

With the constant threat of bandits, of other tribes, and even of other derbhfines, many Phelan live half their life tilling the land and half their life practicing the arts of war. The *Militia* is made up of the ranks of men and women alike, who train together and work on the fortifications of their villages and towns. It is rare outside the lands of the Oirthir for Militia to be someone's primary Career – more likely the person is a Farmer or other Tradesman with Militia for backup.

Include with: Area Knowledge (home town), Shield, Spear, Tactics





Ovate

When omens and portents are everywhere, it takes one of the appropriate mind to perceive them. The *Ovate* is a seer whose job is to prophesy and observe the signs of nature. There are rumors among outsiders that the Ovates engage in blood sacrifice, but there has been no proof of such activities, and the Phelan are silent on the issue.

Include with: Augury, Herbalism, Lore: Phelan, Sixth Sense

Ululant

Requirement: *the Gift of Howl*

A specialist among the Phelan, the *Ululant* has studied the fine art of Howling. They form an intelligence network to communicate over long distances by means of special cries, barks, moans, and yowls. A side effect of their training is their powerful lung capacity. Ululants often have a secondary Career, such as Messenger or Scout.

Include with: Breath-Holding, Cryptography, Hiking, and Language: *Bérla Sgairneach*

New Skills

Goadng

This is the skill of inciting anger in someone, either making them angry with you or with someone else. (“Are you going to let him get away with that insult? Are you?”) You may use this skill on Influence Tests (q.v. *Ironclaw*) to rile folks up and otherwise motivate them to do things based on wrath and bravado.

When combined with the Fool Career, the skill of Goadng works as one of the *Fool Powers* (see page 76).

Possible Favored Uses: *On drunken people; to incite wrath against my target’s enemies; by lying or distorting what the target’s enemies said.*

Language: *Bérla Féini*

Long ago, the Phelan spoke their own language, known as *Bérla Féini*. The original law of the people of the Phelan has yet to be translated into Calabrese and is still kept in this original language. Also, while the language of Calabrese is relatively common in Phelan demesne, there are places where only *Bérla Féini* is spoken. Without a common language, characters will have difficulty communicating — the Game Host may force multiple tests of Mind Dice against appropriate levels of difficulty.

Possible Favored Uses: *When composing poetry; legal terms.*

Language: *Bérla Sgairneach*

All wolves possess the ability to howl — to focus their breath to issue sharp cries, mournful howls, and piecing barks that echo across the countryside. The Phelan use their ability to Howl to communicate over great distances, with the code they call the *Bérla Sgairneach*. The subtleties of Howling can rival that of spoken language. More details on Phelan howling are in Appendix 1, on page 115.

While only those with the Gift of Howl may speak this Language, anyone can learn to understand it.

Possible Favored Uses: *Calling for aid; calling for war; funeral dirges; howling in chorus.*



Literacy: Bérla Galláneath

Not only do the Phelan have their own language — they also have their own alphabet. The written form of *Bérla Galláneath* is quite sophisticated, including not only vowels and consonants but also marks for inflection, tone, tempo, et cetera, to express not only words but also howls. The Phelan do not keep written documents or correspondence — *Bérla Galláneath* is used exclusively by Brehona for the marking of standing stones.

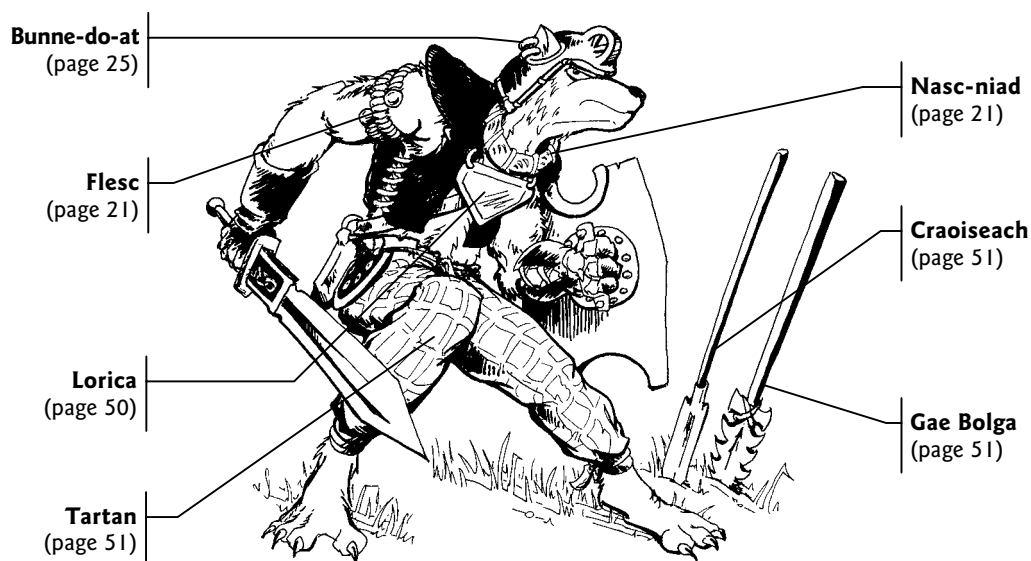
Possible Favored Uses: *For a specific clan.*

Mockery (requires specialization)

This is the skill of finding fault with a target and bringing it to their attention in the most obnoxious way possible. You may use this skill on Influence Tests (q.v. *Ironclaw*) to deride others, possibly humiliating them in front of their peers.

When combined with the Fool Career, the skill of Mockery and its five specializations work as *Fool Powers* (see page 76).

Possible Favored Uses: *In front of the target's superiors; by lying or distorting what the target said.*



New Weapons and Equipment

Phelan warriors equip themselves as best as they can afford. Unfortunately, the ovens for forging steel are unknown outside of the five Cathairs, so swords and metal armor are rare. Most folk settle for bethrach-leather vests and spears of fire-hardened wood.

Since good armor is hard to find, shields are a popular alternative. The preferred Phelan shield is made of wood with a center-grip, rather than lashed or strapped to the arm. The better shields have a concavity at the top reinforced with metal — the curved edges allow it to catch downward swings more easily, and the wielder can hold the shield close to their face and still see over it. Most shields have two such divots, so they can be flipped over when the top becomes too damaged.

When folks can get metal, it is usually in small quantities, such as the *lorica*, a small breastplate that protects the sternum and ribs, attached around the neck. To protect the head, helmets with a round “spoke-wheel” boss are preferred. To reinforce the leather, bits of metal





are often riveted into the interior, by using a hammer and flat studs – denarii are often used for this purpose, being small, round, and of a uniform size. Often the legs lack covering, either to do lack of materials or to reduce encumbrance. Fianna and other warriors who want to show their colors will often wear pants of *tartan*, or woolen cloth, which are checkered or cross-barred with narrow bands of various colors. (The Phelan lack a system of organized heraldry – if two derbfhines have colors too similar to one another, then they usually fight it out or seek arbitration from a Brehon.) Shoes are for the rich – the common folk make do with sandals, foot-wraps, or make do without footwear at all. In fact, the Phelan have invented a kind of weapon that can be thrown with the foot – see below.

In game terms, most Phelan warriors will be equipped with Light Leather armor and a Spear or two. The more affluent will wear Reinforced Leather and carry a Sword and Shield. In addition, there are two kinds of spears and one kind of mace unique to the Phelan.

Craoiseach

This weapon is a spear with a longer blade at the end, not as wide nor does it have a "stop-thrust" guard on it. Rather, the weapon is designed to be swung to bring the weight of the blade down upon someone much like an axe.

The Craoiseach must have a steel point that is forged to sharp edges, and thus is as difficult to make a sword. ***The Craoiseach is an Expensive item.***

In game terms, the Craoiseach is treated like a Spear, using Spear Skill with To-Hit Rolls and using the attributes for a Spear from the Ironclaw book. However, like a Sword, the Craoiseach has a choice between two Special results on an Overwhelming Success for the To-Hit roll.

Special: Slash +d6 or Impale. If you choose to *slash* your target, then include an extra d6 with your Damage Dice. If you choose to *impale* your target, then your target loses their lowest Armor Die — do not include their smallest die with their Soak Roll at all. (The target's natural Soak Dice are unaffected.)

Gae Bolga

Phelan are infamous for their barbed spears, which they call the *Gae Bolga*. This spear has a broad triangular head with serrated edges that curl backwards. This weapon is sometimes called the "disemboweling spear" for that reason.

In game terms, the Gae Bolga is treated like a Spear, using Spear Skill with To-Hit Rolls and using the attributes for a Spear from the Ironclaw book. However, the Gae Bolga has a different Special result for an Overwhelming Success on the To-Hit Roll.

Special: Chance to get stuck. If you cause at least one Wound to your target, then your Gae Bolga has become stuck in their body! This has a variety of game effects:

- You may either let go of the spear, or hold onto it. If you hold onto it, you may try to pull it out – see below.
- As long as the Gae Bolga stays in, and the target does any strenuous movement (such as move more than their Stride, or Dodge, or the like), then they suffer great pain. The target must make a Resolve Test vs. the Basic Damage of the weapon (no Strength dice.) Note that if the target botches this test, they will suffer another Wound.



- The spear may be removed by force. Anyone may run up to the target and try to grab the spear. If the target opposes this, roll a contest of the grabber's Speed & Wrestling vs. the target's Parry, Block, or Dodge. (Note that if the target Dodges, that's strenuous activity, as above.) It takes a contest of Strength vs. the target's Armor (not Soak) to remove it – if removed by force, the target must test their Soak (*without* Armor!) vs. the Strength roll just used to remove the spear, as a Damage Roll.
- The spear may be removed carefully, by use of Mind & First Aid skill. The difficulty is in proportion to the time spent removing it: in one round, 2d12; in one minute, 2d8.
- If the target can pass the Resolve Test, they can try to remove the spear from their own body, either with force or with care.

Also, the reverse edge of the spear-point of the Gae Bolga curves backwards in such a way that one may pick the weapon up between their toes and toss the weapon using a kicking motion with the foot. Fianna in defensive often have one foot on a Gae Bolga while their hands hold their shields and swords at the ready.

In game terms, the rules for throwing a Gae Bolga with the foot are as follows:

- The thrower must be bare-foot.
- If the thrower does not have Prehensile Feet, there is a -1 Penalty to the throw.
- If the thrower does not have Multidexterity, there is another -1 Penalty to the throw. (Thus most Phelan will suffer -2.)
- Use the Spear-Throwing skill (a.k.a. Thrown Weapon: Spear) when throwing a Gae Bolga with the foot. Yes, one can have "Using the foot" as their Favorite Use.

Shillelagh

First, find a tree-root or log that is a good shape for a club – one with a comfortable balance and heft. Then hollow it out using wood-carver tools. Finally, fill it with molten lead, which is much easier to work with than steel. What you have now is a *Shillelagh*, the mace that looks like a club.

In game terms, a Shillelagh is identical to a Mace in all aspects.

Phelan Names

Most folk have a surname, or second name that tells of their relation, combined with a word that describes the descent. The word *Mac* means "son of," so *Beagen mac Kennocha* would mean "Beagen, son of Kennocha." The word *Sen* means "daughter of," as in *Jilleen sen Isibéal*. Usually boys take the surname of their father and girls take the surname of their mother, but there are exceptions.

Every Phelan belongs to a *derbfhine*, or an extended family that traces descent from a common grandmother. The modifying word *Ua*, "grandson or granddaughter of," would go in front of such a name. For example, *Lugaid mac Uathach* would expand to "Lugaid, son of the grandson of Thach," meaning that Lugaid takes pride in tracing his line back that far. Among other things, one's *derbfhine* determines whether one can claim nobility (see page 20).

A name can be combined with the prefix *Gil-* or *Kil-*, or with the word *Giolla*, meaning "one who serves." For example, *Gilroy* means "one who serves Roy." Phelan locals may refer to an outlander by the cause they serve, such as *Corcoran Giolla Bisclavret*, "Corcoran who serves the Bisclavret."

For a pronunciation guide, see page 114.





Female Names

Aedammair, Aideen, Ailionora, Ailis, Aine, Airmid, Aisling, Alma, Ana, Andraste, Anu, Aoife, Artis, Bairrfhionn, Banba, Beare, Becuma, Berrach, Bevin, Binne, Blair, Blaithin, Boann, Brenda, Briana, Brid, Bryg, Cahan, Caillech, Caireach, Caireann, Caitriona, Caoilinn, Casidhe, Ceara, Celach, Cessair, Ciar, Cliona, Clodagh, Cochrann, Colleen, Conchobarre, Cori, Creidne, Cuimhne, Dairine, Darby, Daron, Dealla, Dechtire, Deirdre, Delaney, Delbchaem, Derry, Dervil, Devnet, Doireann, Doirind, Doneele, Donnfhlaith, Druantia, Dubh, Dubheasa, Eabha, Eachna, Eadan, Earlene, Eavan, Ebliu, Edana, Eibhilín, Eilinora, Eilis, Eithne, Elatha, Elva, Emer, Ermine, Etan, Etaoin, Fand, Fedelm, Fenella, Fethnaid, Fianait, Fidelma, Finnsech, Fionnabhair, Fionnuala, Flann, Flidais, Fodla, Fuamnach, Geileis, Glenna, Gobnait, Gormlaith, Grania, Granuaile, Isibéal, Jilleen, Kacey, Kaitlin, Keara, Keavy, Keelin, Kennocha, Kerry, Kevyn, Kiley, Labhaoise, Laoise, Lasair, Liadan, Luiseach, Mab, Maeve, Máire, Máiréad, Mairin, Margo, Margreg, Medb, Mell, Mene, Moina, Moninne, Moriath, Morrigan, Muadhnaid, Muireann, Muirín, Muiriol, Muirne, Myrna, Naomh, Narbflaith, Neala, Nessa, Nevina, Nia, Niamh, Nila, Nola, Nora, Orla, Ornice, Padraigin, Payton, Rioghnaigh, Rionach, Rori, Ros, Ryann, Rylee, Sadhbh, Saoirse, Saorla, Saraid, Scathach, Sceabh, Seana, Seanait, Shanley, Shanna, Shannon, Sierra, Sile, Sine, Sinead, Siobhan, Siomha, Sláine, Sloane, Sorcha, Taillte, Tara, Teamhair, Tierney, Tipper, Tlachtga, Trevina, Troya, Tuiren, Tullia, Uathach, Una.

Male Names

Achircir, Adair, Adamnan, Admor, Aeducan, Ailbhis, Ailill, Ailin, Baire, Banning, Barram, Barry, Bearach, Belenus, Blaine, Blathmac, Bodb, Bogart, Brady, Bram, Bran, Brandubh, Buaidnech, Caoimhin, Cahan, Cairbre, Cairell, Cairpre, Calhoun, Caoilte, Caoimhin, Carrick, Cass, Cathal, Cathbad, Ceallach, Conleth, Conley, Connor, Conri, Cormac, Corrigan, Cowan, Coyle, Craig, Credne, Criofan, Crofton, Crom-chend, Cuirithir, Culann, Culley, Daigh, Daimine, Dáire, Dearg, Declan, Dedad, Demne, Desmond, Desmumhnach, Devine, Diancecht, Diarmaid, Digby, Dow, Driscoll, Dubaltach, Dubgall, Dubhdara, Dubhghlas, Dugan, Eachan, Eamon, Eanna, Eion, Eireamhon, Eirín, Elatha, Eochaid, Eoghan, Eoin, Erand, Erc, Eremon, Esras, Eterscel, Fiachu, Finneces, Finnian, Fionn, Fionnbharr, Fiontan, Flann, Hoyt, Iar, Ibor, Imar, Iuchar, Iucharba, Kavan, Keallach, Keary, Laoire, Larkin, Lawler, Lennan, Liam, Lir, Lochlainn, Loegaire, Lorcan, Luchtaine, Lugaid, Lugh, Lunn, Maelduine, Maghnus, Mellan, Merrill, Merritt, Miach, Micheal, Midir, Mochaomhog, Nuada, Oengus, Ogma, Oisín, Oran, Oscar, Padraig, Piaras, Quigley, Quillan, Quinn, Rafer, Ragallach, Reamonn, Rian, Riddock, Riocárd, Riordan, Roarke, Rogan, Rónán, Ro-Sin, Ro-Thir, Ross, Ruadan, Ruairi, Ruamnach, Ruarc, Ryan, Saoirse, Scanlon, Séamas, Seán, Seanán, Semias, Setanta, Shanley, Sierra, Sin, Sithchean, Skelly, Sleibhin, Sloan, Somhairle, Strahan, Struthers, Sualtam, Suibhne, Tarlach, Tathmael, Tiarnach, Tiarnan, Tigernach, Tormey, Torn, Treasach, Trevor, Trir, Troy, Tulley, Turbech, Tynan, Tyrone.



“When no one understands what you say, they make you an Eces. When the Ecesaí don’t understand what you say, they make you a File. And when the Fili don’t understand you, they make you an Ollamh.”

— Phelan joke about Druids

DRUID MAGIC

In Which the Wizardly Mysteries of the Phelan are Revealed



The Phelan have their own wizards, who know how to call upon supernatural power: the *Druids*. Their role is to see what others cannot — to communicate with the spirits and to command the magicks that strike down the unjust and set things right where they were wrong.

It is very rare for someone to be a Druid as their only career; most tend to be schooled in other “educated” trades, such as Apothecary, Brehon (see page 47), or Homeopath.

There are three levels of education among the Druids. The lowest level is the *Eces*, or “apprentice poet” (plural *Ecesaí*), who has just begun learning the thousand-odd poems that Druid training entails. The second rank, or *File* (plural *Fili*), is earned once one has committed all 1,144 poems to memory, according to Phelan custom. The details of how one is promoted to the highest rank, the *Ollamh* (plural *Ollúna*), are only known among the Druids.

The Way of the Eces (Apprentice Druid)

Requirement: the Career of Druid at d4 or better

Aos Sí

Cost: 2	Difficulty: 2d8	Type: Regular	Effect: Target glows with magic light and can see in darkness.
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You can cause a living being, such as animal, yourself, or some other person, to have a ghostly luminescence. Your target may choose to resist this spell, rolling their Will & Race Dice vs. 2d8. If they achieve a Tie or better, they resist the effect.

For the rest of this Scene, the target of this spell becomes *Luminescent*. They can be targeted without any Penalties for darkness. It is nearly impossible for the target to hide — Stealth and the like becomes useless. Their vision also becomes completely as clear as day — they treat everything they can see as if it was in daylight or brighter.





Beannú

Cost: 3	Difficulty: 3d6	Type: Delayed	Effect: Target may re-roll their next Botch.
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You use this spell to safeguard a friend against their next calamity. The next time the target of this spell rolls a *Botch* (q.v. *Ironclaw*), this spell takes effect. The target re-rolls all their dice, and they must abide by the second roll — which may be a Botch itself.

At the Game Host’s discretion, this spell may also avert some other kind of disaster, not just a dice roll.

In any event, when the spell takes effect, the *Beannú* ends and the Delayed Magic Points are released. A target may only have one *Beannú* at any one time — a newer casting automatically dispels an older one. In addition, this spell *only works on others* — you *cannot* cast it on yourself.

Call Raven

Cost: 3	Difficulty: 3d4	Type: Regular	Effect: Call the nearest group of Ravens.
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You can attempt to summon a raven to your aid. After casting this spell, roll your 3d4 Effect Dice and your Druid Trait as a Simple Roll. Your score is how far your call goes out, in leagues. All Ravens within that distance hear your call. Within this Scene (that is, the next five minutes), one or more Ravens may choose to “answer your call” and will come to your location. They will know exactly where you are, but not necessarily how to get there — they will have to make Travel Tests (*Ironclaw*, p. 151) to get to your location.

Your particular call is unique to you, so any Ravens who recognize you can answer. You may also request a particular Raven or group of Ravens *if* you know their names.

Nothing about this spell “compels” the Ravens to answer, nor does this spell give you any “control” over the targets. Once the Raven or Ravens arrive, you will have to convince them to help you, as you would any other Non-Player Character, perhaps by using your social skills (as per an Influence Test, *Ironclaw*, p. 139) or by offering material incentives (as per a Bribery Test, *Ironclaw*, p. 132).

This spell is part of the covenant enjoyed between the Druids of the Phelan and the Fiach. Frequent use or abuse of this spell may anger these folk. This spell only works on Ravens, and on no other race. (But compare *Summon Morrigna*, page 64.)

Imman Ersooyl

Cost: 4	Difficulty: 4d6	Type: Regular	Effect: Stop a spell from working, testing 4d6 vs. its Difficulty Dice.
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This spell can do one of two things: *prevent a spell from being cast*, or *remove enchantment from a target*.

Preventing a Spell from Being Cast

You cast this spell on another spell, usually one of your foe’s spells.

Roll your Effect Dice vs. the Effect Dice of the spell you are trying to prevent. If you Succeed, then the target’s spell is prevented from being cast. The target must still spend the Magic Points.

Example: Daire wants to prevent the Rain of Blood being hurled at him. The Rain of Blood’s Effect Dice is 4d10, so Daire’s player will roll his *Imman Ersooyl* Effect Dice of 4d6 vs. 4d10. If he Succeeds, then no one need suffer the Rain of Blood.





Note that this spell is a Regular spell, and not a Defensive one. If you want to use this spell “defensively,” you will have to Focus so you can interrupt the caster (q.v. *Ironclaw*). If you successfully prevent the spell from working at all, then *no* targets are affected, regardless of the prevented spell’s Scope (Target, Cluster, Group, or Crowd).

Removing Enchantment from a Target

This spell will also remove any “false enchantment,” or magic effect, from a *single* target that is caused by magic. This includes any magically-induced *Blindness*; *Confusion*; *Er Troilt*; *Euphoria*; *Fear*; *Luminescence*; being a *Marionette*; *Mesmerism*; *Paralysis*; *Petrification*; *Rage*; *Shivering*; *Silence*; *Sleep*; or *Terror*. This spell can also remove “beneficial” spells from your opponents, such as *Flesh Ward*, *Protection from Rain*, *Beannú*, etc.

Roll your *Druid Trait Dice* vs. the appropriate *Wizard Trait Dice* of whoever cast the spell you seek to remove. For example, if you are trying to remove the effects of a White Magic spell, then your opposed dice is the other caster’s *Cleric Trait*. If you *Succeed*, the enchantment is removed immediately.

Example: Daire’s attempt to prevent the Rain of Blood failed — now he finds himself thrilled with supernatural fear. Daire now chooses to cast *Imman Ersooyl* to remove the enchanted effects. The hostile Druid who hurled the Rain of Blood has only a d4 in his *Druid Trait*, whereas Daire has a d12, so Daire need only beat a d4 with his d12.

You may only remove an enchantment from a single Target in this way. Following the above examples, if Daire had *prevented* the Rain of Blood from being cast, then *no one* would have suffered the spell’s ill effects.

What this Spell Cannot Do

This spell has *no* effect on states that were not inflicted from Wizardly Magic, such as the powers of a Fool, Atavisms, Blessed Magic (from *Doloreaux*), etc.

This spell also does not affect *Delayed Spells* while they are Delayed, such as *Lazarus Heart* or a *Bound Elemental*. However, whenever Delayed magic “comes into effect,” such as a *Lazarus Heart* trying to save someone’s life or a *Bound Elemental* Special effect triggering on a weapon attack, *then* you can try to dispel the effect as “Preventing a Spell from Being Cast,” above.

Iocshlant

Cost: 3	Difficulty: 3d12	Type: Regular	Effect:	Group has their next Healing Test living conditions improved by one step
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This spell calls upon magic to help your comrades to mend. Cast on a Group of targets, the next time they are to make a Healing Test (*Ironclaw*, p. 185), the quality of their “living conditions” improves by one step. *Extreme* conditions become *Hard*; *Hard* conditions become *Medium*; *Medium* conditions become *Easy*. If conditions are already *Easy*, then they automatically pass their next Healing Test, recovering one Wound automatically.

Rain of Ice

Cost: 5	Difficulty: 5d8	Type: Regular	Effect:	Group must test Body, Speed & Will vs. 5d8 or suffer Fatigue and Shivering.
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You can summon hail and freezing rain from the heavens to smite your foes. This spell only works on targets under the sky — rooftops and such will protect the targets.



Each target in the Group must test their Body, Speed & Will vs. the 5d8 effect dice. They may also include dice from any Shields they may carry, as well as any *Protection* magic.

If they *Fail*, they suffer one Fatigue, and they suffer from *Shivering*. A *Shivering* target suffers a –1 Penalty on all rolls involving Speed or other tests that involve fine control or a steady hand. The *Shivering* lasts for the next three Rounds.

If they *Overwhelmingly Fail*, they suffer one Wound, and they will suffer from *Shivering* for the rest of the Scene.

Remove Glamour

Cost: 3 *Difficulty:* 3d12 *Type:* Regular *Effect:* Remove an illusion from the target.

This spell attempts to dispel any *Illusion* magic on the target. This spell affects, among others, *Steal Guise* and *Neuakinaght*. At the Game Host's discretion, this spell also works on other spells that attempt to deceive others with false appearances.

Roll this spell's Effect Dice of 3d12 vs. the appropriate Wizard Trait of whoever cast the Illusion Magic. If you *Succeed*, the Illusion is dispelled, and any Magic Points that were Delayed by the Illusion are now released.

Teinm Laeghda

Cost: 5 *Difficulty:* 5d6 *Type:* Regular *Effect:* Know the name and history of an object.

You can use this spell to discover the recent history of an object. You must be in physical contact with the object to cast this spell upon it.

To determine how effective your scrying is, you must roll your *Mind and Druid Career Trait*. (If





you made a Casting Roll, use that same roll; otherwise, roll those dice now.) The object resists with 3d6, plus any magics cast upon it to deny its history (*Ironclaw*, p. 56)

If you *Succeed*, then you have learned some basic details about this object. If anyone claims this object as their Favorite for Skill Use, then you will get a vague impression of what they look like (enough to recognize them if you've met them before). You will also have knowledge of the most important use or event that involved this object.

If you *Overwhelmingly Succeed*, then in addition to the results above, you will have intimate knowledge of everything this object has been used for. Whenever you have a question about what this object has been used for, you may ask for a Know Test of your Mind & Druid Trait vs. a difficulty set by the Game Host (typically 2d6).

This spell only works on inanimate objects, such as tools or weapons. It *will* work on dead bodies and corpses, with the “most important event” being whoever killed the creature!

Example: Úr-Dagda comes across a mysterious corpse. He casts the spell *Teinm Laeghda* to find out some details about the body. Úr-Dagda has a Mind of d12 and a Druid Trait of d10. He must roll against 3d6.

Úr-Dagda scores an 8 and his opposed roll comes up 5, thus achieving a simple Success. He discovers that the name of the hapless corpse is “Carrick.” If he had *Overwhelmingly Succeeded*, he may have had some insight into who killed the poor man.

This spell does not give you “retrocognition” — it does not replay past events for you. Rather, you will get abstract impressions on what the object was involved with.

The Way of the File (Journeyman Druid)

Requirement: being Adept at the Spell-Casting of five spells from the list
The Way of the Eces

Ban-aileadh Suilt

Requirement: Caster must be a woman

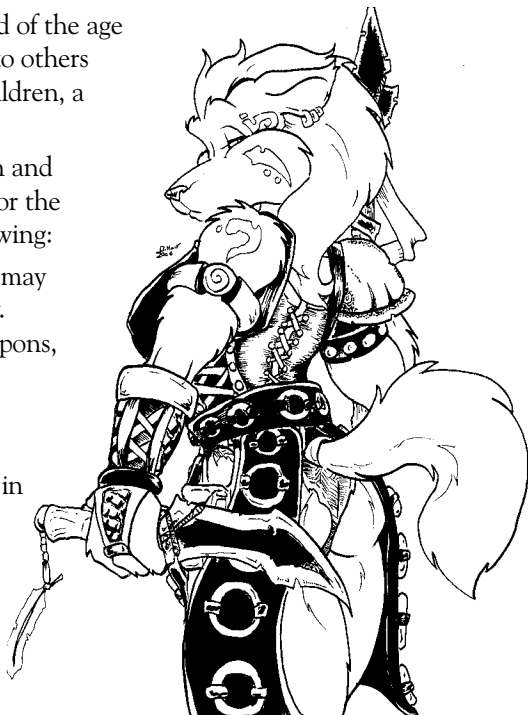
Cost: 3 Difficulty: 3d6 Type: Regular Effect: Intimidate men with your femininity.

You may only cast this spell if you are female and of the age of womanhood. This spell serves as a reminder to others that, as a woman, you are capable of bearing children, a power that men are cursed to never know.

You cast this spell on a Group of men — women and children under 17 years of age are unaffected. For the rest of this Scene, those affected suffer the following:

- When directing any skills against you, they may not claim their Favored Use advantage (q.v. *Ironclaw*.) This includes using Favorite Weapons, and skills used in Influence Tests.
- When you and an affected target Test dice against one another as a Simple Test, any result that would be a Tie is instead swayed in your favor: you claim an *Overwhelming Success*, and your target *Botches*. Damage Rolls are unaffected.

The effects of this spell last for the rest of this Scene, or until dispelled.





Cur Mow

Cost: 4	Difficulty: 4d8	Type: Regular	Effect: Inflict misfortune upon a household
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Often used to show displeasure, you can use this spell to inflict a blight upon those who cause you displeasure. Roll your *Cur Mow* Effect Dice of 4d8 vs. the Difficulty of the blight you want to inflict. Here are some suggested blights and their difficulty:

<i>Desired Blight</i>	<i>Suggested Difficulty</i>
Spoil food	2d6
Wither plants	2d8
Inflict disease upon cumalaí	2d10
Destroy leather goods	2d10
Turn dry land into a bog	2d12
Rot the timbers in a house	2d12
Rust steel goods	3d12

This spell only works on inanimate objects and animals. It does *not* affect people or other sentient beings. This spell is a general “curse” — the Game Host should keep this spirit in mind when deciding what sort of effects this spell can cause.

The effects of the blight last until repaired by some means, or if removed with the spell *Assec* (see page 61) or any of the White Magic *Cure* spells (see *Ironclaw*, page 218, 220, or 222).

Imman Er Ash

Cost: 3	Difficulty: 3d8	Type: Regular	Effect: Stop a spell from working, testing 3d10 vs. its Difficulty Dice.
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With the exception of the improved Effect Dice of 3d10, this spell is the same as *Imman Ersooyl* (page 55).

Leighis

Cost: 4	Difficulty: 4d10	Type: Regular	Effect: Group has their next Healing Test living conditions improved by two steps.
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This spell calls upon magic to help your comrades to mend. Cast on a Group of targets, the next time they are to make a Healing Test (*Ironclaw*, p. 185), the quality of their “living conditions” improves by two steps. *Extreme* conditions become *Medium*; *Hard* conditions become *Easy*. If conditions are already *Medium* or better, then they automatically pass their next Healing Test, recovering one Wound automatically.





Neuakinaght (Fog of Imperceptibility)

Cost: 4 Difficulty: 4d10 Type: Delayed Effect: Target becomes Imperceptible.

When you cast this spell, a mystical fog surrounds your target, shielding them from prying eyes.

The target of this spell becomes *Imperceptible*. In order to perceive an Imperceptible target, you must win a test of your Mind Dice, Observation Skill Dice, and Sixth Sense Dice vs. the 4d10 Effect Dice and the target's Stealth Dice (if any). *Racial Senses do not help you find Imperceptible targets at all.*

If you can *Tie* or better, then you can perceive the target and the Imperceptibility is instantly dispelled. If you *Fail* to see the Imperceptible target, then they remain undetected.

The target of this spell is “shrouded” in a magic mist, which covers them and all the things they carry, up to their maximum Encumbrance (q.v. *Ironclaw*). They may only hide other people if they physically pick them up and carry them. Items picked up “disappear,” as if receding into a fog, and dropped items suddenly “appear” — such events should allow onlookers to make rolls to perceive the target, as above.

The Imperceptibility will also be dispelled if any of the following events happen:

- *If the Imperceptible combatant chooses to attack.* If they choose to do so, however, roll an Ambush Test (q.v. *Ironclaw*), including the 4d10 with the combatant's Ambush Dice, as the Imperceptibility will offer an advantage of surprise.
- *If the Imperceptibility is dispelled with counter-magic.* This spell is *Illusion* magic — it can be dispelled by *Remove Glamour* (page 56).
- *If the Imperceptible target “trips up” or is otherwise blatantly revealed.* This includes, but is not limited to, failing a Resolve Test, making a Loud Noise, and many Botches or Overwhelming Failures on other kinds of rolls.

Once the target is no longer Imperceptible, the spell ends and the Magic Points are released.

You may cast this spell on a destrier or other war-mount, rendering it and all it carries (including rider) Imperceptible. If the mount is Skittish or otherwise not war-worthy, it will spook and instantly reveal itself. See the *Rinaldi* book for more information on mounts and mounted combat.





Rain of Blood

Cost: 4	Difficulty: 4d10	Type: Regular	Effect: Group must test Body, Speed, & Will vs. 4d10 or suffer Wounds and Fear.
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You can call from the heavens a grotesque display of blood, guts, and entrails to swathe your foes and to shatter their morale. This spell only works on targets under the sky — rooftops and such will protect the targets.

Each target in the Group must test their Body, Speed, and Will vs. the 4d10 effect dice. They may also include dice from any Shields they may carry, as well as any *Protection* magic.

If they *Fail*, they suffer one Wound, and they suffer *Fear* (q.v. *Ironclaw*) for the next 3 Rounds.

If they *Overwhelmingly Fail*, they suffer one Wound, and they suffer *Terror* (q.v. *Ironclaw*) for the rest of the combat.

Séamh

Cost: 4	Difficulty: 4d6	Type: Delayed	Effect: Target may re-roll their next Botch or Overwhelming Failure.
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You use this spell to safeguard a friend against their next calamity. The next time the target of this spell rolls a *Botch* or an *Overwhelming Failure* (q.v. *Ironclaw*), this spell takes effect. The target re-rolls all their dice — if the new result is better than an *Overwhelming Failure*, the new roll stands. Otherwise, use the old roll.

At the Game Host’s discretion, this spell may also avert some other kind of disaster, not just a dice roll.

In any event, when the spell takes effect, the *Séamh* ends and the Delayed Magic Points are released. A target may only have one *Séamh* at any one time — a newer casting automatically dispels an older one. In addition, this spell *only works on others* — you *cannot* cast it on yourself.

The Way of the Ollamh (Master Druid)

Requirement: being Adept at the Spell-Casting of five spells from the list The Way of the File

Assec

Cost: 5	Difficulty: 5d8	Type: Regular	Effect: Remove a blight from a household.
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You can call upon a general blessing to restore a household from ruin. Roll your 5d8 Effect Dice vs. the difficulty of the blight you want to remove. Here are some suggestions:

Desired Blight	Suggested Difficulty
Restore spoiled food	2d6
Restore plants	2d8
Cure cumalaí of disease	2d10
Restore leather goods	2d10
Restore a bog to dry land	2d12
Restore a wooden house	2d12
Restore steel goods	3d12





This spell can be used to restore something of a blight caused by the spells *Cur Mow* or *Cur Naardey*. This spell does *not* restore lost Fatigue or Wounds, nor does it work on people or other sentient.

This spell also does not create good things from bad — it “restores” things that have been ruined for some reason. Game Hosts should use their discretion.

Ban-aileadh Er Troailt

Requirement: Caster must be a woman

Cost: 5	Difficulty: 5d6	Type: Regular	Effect: Force men to suffer the pains of childbirth
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You may only cast this spell if you are female and of the age of womanhood. This spell serves as a reminder to others that, as a woman, you must bear the burden of childbirth, a suffering that men would be better for the experience.

You cast this spell on a Group of men — women and children under 17 years of age are unaffected.

For the rest of this Scene, those affected become *Er Troailt*, or pained as a woman is during childbirth. Those suffering under *Er Troailt* are affected as follows:

- They may not claim *Focus* for any reason. Concentration and skills that require self-confidence (such as Intimidation and Leadership) are impossible.
- They may not claim any *Favored Use* advantages for any reason.
- The target suffers an extra 3 stone of Encumbrance, although there are no obvious effects.
- At the end of every round, they must pass a Resolve Test (*Ironclaw*, p. 148) vs. 1d6, suffering any ill effects. (Since this happens at the end of the Round, anything that sends them Reeling simply makes them lose next Round’s action.)

There may be other effects — the Game Host should see *Er Troailt* as a role-playing opportunity. The effects of this spell last for the rest of this Scene, or until dispelled.

Conseun

Cost: 5	Difficulty: 5d6	Type: Delayed	Effect: The next time Target Botches or Overwhelmingly Fails, re-roll all dice
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You use this spell to safeguard a friend against their next calamity. The next time the target of this spell rolls a *Botch* or an *Overwhelming Failure* (q.v. *Ironclaw*), this spell takes effect. The target re-rolls *both* all their dice *and the dice on the opposing side*, and compares the result. If this new result is better than the last one, this one stands — otherwise the old outcome is used.

At the Game Host’s discretion, this spell may also avert some other disaster, not just a dice roll.

In any event, when the spell takes effect, the *Conseun* ends and the Delayed Magic Points are released. A target may only have one *Conseun* at any one time — a newer casting automatically dispels an older one. In addition, this spell *only works on others* — you *cannot* cast it on yourself.

Cur Naardey

Cost: 4	Difficulty: 4d10	Type: Regular	Effect: Inflict misfortune upon a household
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With the exception of the Magic Point cost and 4d10 Effect Dice, this spell is the same as *Cur Mow*, page 59.



Imman Magh

Cost: 2	Difficulty: 2d10	Type: Regular	Effect:	Stop a spell from working, testing 2d12 vs. its Difficulty Dice.
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With the exception of the improved Effect Dice of 2d12, this spell is the same as *Imman Ersooyl* (page 55).



Rain of Fire

Cost: 5	Difficulty: 5d8	Type: Regular	Effect:	Group must test Body & Speed vs. 5d8 or suffer Wounds and catch fire.
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You can summon fire from the sky to strike those who oppose you, setting them ablaze. This spell only works on targets under the sky — rooftops and such will protect the targets.

Each target in the Group must test their Body & Speed vs. the 5d8 effect dice. They may also include dice from any Shields they may carry, as well as any *Protection* magic.

If they *Fail*, they suffer one Wound, and they are on fire (q.v. *Ironclaw*).

If they *Overwhelmingly Fail*, they suffer three Wounds and are on fire.

Steal Guise

Cost: 3	Difficulty: 3d12	Type: Delayed	Effect:	Target must test Body, Speed & Race vs. 3d12, or you steal their appearance.
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You can steal someone's appearance, and put it on someone else, either yourself or a confederate (who is hereafter called the "pretender"). The target whose guise is stolen still keeps their own appearance.

While in their guise, *the pretender is forced to use the lower Body, Speed, and Race of either themselves or the target whose guise is stolen*. If the pretender ever wants to use their own (higher) traits, then they can do so ... but calling upon those dice instantly dispels the Guise.



Example: Bodicia (Body d8, Speed d4, Race d10) steals the guise of Canrea (Body d6, Speed d10, Race d8). While in this assumed shape, Bodicia's effective Body and Race drop to those of the guise — she must roll Body d6, Speed d4, and Race d8. If Bodicia ever wants to call upon her superior Body or Race dice, she may do so — but the instant she does, the Guise is dispelled.

The pretender's Mind, Will, and Career dice are unaffected, as well as other Traits. However, the pretender is most likely trying to pass himself off as someone else — if he reveals that he is more intelligent, determined, or knowledgeable than who he is pretending to be, the Guise won't be dispelled but folks will no longer be fooled.

This spell does not grant the pretender any Skills, Gifts, or other special abilities of the target — it only grants an Illusion of an appearance of someone else.

In addition to the reason above, the Guise can be dispelled by any of the following circumstances:

- *The pretender uses a Racial Gift that the target obviously does not have.* For example, if a Bat pretending to be a Wolf uses Flight, then the Guise is dispelled.
- *Either the pretender or the target dies.* (Thus in order to impersonate someone, you cannot just assume their appearance and then kill them. You will probably have to capture them.)
- *The pretender has Remove Glamour (page 56) cast on them.* (This spell is *Illusion* magic.)
- *The pretender has Dispel Magic, Imman Ersooyl, or another like spell cast upon them to remove the spell.*

To fool others, the Game Host may ask the pretender to pass a test of their Disguise Skill Dice vs. another's Mind Trait or some arbitrary difficulty. In general, it should be harder to fool intimate friends of the target, and easier to fool people who would have never met the target before. Those with the gift of Second Sight get one roll of their Second Sight vs. 3d12 to see the Illusion for what it is.

Summon Morríгна

Cost: 5	Difficulty: 5d6	Type: Regular	Effect: Summon a war-goblin.
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You can attempt to summon a war-goblin, or *Morríгна*, to your aid. After casting this spell, roll your 5d6 Effect Dice and your Druid Trait as a Simple Roll. Your score is how far your call goes out, in leagues.

All *Morríгна* within that distance hear your call. Within this Scene (that is, the next five minutes), one *Morríгна* may choose to answer your call and to come to your location. Not only will the *Morríгна* hear your call, they may choose to appear exactly where you are, instantly, descending from the sky in a whirl of fog and leaves or another mystical entrance. The characteristics for a *Morríгна* are in the Game Host's section (and thus a secret kept from Players), on page 101.

Your particular call is unique to you, so any *Morríгна* who recognize you can answer. You may also request a particular *Morríгна* if you know its name.

Nothing about this spell compels the *Morríгна* to answer, nor does this spell give you any control. Once the *Morríгна* arrives, you will have to convince it to help you somehow — the promise of battle often works well. Of course, it may also choose to attack you, so you may want to take up defensive measures before casting this spell.





Teanacadh

Cost: 5	Difficulty: 5d8	Type: Regular	Effect: Group has their next Healing Test living conditions promoted by one step
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This spell calls upon magic to help your comrades to mend. Cast on a Group of targets, the next time they are to make a Healing Test (*Ironclaw*, p. 185), the quality of their “living conditions” improves by three steps. *Extreme* conditions become *Easy*. If conditions are already *Hard* or better, then they automatically pass their next Healing Test, recovering one Wound automatically.

Tuigen (Mantle of Feathers)

Cost: 6	Difficulty: 6d6	Type: Delayed	Effect: Gain the Gift of Flight
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You cast this spell upon yourself. You suddenly gain a mantle of black raven’s feathers, known as a *Tuigen*. You now have the Gift of *Flight* (q.v. *Ironclaw*), with the following exceptions:

- It is the *Tuigen* that flaps, not your own arms, so you may use both hands freely, such as to wield a “2-Awk” weapon.
- Your Flight Speed is equal to the sum of your Speed Dice and *Druid* Career Dice (instead of Race Dice) — subject to Encumbrance, of course.

The spell lasts until you remove the *Tuigen*, at which point it disintegrates into feathers. Also, as an option, anyone attacking you may trade their Overwhelming “Special” result with the following result:

Special: Destroy Tuigen. Instead of damaging the target, you can attempt to destroy the *Tuigen* instead. Roll your Damage Dice vs. 2d8. If you score one hit or more, the *Tuigen* is destroyed (and dispelled), and the target is immediately sent Reeling and loses the ability to fly. Whether you succeed or not, the target suffers no Wounds from your attack.

Frequently Asked Questions about Druid Magic

How do the spells in this chapter compare to the ones in the Ironclaw book?

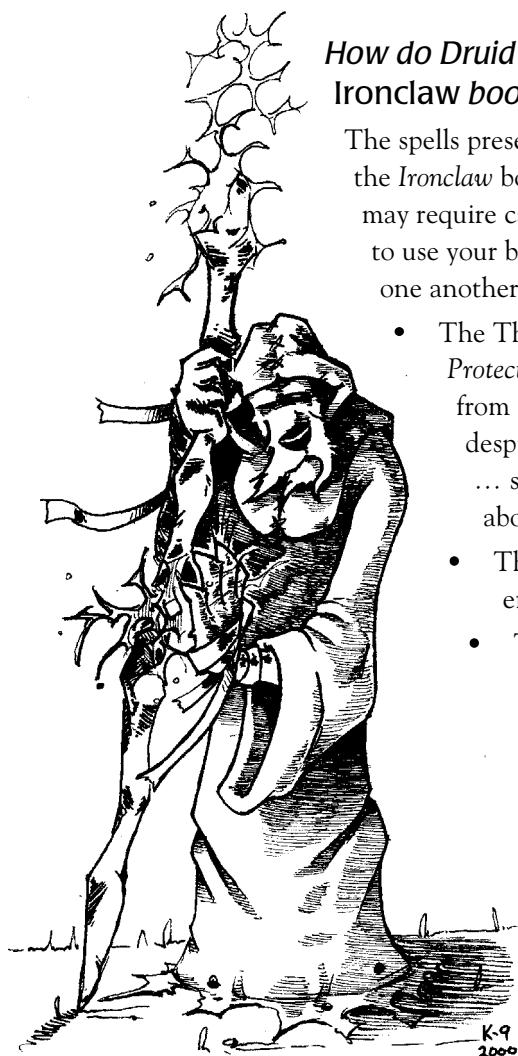
The Druids are Wizards, just like Elementarists, Clerics, etc. as described in the *Ironclaw* book. Each list has Requirements that must be met before you can even attempt to cast the spells. (*Ironclaw*, p. 194), the Druid trait adds to your starting Magic Point total (*Ironclaw*, p. 195). However, there are a few notable differences:

- The Phelan are not a literate people. The Druid trait does *not* include any Literacy skill. In game terms, a character that wants to learn these magics will have to find a teacher to give oral instruction, as there are no books to study.
- The common Wizardly Magics of Calabria were developed by masters to teach their apprentices over the course of hundreds of years. As part of this instruction, the masters created the “Privilege” spells that would let them keep their students in line. The magics of the Druids are not nearly as “structured” — as such, there are *no* Privilege spells of any kind.

How do Druid Magic and Wizardly Magic (from the Ironclaw book) affect one another?

The spells presented in this chapter work just like the spells in the *Ironclaw* book. They all cost Magic Points to cast, they may require casting rolls, etc. As Game Host, you will have to use your best judgment on how the spells interact with one another. Some suggestions:

- The Thaumaturge Spells *Protection from Rain* and *Protection from Weather* completely protect a target from any of the Druid’s *Rain of ...* spells. Also, despite the word “Circle,” all *White Magic Circle of ...* spells are effective against magic rain from above.
- The *White Magic Cure* spells can counteract the effects of *Cur Mow* and *Cur Naardey*.
- The Druid spells *Imman Ersooyl*, *Imman Er Ash*, and *Imman Magh* can counter-spell *any* spell, including Wizardly Magic from the *Ironclaw* book. Likewise, the magic of Thaumaturgy can counteract the spells in this chapter.





Then his first distortion came upon [Conas] so that he became horrible, many-shaped, strange and unrecognizable... He performed a wild feat of contortion with his body inside his skin. His feet and his shins and his knees came to the back; his heels and his calves and his hams came to the front... His mouth was twisted back fearsomely. He drew the cheek back from the jawbone until his inner gullet was seen... A strange heat radiated from his body, such that the snow upon the ground melted away in a circle seven paces around him.

— Excerpt from *The Song of Conas Mac Gadhar*, translated from the Bér-la Féini, describing the Atavism of Riastradh

ATAVISM POWERS

Being a List of New Powers Particular to the Phelan

Many scholars have pondered why the Phelan and their kith are such accomplished Atavists. Do they have some sort of “pure understanding” with the natural world, uncluttered by so-called “civilized” thought? Did their ancestors make a pact with spirits of long ago, imparting a subconscious understanding that others can never hope to share? Or is it, as some cynical scholars believe, that lack of the education that allows for Wizardly Magic and of the technology of the rest of the world has encouraged the relatively “easy” and “cheap” practice of culturing one’s inherent ability?

No matter what the reason, few will dispute that the Phelan are the world’s most accomplished Atavists. Despite what some may think, one does not simply strip naked, jump up and down, howl at the moon, and then suddenly reap miraculous rewards. Rather, a true Atavist must learn how to “slay the mind,” to let their inner powers come forth.

Atavist teachers often send their pupils on a “vision quest.” The student has all possessions removed, is forbidden to eat for two weeks or more, and is sent to wander the countryside, avoiding all contact with other sentient beings. The Phelan, being wolves and thus accustomed to hiking long distances, will often go many leagues on such a quest. At the end, the hunger and the weariness of travel takes the student to an “altered state” of consciousness, a primal level of being. At this moment, the delirium of exhaustion gives way to the will to survive, and the student becomes an Atavist in earnest, learning the most basic ability — to replace a Confusion of mind and inaction with a Berserk fury to live.

In game terms, a Game Host may allow a Player-Character to learn the Gift of Atavism. First, the PC must find another Atavist who is willing to teach them. Then the Player must write “Gift of Atavism” on the PC’s Self-Improvement List, and over the course of adventuring, they must commit at least 15 Experience to learning it. Finally, the PC must go on a quest, alone and without equipment or items, which is a good role-playing opportunity.

New Atavist Powers

The Atavisms found in the *Ironclaw* rulebook are the “common” powers — the ones that most Atavists know and have the most general utility. The Phelan and their neighboring tribes know many more powers that one can cultivate. Note that many of these powers have very particular Requirements governing who can and cannot use them.



Animal Magnetism

Difficulty: 2d8 & your own Mind Dice

Through superior body control, you can change your body language, voice and timbre, even your scent in a calculated manner to affect those of your kind. If your Atavism test is successful, for the rest of this Scene, you may include your Race Die with any rolls made on Influence Tests *among others of your same Race*.

Battering Charge

Difficulty: 4d6 & your own Mind Dice

At the end of the Round (in the Third Rank), you can spring forth in a mighty charge. You must choose the direction you will launch yourself in before invoking the power.

If you *Fail* to beat the Difficulty Dice, then the power fails.

If you *Tie* or better, then check the dice you just rolled for your charge (I.E., your Race Die and your “Battering Charge” Atavism Skill Dice). As a *Simple Roll*, you launch yourself in a straight line equal to your highest showing die. Any and all targets you collide with must test against your dice, as if hit with a Homing Attack (q.v. *Ironclaw*) using your dice, suffering one Wound per hit. If by moving that many paces, you strike a wall or other impassible object, then you must test your Soak Dice against your own first roll.



Example: Sen-cuilean launches himself forward using the Atavism of “Battering Charge.” He has a Race Die of d12, and his Battering Charge is d12 & d6, for a total of 2d12 & d6. He invokes his Atavism power, rolling 9, 6, and 4. The Difficulty Dice scores a 5, so Sen-cuilean successfully invokes his power. He launches himself 9 paces.

Faileag is in Sen-cuilean’s path — he suffers a Homing Attack, which he can defend against using Dodge or Block. Since he has no shield, he must Dodge. He combines his Speed & Dodge dice of d8 & d6 with his Soak and Armor dice of d10 & d6, so he rolls d10, d8, and 2d6 to avoid damage. His dice come up 10, 7, 3, and 1. Faileag suffers one Wound.

Burrowing

Difficulty: as below

You can use your bare paws to dig faster than ordinary folk can use a shovel. After invoking this power, next round you must choose the “Move” maneuver. Compare your Race Dice and Burrow Skill Dice vs. the difficulty of the substance you are trying to burrow through, as a Damage Roll. For each hit you score, you can burrow a pace’s length, making a hole wide enough to admit a person of your Size or smaller. The tunnel is not particularly stable, and will probably collapse if any explosions or violent magicks go off nearby; the Game Host should use their discretion.

Material	Difficulty for Burrowing	Material	Difficulty for Burrowing
Dirt	4d6 & own Mind Dice	Rock	4d10 & own Mind Dice
Wood	4d8 & own Mind Dice	Metal	4d12 & own Mind Dice





The Crushing Grip of Unreason

*Requirements: a Race Trait that applies to Wrestling
AND a Successful Grapple on an opponent*

Difficulty: your own Body Dice & Mind Dice

After invoking this power, for the next round and the next round only, your Crush follow-up becomes devastating. On the Damage Roll, treat all Successes as Overwhelming Successes, as a “Slaying” attack. (This means that each Damage Die that beats a Soak Die causes at least two hits.)

Dew-Walking

Requirement: a Race Trait that applies to Stealth OR the Gift of Sure-Footed

Difficulty: your own Body & Mind Dice

With this ability, you can pass without trace. You can step over branches without breaking them, you can cross grass and dirt without leaving any footprints, and you can even avoid leaving your own spoor. In game terms, for the next hour, you can be Tracked only if the tracker scores an *Overwhelming Success*.

Eternal Breath

Requirement: a Racial Trait that applies to Breath-Holding OR the Toughness Trait

Difficulty: your own Body, Speed, & Mind

Your advanced degree of body control allows you to hold your breath for a lot longer than most folks. You *must* be able to breathe when you first invoke this power, but you may then hold your breath for the rest of this Scene (generally five minutes) without any ill effects. While holding your breath, you may not speak or perform other feats that require the use of breath.

Flight of the Prey

Difficulty: your own Mind and Will Dice

You can summon your “fight or flight” instinct for flight. For the rest of this Scene, you gain a Passion of Fear (*Ironclaw*, p. 67) equal to your own Race Trait. This Fear Trait can make escaping much easier!

Hunter’s Ken

Requirement: a Race Trait that applies to Tracking OR the Gift of Keen Nose

Difficulty: 2d10 & your own Mind Dice

With this ability, you can draw upon your inherent senses to improve your ability to survey the landscape. For the next hour, when rolling Tracking Dice, treat all Successes as *Overwhelming Successes*. Among other things, this will make it easier to spot those who have the Atavism of Dew-Walking (see page 69).

Imbas Forosna

Requirements: the consumption of the target’s blood

Difficulty: 2d10 & your own Mind Dice

With this gruesome power, by harnessing the communion of yourself with nature and with all things, you can drink someone’s blood and learn something about the past, present, and future of your target. This power is particular to the Phelan — very few Atavists know the secrets of its use.



In addition, having consumed the blood of your target you will have sympathy with them at the moment of the drawing of their blood. *Until your next full night's sleep, you are affected as follows:*

- You cannot invoke the power of the *Imbas Forosna* again until you sleep. All attempts will fail.
- When trying to invoke another Atavist Power before your next sleep, include both your own Mind Dice *and* the *Imbas Forosna*'s prey's Mind Dice with the opposed difficulty.
- You will have any Passions (see *Ironclaw*, p. 66) that the prey has, at the same level they do. At the Game Host's option, you may suffer from some of their Internal Flaws, as well.
- You can attempt to ken your prey's mind. Treat this as a Know Test, rolling your Race & *Imbas Forosna* dice vs. your prey's Mind. On a *Success*, you can learn something general about your prey. On an *Overwhelming Success*, you can learn deep and intimate details about your prey. The Game Host should only allow one attempt to learn any one fact.
- The next time you sleep, you will have a dream about your prey's future. To interpret the dream, you must test your Augury Dice vs. a difficulty set by the Host (typically 2d12).

In game terms, a "pint of blood" is equivalent to a Wound of damage, but it must be "the right kind of blood," which usually means drawing the blood from a helpless target. If you know at least a d4 of *Imbas Forosna*, you may replace your *Bite* Special result with the following:

Special: Draught of the Imbas Forosna. If your *Bite* attack inflicts a Wound, then you have managed to draw a pint of blood out of your target and down your own gullet. Before this Scene ends, you may invoke the Atavist Power of "Imbas Forosna."

Invulnerable Hide

Requirement: a Racial Trait that applies to Resolve OR the Toughness Trait

Difficulty: your own Body and Mind Dice

For the rest of this Scene after invoking this power, you may include your Racial Trait with all Soak Dice.

Knowing the True Nature

Requirement: the Gift of Keen Nose

Difficulty: 2d6 & your own Mind Dice

By invoking this power, for the rest of this Scene you can ken the trace scents that most folks are unaware of, that betray their feelings and desires. For instance, with a successful roll, you can smell the greed of a guard searching for a bribe, the fear of an enemy, or the joy of a true friend seeing you after a long separation. In particular, it will be almost impossible for others to Bluff you — include both your Race Trait and your "Knowing the True Nature" Skill Dice when testing.

Marking of Territory

Difficulty: 2d4 & your own Mind Dice

You can mark a place as your own, by such natural means as claw-marks, "forms" or dug-out ground, and special spoors. For a week following your marking, no one but you may claim *Favored Use* bonuses within 36 paces of your mark. You must mark a "natural place" that is stationary — the Game Host is the final judge on what is acceptable territory.





Pack Mind

Requirement: a Race Trait that applies to Tactics

Difficulty: 2d8 & your own Mind Dice

Until the next night, you may claim the following advantages:

- You may include the lowest Race Trait Die among your party with any Ambush Tests (q.v. *Ironclaw*) and any Warfare Tests (q.v. *Ironclaw*).
- You may communicate “silently” with other Atavists within 36 paces of you, using a mystical command of body language, curt cries and barks, secret spoors, and other “natural” methods. Remember that this is an Atavist power — complexities of language cannot be communicated, and magic spells are right out. In game terms, you may attempt to use your Leadership Dice to rally any fellow Atavists within 36 paces of you (q.v. Rally Tests, *Ironclaw*).

The Rain of the Hystrix

Requirement: the Gift of Spines

Difficulty: your own Body & Mind Dice

With a powerful spin and tension of your wiry muscles, your spines fly forth from your body in a deadly hail. If your power is successful, roll your Race & Body Dice as a Simple Roll—everyone within that many paces suffers the ill effects. All affected must test their dice vs. yours as if hit by a Homing Attack (q.v.), suffering one Wound per hit.

Example: Padraigin has a Race Die of d12 and a Body Die of d10. She calls forth her Atavism, “Rain of the Hystrix,” and her d12 & d10 come up 7 and 2. All combatants within 7 paces of Padraigin must test their Speed, Dodge, Armor and Soak vs. the 7 and 2 as a Damage Roll, suffering wounds accordingly, as per a standard Homing Attack.



Riastradth (Warp-Spasm))

Requirement: being in a State of Rage

Difficulty: 3d10 & your own Mind Dice

The most fearsome of Atavist abilities, this power allows you to tap into the inherent, chaotic qualities of life and nature itself to unleash its destructive fury, known as the *Riastradth*. This Atavism is known only among the Phelan, so it would be very rare for an outsider to learn it. More than one foreigner has made a pilgrimage to the wild lands of the Phelan to find



someone who can teach them the secrets of “slaying one’s mind” and tapping into their ultimate primal resource.

To invoke this power, you must currently be in a state of *Rage*. The means by which you become *Enraged* isn’t important — it could be because you invoked the Atavism of “The Rage Unleashed,” or it could be because you were Goaded by a Fool (q.v.), or it could be because of magic, etc.

While seized by the Riastradth, your body becomes amorphous and strange — every tendon and vein bulges out, your eyes glaze over, and you become a fearsome sight indeed. A “hero’s light” can be seen radiating from your body, and your body radiates an uncomfortable heat.

While in the state of Riastradth, the following abilities apply:

- *Your Size increases by your Race Trait, in stone.* This change will render any armor you wear unusable, as you will now be too large to wear it, and your mutating form is unsuited for fitted clothes. When you burst out of your armor, you may suffer injury: roll Damage, comparing your Armor Dice vs. your Soak Dice.
- *Anyone who has never seen you invoke your Riastradth must test for Fear (Ironclaw, p. 134)—* their Will & Race vs. the Race & Riastradth Skill Dice you just rolled to invoke the power. If they *Succeed* on this test, they never need test again, in this Scene or any other, as they have become inured to your countenance — otherwise, they must test each time they see you. This Fear only lasts for as long as you remain in Riastradth.

Note that the immunity that others get is only for *your* personal Riastradth – it does not apply to anyone else’s Riastradth. Also, you have no special immunity to anyone else’s Riastradth, either, and you must test just like everyone else, even if you are currently in Riastradth, yourself.

- *Every round from now on, at the end of the Third Rank (before any tests you might have to make to avoid Unconsciousness) you may invoke a “free” Atavist Power —* simply roll the dice to activate, as usual, as if you had spent a Maneuver to do so. This “free calling” costs you no action or Maneuver of any kind; it is from your warped body and altered state of mind.

This “free Atavist Power per round” is the major reason the Riastradth is so fearsome.

One popular choice is “Reserves of Strength” (q.v. *Ironclaw*) — since that power can help you on any upcoming Unconsciousness Tests by healing your Wounds.

Yes, this does mean that you get to use a “free” Atavist Power *on the same round as you successfully invoke your Riastradth*. Popular choices for this first round include “Inner Might,” “Invulnerable Hide,” and “The Swiftiness of the Unfettered.”

- *Your body radiates an intense heat and light.* Any snow around you will melt. Any fog will boil away. Stealth will be impossible. You will be cured of any *Shivering*. While the heat is uncomfortably warm, it is not enough to cause any appreciable Wounds to yourself or anyone else. (This intense heat is part of what causes the Fear Test, above.)

The Riastradth lasts as long as you can maintain the state of *Rage*.

(As a side note, being *Berserk* is equivalent to being *Enraged* for purposes of this power.

However, a Berserk combatant cannot tell friend from foe, so a Berserker in Riastradth is the stuff of nightmares.)

Example: Ellaish the Atavist and Súan-lin the Fool find that they cannot resolve their differences with a band of invading Doloreaux by peaceable means. Combat is joined.

On Round 1, Súan-lin the Fool uses his power of Goadng (see page 77) to send Ellaish into a *Rage*, by deriding his combat ability, making sarcastic comments about how it would be safer to retreat, etc. Now that Ellaish is *Enraged*, he then invokes the Atavist Power of “Riastradth.” He rolls his Riastradth Dice of 3d12 vs. 3d10 — he scores an 8 vs. 7, and is Successful.

Immediately, everyone who can see him and, who has not seen Ellaish’s Riastradth and passed such a test before, must test their Will and Race vs. Ellaish’s Riastradth score

of 8. All the Doloreaux must test, but Súan-lin passed this test in a previous battle long ago, and is thus immune. All Doloreaux that fail the test suffer from Fear, and are at a -1 Penalty when doing anything but defending, retreating, or fleeing.

The very same round that he invokes the Riastradh, Ellaish also invokes the atavist power of “Inner Might” — this is his first free Atavist Power. Ellaish’s Strength increases immediately.

On Round 2, some Doloreaux engage in desperate combat while others fall back to defensive positions. Ellaish boldly charges and Strikes Hard against one of his foes. At the end of the Round, Ellaish is still in the state of Rage, and thus still in his Riastradh, and thus he may invoke another free Atavist power — this time he chooses “The Swiftiness of the Unfettered.”

On Round 3, one of Doloreaux gets a lucky hit and inflicts 5 Wounds on Ellaish, who Strikes Sure in response. At the end of the Round, Ellaish invokes “Reserves of Strength” as his free Atavist power. His power is successful, removing one Wound and converting 4 to Fatigue.

However, at the end of Round 3, Ellaish must test for Unconsciousness (q.v. *Ironclaw*), since he’s down 4 Fatigue. That’s a test vs. d6. Ellaish’s Resolve Dice come up with a Score of 5, but the Difficulty Dice come up 6. Normally, Ellaish would immediately fall Unconscious — instead, he loses his state of Rage. Since he loses his state of Rage, he also loses his Riastradh. Ellaish no longer has his monstrous appearance, so the *Fear* effect disappears. He does *not* lose his Atavisms, but he no longer may invoke a free power each round.

If Ellaish can become Enraged again, he can try to invoke the power of Riastradh again. And if he is successful, all who failed the Fear Test last time must test again; those who passed the test are forever immune.

The Salmon Leap

Requirement: a Race Trait that applies to Jumping OR the Quickness Trait

Difficulty: your own Body & Mind Dice

After invoking this power, your ability to jump for the very next Round is dramatically increased. On a *Success*, double your Jump distance next round. On an *Overwhelming Success*, triple your Jump distance.

Scaling the Sheer

Requirement: a Race Trait that applies to Climbing OR the Dexterity Trait

Difficulty: your own Body & Mind Dice

After invoking this power, your ability to climb becomes miraculous. After rolling to invoke this power, add your Race & Scaling the Sheer Dice together. (This is one of the few cases in *Ironclaw* where you add dice together.) You then may ascend any vertical surface up to this sum or up to your Dash, whichever is lower, in paces.

This surface can be sheer and devoid of handholds and other such conveniences necessary to “lesser” climbers.





Searing Spray

Requirement: *the Gift of Spray*

Difficulty: 2d10 & your own Mind Dice

After invoking this power, for the very next Round, your Spray attack becomes more potent, becoming one “step” more powerful. When targets try to resist your Spray, treat all *ordinary Successes* as *Ties*, all *Ties* as *Failures*, all *Failures* as *Overwhelming Failures*, and all *Overwhelming Failures* as *Botches*.

The Shattering Cry

Requirement: *the Gift of Echolocation*

Difficulty: 3d8 & your own Mind Dice

You can focus your voice into a harrowing shout that damages your foes. You must focus your Cry on a Cluster within a dozen paces of you. All within the cluster must test their Body & Speed dice vs. your Race & Piercing Cry roll — all targets that have Keen Ears suffer a –1 Penalty to their roll.

On a *Failure*, they suffer one Fatigue and are rendered deaf for the next Round. On an *Overwhelming Failure*, they suffer one Wound and are rendered deaf for the remainder of this Scene.

Stare-down

Difficulty: 2d4 & your own Mind Dice

This allows the user of this Atavist power to cause a fearful or submissive reaction in others. You must be able to make eye-contact with your target. Your foe must pass a Fear Test (q.v.) against your roll of your Race Dice & Stare-down Skill Dice.

Your target may “turn their back to you” and refuse to look into your eyes. You may choose to strike that target “from behind” and claim the +1 Bonus To-Hit, if you are not Honorable.

This power also has an advantage that it is very quiet.

Treading the Spider’s Web

Requirement: *a Race Trait that applies to Climbing OR the Gift of Sure-Footed*

Difficulty: your own Body & Mind Dice

With this power, your footsteps become so light you can tread over almost anything without having it collapse beneath you. Your weight does not actually change, but your footsteps become so light that your weight does not actually rest on whatever you are walking on. For the next Round *only*, you can walk across anything that could support a spider’s weight. This includes, but is not limited to, dry leaves, thin branches, covered pit-traps, and (of course) threads of a spider-web. If the Round ends while you are still treading a surface that cannot support your weight, you will fall through it. You can still be tracked across the surface you crossed — to pass without trace, you must use the Atavism of “Dew-Walking” (see page 69).



Beware of the puddles, for you might drown in them!

— reputed to be the last words Óinnseach ag Gaoil ever spoke,
before she was mute for her remaining twenty-seven years,
then found deceased, face down in a puddle

FOOL POWERS

*Being a Delineation of the Methods of Satire Employed
by a Unique Class of Folk among the Phelan*

Most nobles have at least one jester in their court — a fellow to entertain at large gatherings, to make ribald jokes, and to perform pratfalls and other antics for the amusement of others. Such folk are only a shadow of the role that the *Fool* plays for the Phelan. Fools are like mascots for warrior-bands — they pantomime brave displays, they mock their opponents, and they boost their comrades’ morale with their cheers and jeers.

The Phelan believe that having a Fool around is good luck. It is also believed that one can get some of a Fool’s good luck by beating on them. A good Fool knows how to make others feel better by using Acting Dice to pretend that mild buffets are much more severe, to cringe and to be sent sprawling.

Certain aspects are to be expected of Fools. For one thing, they should not be exceptionally big or strong. (Much like the Mind Trait hinders an Atavist, the Body Trait hinders a Fool.) They will never be taken too seriously and are thus unsuited for roles of authority or nobility. Since Fools are expected to be mischievous, they can often “get away” with Flaws that might get someone else in very deep trouble, such as “Busy Hands.”

Procedure for Using Fool Powers

In the *Basic Combat System*, a Fool must declare that they will use their power at the *beginning* of the round, but they do not actually roll for success until the *end* of the Round. If the Fool is sent Reeling during the round, then the power fails to work.

In the *Advanced Combat System*, using a Fool Power is a Maneuver that takes place along all three Ranks. You must be able to speak on all three ranks. (It takes a while to really work someone up.) If anything interrupts you on those ranks, such as a failed Resolve Test, then you cannot use the power.

Maneuver	Ranks of Initiative			Move	Defense	Action
Foolishness	First	Second	Third	Stride	Normal	Use a Fool’s Power

When you are ready to use the power, roll your Fool Trait Dice and your Power’s Skill Dice. Your target resists with whatever dice they have handy, *and your own Body Dice*. Smaller folks make better Fools.

In addition, the target must be aware of your Foolishness, by sight or by sound. If you want to use pantomime and gestures, they must be able to see you. If you want to shout insults or encouragements, they must be able to hear you.

Goading is the only power to work on a Group (q.v. *Ironclaw*). All other powers work on a single Target.

The effect of a Fool’s Power lasts for the rest of this Scene, *or* until the target can strike the Fool. The act of striking a blow upon the Fool’s person ends all power the Fool has over that person. The strike only has to hit — it does not have to cause damage. (Note that the Career of Fool applies to Dodge Skill.) The target can also use a ranged weapon, or they can even just





throw a stone — if they can hit the fool, then the power that Fool has over them ends. The Fool can, of course, start over again.

As a rule, Fool powers reduce the ability to do “active” things but not “passive” things. They do not affect Defense Rolls or Soak Rolls. They *do* affect ability to resist magical spells and other strange powers, since those test the “confidence” of the target, and the Fool has just challenged that aspect.

Fool Powers

Requirement: the Career of Fool at d4 or better. Each Power is bought at a separate Skill – must have at least a d4 in that Skill to use that Power.

Goad

Resisted by target’s Mind & Will, and your own Body Dice

You can use this Power to whip a Group of targets into a livid rage. Each target that *Fails* to resist becomes *Enraged*. Enraged characters cannot claim *Focus*. The next time something happens to change their Mental State (such as Unconsciousness, Fear, etc.), that change does not happen, and they lose their State of Rage instead.

Mockery of Weakness

Resisted by target’s Body & Mind, and your own Body Dice

You can make spirited jibes at someone’s stature, strength, or appearance. If your target *Fails* to resist, they will suffer a –1 Penalty on Body-related rolls for this scene. This includes, but is not limited to, Strength Rolls and Damage Rolls from hand-to-hand weapons (which include Strength Dice). *However, it does not include Soak Rolls.*



Mockery of Clumsiness

Resisted by target's Speed & Mind, and your own Body Dice

You can call someone a klutz and accuse them of physical ineptitude. If your target *Fails* to resist, they will suffer a –1 Penalty on Speed-related rolls for the rest of this Scene, or until they can make a successful To-Hit roll against you. This includes, but is not limited to, Initiative Rolls and To-Hit Rolls. *However, it does not include Defense Rolls.*

Mockery of Stupidity

Resisted by target's Mind and your own Body Dice

You can poke fun at your target's wits — which is always a good “opener” for more mockery. If your target *Fails* to resist, they will suffer a –1 Penalty on Mind-related rolls for the rest of this Scene, or until they can make a successful To-Hit roll against you. This includes, but is not limited to, Initiative Rolls, Observation Rolls, and *resistance rolls to all other Fool's Powers.*

Mockery of Cowardice

Resisted by target's Mind & Will, and your own Body Dice

You can accuse someone of cravenness and a “yellow liver.” If your target *Fails* to resist, they will suffer a –1 Penalty on Will-related rolls for the rest of this Scene, or until they can make a successful To-Hit roll against you. This includes, but is not limited to, all Resolve Tests.

Mockery of Breeding

Resisted by target's Mind & Race, and your own Body Dice

You can ridicule someone's parents or the characteristics particular to their Race. If your target *Fails* to resist, they will suffer a –1 Penalty on Race-related rolls for the rest of this Scene, or until they can make a successful To-Hit roll against you. This includes, but is not limited to, all Racial Sense Tests, To-Hit Rolls with Natural Weapons, attempts to invoke Atavist Powers, etc. *However, it does not include Defense Rolls that may use the Race Trait, such as Dodge.*

Mockery of Incompetence

Resisted by target's Mind & appropriate Career, and your own Body Dice

To use this power, you must pick a specific Career of the target to mock. If the target has multiple Careers, you can pick which one you are mocking.

If your target *Fails* to resist, they will suffer a –1 Penalty on Career-related rolls for the rest of this Scene, or until they can make a successful To-Hit roll against you. This includes, but is not limited to, all Skills that Career Trait applies to, and (if a Wizardly Trait) all Spell-Casting Tests. *However, it does not include Defense Rolls that use the Career Trait, such as Dodge, Block, or Parry.*

Summary of the Use of Fool's Powers

1. In order to use any Fool Power, you must have at least a d4 of Skill in that Power. Each Fool Power is bought as a separate skill.
2. You must mock your target as a Maneuver, spanning all three Ranks: First, Second, and Third.
3. On the Third Rank, roll your Fool Trait Dice and Power Skill Dice. Your target rolls their resistance dice (as appropriate to the Power) and *your own Body Dice.*
4. If the target *Fails* to resist, they must suffer the effects of the Power for the rest of the scene, *unless* they can successfully strike you with a To-Hit Roll, (no damage need be caused — only the strike is necessary), or until you leave the Scene.





THE RESCUE OF MIRANDA DEVOISIER

*Being a Daring Sojourn into Phelan Demesne and an
Accounting of the strange Personages and Events Found Within*

Attention! The text that follows explains in detail an adventure involving mystery, deceit, and even violence. This section is for the purview of the Game Host only. Those players planning to experience the adventure must avert their eyes and must not read this section, lest they spoil their own enjoyment.

What Has Gone On Before

The rise of literacy among the middle-class has created a need for “greater learning,” the study of history, linguistics, geography, and the like. Many years ago, the Dunwasser shipping company of Triskellian started a correspondence service, copying notes and maps and cataloging them for reference. Although they are still active in shipping (owning stakes in about three ships), today most of their trade is in information. For a hefty sum, the Dunwasser College staff can make information about all sorts of things available, and they have full-time copyists to produce maps, navigation charts, and mathematical aids such as logarithm tables (which are invaluable to the Navigator’s Guild). The College is also home to one of the few printing presses.

There are those who believe that the Dunwasser employees are also maintaining a spy network, since their agents travel to the most remote places and have deep pockets. Dunwasser academics deny such allegations ... but it is certainly true that they send “journeyman students” all over Calabria to learn about the world.

Miranda Devoisier is such a Journeywoman. This raccoon is the world’s foremost expert on the Phelan. She can speak the Bérla Féini language fluently, and she knows the customs well enough to get along with the folk. She has traveled through the Wildenlands and into the darkest parts of the Muire Forest in search of the Shenn Charnane. So that she may be promoted to the Master Rank of Dunwasser College, she has been composing her life’s work: the greatest treatise on the Phelan ever written.

Unfortunately, Fate had other plans. After booking passage on the ship *Chanceux Fils* at the northern port of Mortemere, she was composing the final draft of her treatise when her ship ran into foul weather. The storm ran her ship aground on the rocky cliffs at the base of Cathair Murias.

Whether it is by luck or by virtue of her own capacity, Miranda was the only survivor of the shipwreck. However, the Phelan of Iargúl declared the ship and everything aboard as “bounty from the sea” — including Miranda herself. After dividing the spoils, Miranda was sold as the slave to a Phelan Noble named Dúr Gilroy.

When two weeks went by and the *Chanceux Fils* failed to arrive in port, the Dunwasser College faculty made inquiries of their sources. Gossip travels quickly in Phelan lands if you know the proper people to talk to, and the grim fate of Miranda and her ship were discovered. Now that they are certain she is alive, a rescue mission can be undertaken.



Getting the Players Involved

Every gaming group is different. Some parties concentrate on militancy and combat, while others prefer to solve their problems through reason and other “higher” methods. Most groups are somewhere in between. You, as Game Host, know your Players and Characters better than we do, and it’s up to you to find a way to get them involved in this escapade.

Hooks

In order to “hook” your Player-Characters into this plot, there has to be something in the context of the story that would motivate them to participate. What are your PC’s motivations? What drives them to adventure? Here are some suggestions that may help you.

- Are any of your PCs members of the clergy? A Penitent of S’allumer PC may be asked to deliver a letter or other parcel to Brother Philippe at his mission in Cathair Murias. The academics of Dunwasser College, in turn, will find out about this trip and ask for help in their own personal plight.
- If your characters are scholars, they may have connections among the academics in the Dunwasser College, which may net them the lucrative job. Or they may owe the Dunwasser faculty a favor for previous services.
- Do your Player-Characters have any ties among the nobility? The Noble Houses of Triskellian have distrust of all middle-class organizations, such as Dunwasser College. A lord of the houses of Avoirdupois, Bisclavret, or Doloreaux may “volunteer” to send a party to recover Miss Devoisier ... with strict instructions for the party to report back *all* that they observe.
- Are any of your PCs criminals? This rescue mission does not only pay handsomely, it is also a trip that will take oneself out of town for two months — great for anyone who’s done something that would attract too much of the “wrong” kind of attention and needs to wait for “the heat to die down.”
- The Phelan are masters of mysterious Wizardly Magic and obscure Atavisms. Player-Characters may be looking for an excuse to journey into Phelan territory, and this rescue mission would be one.
- The Dunwasser College will try to hire mercenaries who have experience in a strange land, who can both make a show of force if they are threatened with violence but can also be diplomatic when it’s called for. Any Player-Characters who fit that bill will be the first to be hired.
- Any Player-Character with a background that gives them understanding of the geography of Calabria in general, or the Phelan in specific, would be a good choice to lead this mission.
- As Game Host, you can introduce Miranda Devoisier in a *different* adventure, perhaps as a tag-along NPC who joins up with the Player-Characters for a bit, so that they would develop a “personal connection” with her. Later, when you run *this* adventure, the PCs would have personal motivation to rescue her.





How to Run This Adventure

As Game Host, your job is to make sure the adventure runs smoothly, that all the PCs are getting “screen time” and contributing to the game experience.

- *Episodes in the game should be tailored to your group.* Many of the episodes in this game won’t happen until the Player Characters actually “show up” at the places where they take place. The trick is to encourage your Players to want to solve whatever dilemma the episode causes, and then to be eager to move on to the next one.
- *Choose the episodes that you think your Players will enjoy — skip the ones they don’t.* For example, if your Players don’t like combat and other such dire situations, then don’t use the “Bandit” episode described below. If you don’t think your Players would have fun participating in the “Swamp” episode, then skip that. You should also feel free to improvise new episodes or make major changes.
- *Let the Players exercise their free will.* Your Players may choose not to help poor Lugaid in his cage, or they may want to skirt around the swamp. Never force your PCs to participate in encounters — your best bet is to be familiar with your PC’s Gifts, Flaws, and other motivations and then tweak the episodes to play on those. It will make the Players feel more involved and it will make for a more satisfying game.
- *Watch for the portraits in circles.* When you see these, this means there’s a write-up for the NPC referred to by the picture at the indicated page number.

Preparing for the Journey

Your Party of Player-Characters will probably be somewhere else in Calabria, most likely haunting the ports of Triskellian, or perhaps in another place of prominence, when they are hired by the Dunwasser College to rescue Miss Devoisier.

The last stop of “civilized land” before entering Phelan demesne is the Bisclavret city of Harrowgate. This will be the last place they will be able to spend denarii — the Phelan do not acknowledge any form of coinage. Also, they will be treading into a land that *will not* have inns or way stations — they will have to camp in the woods and live off the land.

The only food they can carry that will not spoil would be “hard-tack” biscuits, dried fruit, and nuts. At Harrowgate, one day’s meal of “iron rations” would cost about 1 denar and would weigh ¼ stone and is freely available. The Phelan lands are mostly Forest and Plains — those characters with poor Survival or Racial Habitat dice may find themselves going hungry.

Hirelings

Your Player-Characters may want to hire people to carry their bags and perform general duty — such folk are often called *hirelings*. Harrowgate is host to all sorts of folk who have a passing familiarity with Phelan territories and would be willing to brave the dangers in return for cash and a share of the spoils.

A hireling is “skilled labor” and thus expects 1 denar a day. Since it will probably take three weeks to reach the coast and back, then the starting price would start at 21 denarii, open to negotiation as per a “Haggle Test” (see *Ironclaw*, p. 137).

Your typical “denar-a-day” hireling has the same statistics as a Thug from the *Ironclaw* book, p. 288. They can be of any Race or Career, though wise Players will look to hire folks with Races appropriate for Forest or Plains Habitats and with Careers appropriate for foraging and for travel, such as Bodyguards, Mercenaries, Rangers, and Scouts. (As Game Host, if you



think your party is weak in certain areas — poor magic, poor at ranged combat, poor survival skills — then you should make those kinds of hirelings available for hire.)

Note that as a “standard” deal, a hireling is not entitled to a share of any “booty” in battle — but then again, they are also less likely to risk their lives. If you are using the *Advanced Combat System*, treat hirelings as a “unit,” rolling their Initiative as one combatant. If any fights start going badly, hirelings are likely to break ranks — the Player-Characters may be called upon to pass Leadership Tests (*Ironclaw*, p. 143) or their hirelings may flee any combat situations. Hirelings who desert a fight will come back later, if just to collect their money.

As Game Host, you control all hireling NPCs. Remember that hirelings are people in their own right — if their PC masters are cruel or unwise, then their hirelings will probably desert them.

As a narrative device, you can use hirelings to show off the dangers of the Phelan territories by using them as “cannon fodder.” They can wander off the trail, only to sink into a bog without a trace. In any ambush, several NPCs could all gang up and attack one poor hireling, killing him instantly. Anything that the extras in movies and television usually suffer through, the hirelings can also suffer.

Foraging

There are no inns or way-stops in Phelan lands. Unlike other parts of Triskellian, there are no traveling traders or caravans moving goods from one place to another. As Game Host, you should impress upon your players that they are no longer in “civilized lands.” Some things to keep in mind:

- The coins of *denarii* and *aureals* have no value in Phelan lands. If the PCs want something from a Phelan NPC, they will have to trade something or perform some favor. Remember that the Phelan are a no-nonsense, earthy-type folk, more interested in tools and weapons than expensive gimmicks.
- There are no inns. The PCs will most likely be camping out in the wilderness. It is doubtful they will be able to carry all the food they need, so some Foraging Tests (*Ironclaw*, p. 135) will be in order. For the most part, the lush countryside of the Phelan demesne is considered “Idyllic.”
- Finding water is not a big problem, but sustenance may be difficult. If a character goes without a meal, they will slowly starve. In game terms, a character that goes one day without eating cannot recover any Fatigue or Wounds by mundane means until they eat. (Magic means of sustaining them, such as White Magic Spells, will be effective.) A character that goes without eating for *two* days straight loses one Fatigue at the end of the second day. Starving characters continue to lose one Fatigue per day, until they eat or (tragically) collapse and perish.
- Desperation, or perhaps slothfulness, might prompt the PCs to steal from someone. Player-Characters can loot someone else’s traps, or even swipe foodstuffs from a farm that they walk past. As Game Host, you should ask the Players about what sort of scheme they want to undertake, then assign a difficulty to the task and ask everyone to roll their dice.





Interludes

This adventure is structured as a few “tales” or episodes that happen as the Player-Characters press forward into Phelan territory. However, several days will pass between each one. As Game Host, you need to be aware of what your Player-Characters enjoy and dislike, and you need to pace the adventure accordingly. To impress upon your players some of the mystery and danger of the Phelan landscape, work these interludes into the game.

- The PCs will have to walk past a farm or two. Any folk they encounter will watch them pass with keen interest, but as long as the PCs are not overtly hostile, they will keep their distance.
- While wandering across an almost-lost trail, the Players could walk past a standing-stone, its carvings nearly lost by hundreds of years of weathering.
- At night, strange howls can be heard. Only those who know the *Bérta Sgairneach* will be able to decipher them. Mostly the cries will be of little use to the PCs — some wolf bragging about how great he is and some other group trying to drown him out, news of the passing of some important personage, news that a band of outlanders are wandering about, etc.
- The PCs could stumble across some of the dangerous fauna of the countryside — perhaps a pack of bethrachanna, or even one of the dreaded uadh-chrith. This sort of interlude is appropriate if the Party gets lost.
- The PCs come across a religious ceremony, several Druids making a sacrifice by throwing bits of jewelry into a pond. The Player-Characters may wait until the Druids leave and then retrieve the valuables from the water — this could incur the risk of reprisal from the Druids and their friends, or perhaps even supernatural “bad luck.”
- The PCs stumble across two families solving a dispute without violence. Instead, each has brought a Fool who hurls insults at the rival family. Eventually, one Fool will become flustered and will resort to fisticuffs, and the two families will hoot, holler, and otherwise



cheer them on. Once only one Fool is left standing, the two families will amicably part ways after this strange spectacle is over.

Suggested Outline for the Adventure

- The Player-Characters gear up at Harrowgate, and travel west-by-northwest.
- After traveling one league or so, the PCs are attacked by Dallóg ag Dael and his gang, as in “The Tale of the ,” page 84.
- After traveling seven more leagues through Plains and Forest, they will come across Hagan fasting in front of Lugaid’s house, as in “The Tale of the Wronged Man,” page 85.
- After traveling four more leagues through Forest, they will be approached by Jilleen, as in “The Tale of the Crying Raven,” page 86.
 - If the Players choose to help Lugaid, they will become involved in “The Tale of the War-Goblin,” page 87.
- After traveling ten more leagues, the PCs must make a choice — either pass through the mountains or through the swamp. (“The Tale of the Crossroads,” page 90)
 - If they choose the mountains, they will struggle against the elements.
 - If they choose the swamp, they may encounter the strange Foud ibn-Habsallah (“The Tale of the Necromancer,” page 91), or they may be ambushed by the Feòcullan (“The Tale of the Skunk Warriors,” page 93).
- After traveling ten more leagues, the PCs will arrive at Cathair Murias. Some quick inquiries will reveal that Miranda Devoisier is alive and the slave of Dúr Gilroy. The PCs will have to get Miranda out of his custody, as in “The Tale of the Noble and his Slave,” page 93.
- Miranda will insist that they retrieve her satchel, which she buried on top of the hill. Alas, in the month she has been held captive, Beltane has come and gone and the mistletoe has come into bloom, and strange magicks have come into being, as in “The Tale of the Haunted Hilltop,” page 96.
- Finally, if all has gone well, the PCs will go home, as in “Denouement,” page 98.

The Tale of the Evil-Eyed Shrew

When the players have traveled out of sight of Harrowgate, they are quickly ambushed by a gang of Phelan marauders. These ruffians are the types who make forays into Bisclavret territory to rob outlanders and to take slaves.

The gang’s strength should be proportional to how much you think your Players can handle. Check the *Ironclaw*, p. 288, for Sample Opponents to use. If your party is about “average” combat strength, then there should be about one Thug per PC. If your party is a bit stronger, mix in one or more Minions. (When it doubt, under-estimate your PC’s strength.)

The gang is led by Dallóg ag Dael, a Shrew Slaver. He is not known for his subtlety or his discretion — he will freely confront the Player-Characters on the road, from a hilltop, and he will issue the following threat:



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“Outlanders! Know that you trespass upon Phelan land! Whether you have chosen to do this out of bravado or out of folly is not my concern. It is my labor to tell you that you are no longer under the protection of your lords and ladies, your guilds and your constables! It is your misfortune that you are now to be taken by Dallóg ag Dael and his fellow compatriots, to be shackled and led away to your new life, to toil for your new masters, the Phelan. Now, lay down your arms and surrender to us, so that your new life may begin swiftly and easily!

Dallóg ag Dael is actually spoiling for a fight, and he will be disappointed if the Player-Characters surrender. It will be difficult to negotiate with him, as he enjoys watching a good fight, and he has several henchmen who are eager to prove themselves worthy to be Fianna and thus are itching for battle. He should have one Minion (see *Ironclaw*, page 288) for each Player-Character, unless you think your PCs are especially good at combat.

Resolving the Encounter with Dallóg ag Dael

By no means will Dallóg ag Dael and his men fight to the death. This is a bandit attack — they are looking for interesting stuff to steal, maybe even slaves to run off with. If they suffer severe losses, they will flee. Dallóg ag Dael will abandon fallen comrades without a second thought — none of them are Fianna yet, and by falling in battle, they have shown that they are still “wet behind the ears” and have much to learn. He will use his Area Knowledge of escape routes in any Chase Tests (q.v. *Ironclaw*, page 133).

Dallóg ag Dael should lose this encounter — the purpose of this encounter is to introduce the Player-Characters early in this adventure is that they are outlanders wandering into a landscape where they have few friends and many enemies. This encounter should also give you a good feel for how powerful your party of PCs is in a combat situation. Do they cooperate and use defensive tactics, or do they charge in without any strategy? Are they good at close quarters? Are they good using ranged weapons? This will be good to know when you choose to stage battles later on.

The Tale of the Wronged Man

While wandering across the countryside, the Players come across what looks like an abandoned farm. Fields are overgrown and cumalaí wander the pasture untended.

Sitting next to the door of the house is Hagan, with a stern expression on his face. He will watch the players approach with keen interest. If they look dangerous, he will flee for his life. Otherwise, he has had nothing to do for the past few days and is bored enough to strike up a conversation.

Questions the PCs may ask Hagan

Who are you and why do you sit here?

“My name is Hagan mac Airmid. I sit here because that yellow-livered Lugaid mac Uathach is off cowering in the hills somewhere rather than face me.”

Who is Lugaid and why are you mad at him?

“Do you see this house here? This is Lugaid’s house. This man, he would like to think that he can do as he pleases and expect that no one would stand up to him. But I, I am of Airmid’s blood, and I was brought up to say what’s right and to *do* what’s right!

“I don’t expect you outlanders to understand our ways, but here, we take our land and our cumalaí seriously. This Lugaid, if he thinks he get away with stealing from my land and rustling from my herd, he has another thing coming!”



(Hagan will go on and on about how Lugaid has wronged him. The gist of his story is that Hagan believes Lugaid and his family has been stealing from Hagan's property.)

Where are Lugaid and the rest of his family?

"Lugaid himself, he's not just a thief but a coward. No doubt he has taken to the hills, hoping that I will weaken first." (Hagan will stand up and shout to the hills, shaking his fist.) "You hear me, Lugaid? Hagan's still here! You won't be rid of me that easy, you mud-bug!"

"Ahem. As for his brood, they 'claim' they are off searching for him, that he's disappeared."

Why do you sit here waiting for him to return?

"That is a question I would expect from an outlander. You seem quick, just ignorant, so I will tell you. As per our law, I am fasting here on Lugaid's doorstep, since he has refused to answer my call for arbitration. After four more nights, the Brehon that my daughter has summoned will arrive, and I am sure to win my grievance against Lugaid's accursed household."

What Hagan *Doesn't* Know

In reality, it was not Lugaid who stole Hagan's cattle. The evil Druid Ua-Dáire has captured Lugaid and used the spell *Steal Guise* to take his appearance. Ua-Dáire wants to pit Phelan against Phelan and to destroy the social order that exiled him.

The Tale of the Crying Raven

This next event takes place after two days' travel away from Lugaid's farm. Shortly after sunrise, a raven will alight on a high tree branch and will squawk down at the players:

"Attention, good folk of the land! Know this, that just over the hill of the broken rock, Lugaid mac Uathach clutches the bars of an iron cage and begs for freedom! Will no one help him?"

If the PCs ignore her (or even worse, attack her), then she will fly off in search of others.

Questions the PCs may have for Jilleen the Raven

What follows are some of the common questions your Player-Characters may ask Jilleen.

Who are you and what do you do?

"I am Jilleen sen Isibéal, a messenger of the Fiach, masters of the noonday sky. While we Fiach are of feather and the Phelan are of fur, we are both cousins in this place, as the clouds are cousin to the rivers below."

What has happened to Lugaid?

"He has been captured by a Morrígnai! He is held in an iron cage, inside a cave just over the broken rocks of yonder hill. He has not seen the stars of night nor the light of day for a week or more, and he starves at the hands of the cruel beast! Pray save him!"

What is a "Mor-REEGH-naw"?

"It is a beast most foul, twice the size of a wolf and twice as fast as a raven! While it has the beak and feathers of my kind, it walks on two legs and has the fingers and thumbs of your kind. It guards the cave against those who would enter, night or day, without sleep."



How did you know Lugaid was in this cave?

“I am Fiach, I am Raven. Where some hear only the whistle of the wind, we Fiach can hear the whispers of what is and what will be. When I woke up this morning, I could see by the way the leaves canted in the breeze that they were pointing me in this direction, to address this wrong against my land-bound cousin.”

(Jilleen is referring to her talent for Second Sight, which all Ravens have.)

Why can't you help him?

“He is trapped in a cage of iron. A heavy bar that would take two stout men to lift seals the door to his cage. And, as you can see, I am too small to free him.”

Resolving the Encounter with Jilleen

Jilleen will try to talk the characters into helping Lugaid. If they refuse, then she will fly off to find someone else.

If the Player-Characters agree to save Lugaid, then Jilleen will lead them as far as the hill with the broken rocks, which are marked with a curious spiral pattern. Below is a valley of dense trees.

The Tale of the War-Goblin

Off the beaten path, in a copse of trees growing in a boggy valley is the mouth of a cave, stalks the most feared monster in all of Phelan lore — the Morrigna.

Unbeknownst to the players, this Morrigna is in collusion with Ua-Dáire. Having stolen Lugaid's appearance with *Steal Guise*, Ua-Dáire is marauding the countryside, committing crimes in Lugaid's name. The Morrigna's motivation is that anything that causes trouble among its enemies, the Phelan, is a good thing.

Outside the cave are numerous bushes, shoots, and loam that grow in the rich soil. The parts of the map that are marked in gray represent these bushes. Against ranged attacks, the plants obscure vision enough to give any combatant fighting in the shaded zone “soft cover” — an extra d8 Defense Die.

Inside the cave, it is pitch-black. Only those with Echolocation can make To-Hit Rolls without penalty. (See the Listen Test and Smell Test rules in the *Ironclaw* book for ways to fight in total darkness.) Lugaid is trapped in a cage in the corner, sealed with an iron lever that must be lifted to unbar the door. It would take a Strength Test vs. 2d12 to lift the bar to release him. (Multiple characters may co-operate to lift the bar, by pooling together all their Strength Dice.) Unfortunately, the cage is not very well oiled, and lifting the bar will make a loud noise, alerting the Morrigna if it is not already aware.

Fighting the Morrigna

If the PCs try to surprise the Morrigna, treat this as an Ambush Test (*Ironclaw*, p. 127). The Morrigna will fight everyone to the best of its ability; it is formidable enough to take on an entire party of PCs.

If anyone among the PCs is Honorable (or Overconfident), they may challenge the Morrigna to single combat. If so challenged, it will accept, choosing a duel of swords (naturally). If the challenger argues that they have no sword, then the Morrigna will produce its back-up weapon, and then offer the blade with a smile.



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When fighting, the Morríghna will not want to leave the copse of trees or the cave — despite the reputations of the war-goblins, this Morríghna doesn't like to take risks.

If the battle goes poorly for it, the Morríghna will try to escape, by casting *Tuigen* and flying away with its Mantle of Feathers. It will curse the Player-Characters as it flees.

If all is lost and it cannot flee, it will surrender. It will offer to return the favor of letting it live by granting the warriors who vanquished it one use (apiece) of the *Summon Morríghna* spell. To seal this magic, the Morríghna will give the victor one of its feathers, and it will tell its name, “Badb ná Cosair Chró.” (In other words, the Player-Character will be able to say, “Badb ná Cosair Chró, come to me!” and this Morríghna will appear, to perform one task.) While the Morríghna may be argumentative and belligerent, it will honor its own word. Also, note that this is the *only* situation where the Morríghna will give its name.

Talking to the Morríghna

Despite its fearsome countenance, the Morríghna is quite intelligent. It speaks Calabrese with a Bérla Féini accent, with a deep rumbling voice you would expect of a giant monster. It isn't very good conversation, though. Some examples:

Who are you and what do you do?

“I am a Morríghna! Look upon me and despair, puny mortal. But do not look too long, lest you die of fright. Myuh-heh-heh!”

What is in that cave?

“Are you still here? Since you are an outlander, then you are either ignorant or a fool, to think you may make demands of a Morríghna. What is in the cave is not your providence.”

We know you have someone in the cave. Surrender him to us.

“Myuh-heh-heh. Such impudent words. Again, you have mistaken me for someone who pays respects to one of your pathetic lords — I am Morríghna, and I am my own master. Now be away from this place while you still have the power to leave.”

Why have you taken this man hostage?

“You may have some wits about you after all. True, it is unusual that someone such as I would dare trifle in the affairs of you lowly-born mongrels. Yet there are reasons behind my actions, and I see no reason to dispose them to you.”

(In truth, the Morríghna is holding Lugaid hostage so that Ua-Dáire can continue to use the *Steal Guise* spell, which will stop working if Lugaid dies. The Morríghna will not let this slip unless it is somehow tricked into doing so.)

Dealing with the Morríghna

Like other kinds of people, the Morríghnai can be tricked or confused. Players may try to use magic — spells such as *Sleep* might work. They could try sneaking past it (*Ironclaw*, p. 149). Or they may try bargaining with it, although it is unlikely they have anything the Morríghna might want, as money has no meaning to it and it already has fine arms and armor. The variety of what can happen is limited only by your Players' imaginations.

Resolution

If the PCs free Lugaid, he will thank them profusely. He is weak from hunger but otherwise physically okay, and he is shaken from his ordeal. The PCs should make all haste to return



Lugaid to his farm so that he may tell everyone of his ordeal and clear his name before Hagan seizes his estate.

If the Morrigna escaped, it will probably return at some later time to exact its revenge. As Game Host, you are encouraged to play up the Morrigna's "monster" nature. Unlike a normal person, it shouldn't sneak into someone's house at night and murder him in their sleep or something like that. It should show up at some social event, like a parade or festival, where there will be dozens or hundreds to witness the PC's defeat. Or it should capture a loved one and spirit them off to a far hideaway, cackling gleefully as it does so in only the way melodramatic monsters do.

Of course, the Player-Characters may fail to free Lugaid, or they may even have ignored Jilleen... in which case, you should move on to "The Tale of the Crossroads," page 90.

Questions the PCs may have for Lugaid

Who are you and what do you do?

"I am Lugaid mac Uathach, and I am but a simple farmer. Why this calamity has happened to me, I do not know! Thank you for saving me!"

What happened to you?

"It was a curious thing... I had traveled into the Commons-Land near my farm, deep into the forest, looking for fallen wood. My axe has been sharpened once too many times, and I fear it no longer holds an edge. In my quest to find good firewood, I went deeper into the Commons-Land wood than I had ever traveled before.

"I came across what appeared to be an old man sitting on a log. Once I satisfied myself that he was not armed nor did he have confederates in the woods, I approached him and asked him if he was lost.

"He said that he was not, but that he was waiting for someone. He asked me my name. Knowing that to give a stranger your name is to give them power over you, I did not tell him. I only divulged that I was the master of a household not more than two leagues hence.

"With that, he laughed loudly and stood up — and at that moment I realized he was not a decrepit old man, but a stout, wild-eyed wolf with russet fur and gnarled fingers. He was *Aos Daoine* — as he stood on one leg and extended one hand, a rain of snow and ice descended from the sky, chilling me to my bones and holding me fast. As I watched in silent terror, he invoked more words of power, a sort of magic in which his appearance changed, to resemble mine! "Then from behind me, the giant arms of the war-goblin seized me, and I was spirited away, to be stuffed into that cave, where I have spent many nights."





What crimes did you commit against Hagan?

“I have done nothing against Hagan! I fear that this witch, he has stolen my appearance and committed enormities in my name! I must go home immediately so that my family may know that I am alive and am innocent of wrong-doing!”

Lugaid will be eager to return home, and he would ask that at least one Player-Character come with him to give witness to his story.

The Tale of the Crossroads

As the PCs travel further into Phelan territory, they will come to a crossroad. Should they try to travel over the broken hills (a Mountains region with no roads), or should they try to brave the dangers of the swamp?

Should they take the path through the Broken Hills?

Those with “Area Knowledge: Phelan lands” or Geography skill should roll vs. a difficulty of 2d8 to Know that the hills are dangerous to pass. There are numerous steep precipices into mist-shrouded valleys, and a waterfall or two. Much climbing will be involved.

If the PCs choose to cross over the mountains, then they will have some tough tests ahead of them. Barring some miracle, it will take three days to pass through. On each day, each character (PC and NPC alike) must test their Body, Climbing Skill Dice, and Racial Habitat: Mountains dice vs. 2d6 — with all their dice limited by their Encumbrance Limit (q.v.).

Those that Fail the roll should have a minor mishap. Here are some ideas:

- While scrambling over a slick surface, the character drops something important. It could be their pack or other easily replaceable items, or (if they Overwhelmingly Failed) one of their Favorite Items.
- One of the PCs could take a nasty fall — 2d12 damage vs. Soak and his single largest Armor Die. This fall could be into one of the misty valleys, or perhaps into an unseen cave.
- Avalanche! The PCs may be required to dodge a Homing Attack of 4d6 as boulders rain down upon them.

The choice to go through the mountains is more of a “man vs. nature” path than the swamp. Some Players will find this an exciting change of pace; others will be bored without any visible enemy. As Game Host, monitor your Players and spend as little or as much time on this part of the adventure as you think they’ll enjoy. Remember, there’s nothing like the loss of a hireling’s life to remind the Players of their own mortality.

Should they take the Swamp?

Those with “Area Knowledge: Phelan lands” or Geography skill should roll vs. a difficulty of 2d8 to Know that these swamps are rumored to be haunted. The exact rumors of the haunting are variable — if multiple PCs pass this Test, each should know a different rumor! Here are some ideas:

- In the darkness of the growth, sometimes floating lights can be seen. Do not approach them! These lights are the ghosts of people who have died in the swamps — they seek to lead travelers into quicksand so that they may die and join them.



- A dread wizard makes his home in the swamp. He commands an army of goblins who kidnap children. Some say the wizard turns the children into goblins to serve him, others say that he turns them into soup.
- Some believe that the Shen Charnane is really hidden within this swamp, guarded by eighty-one warriors who have instructions to slay anyone who dare approach this lost place.
- A tribe of subhuman cannibals lives here — folk who were once men but have become degenerate from the lack of light, from their own false religion, from their own foul practices, or what have you.

The truth of what is in the swamp is somewhat different, and offers you, as Game Host, the opportunity for one or two different encounters.

- The swamp is also home to Foud ibn-Habsallah. See “The Tale of the Necromancer,” below. This encounter is a good role-playing opportunity.
- The swamp is the home of a tribe of Feòcullan, the xenophobic skunk people. See page 93 below for details on encountering these folk. This encounter is very combat-intensive.

The Tale of the Necromancer

Even during the day, the swamp is shrouded in darkness. The ground must be tested every step, lest a misstep lead one into bottomless quicksand and an unmarked grave.

One of the characters, perhaps a hireling or the most Skittish PC, should see mysterious shapes in the distance — shambling, humanoid figures. As Game Host, you should keep the Players guessing for a while exactly what they are up against. Eventually it will become clear that decaying bodies are rising out of the swamp — undead bodies, powered by arcane forces. The Players will probably take up arms and form a defensive line. At the right moment, a figure should present himself, his accented voice booming over the muffled quiet of the mossy swamp:

“Hold! Know this, trespassers, that you have come into my demesne without making the proper offerings or the correct signs. Tell me — who would speak for you? Who is your leader? What banner or office do you serve?”

At this point, Foud and his undead apprentice should come forth. All shambling undead will halt at the sound of his voice.

Talking with Foud

Foud himself is curious about the outlanders. They’re obviously not the Feòcullan, who are the usual folk who come to harass him. And any non-Phelan in such a strange place is sure to arouse his curiosity. Being a wizard and a learned man, he will be curious about them. Here are some common questions the Player-Characters may ask.



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Who are you and what do you do?

“My name is Foud ibn-Habsallah al-Avami. You may simply address me as Foud. I am a hermit and a scholar. I find that, in these swamps, I am rarely disturbed by worldly concerns.”



Who is that behind you?

“That is my apprentice. If you have questions, you should address them to me. He does not speak.”

You are a Necromancer, and as a servant of S'allumer or a Witch-Hunter, I oppose you. Will you surrender to me?

“I have done nothing to you, and it is yourself who trespasses into this place. I salute your zeal to your cause, and I would ask that we remain civil to one another. I bear you no animosity.”

Are you the man who captured Lugaid and commanded the Morrigna?

“Alas, I know not of this ‘Lugaid’ you speak of, so I have no feelings for him one way or the other. As for war-goblins, I avoid their company.”

We would like to pass through your swamp. May we?

“Once I am sure that your motives are not inimical to mine, then yes. Come forward.”

(See “Resolution,” below, for how Foud enables someone to bypass the zombies.)

What do you know of the haunted swamp? Who are these zombies?

“What you see before you are not ghosts, but the empty vessels of the Feòcullan, the savage tribe of skunks who are war with the world. These folk thought to take my life or the lives of those I care about. You can see their folly.”

Resolution

If the Players attack Foud, he will order his undead to swarm the PCs and then he will flee. He has very few Magic Points to spend on hostile magic, and he gains nothing by the combat. He has ten zombies at his call.

Foud has commanded the zombies to avoid anyone who is a Necromancer or has Necromancy magic on them. Once he has decided the PCs are not going to slaughter him or otherwise cause him harm, he will let them pass. He will cast *Instrument of Vengeance* followed by *Tapping the Soul* on the weapon of the party leader. In the swamp, Foud does not meet many living people, and since these PCs are itinerant folk, they will be far away when and if the spell takes effect. To know what spell he is casting, other PCs must pass a Test of Lore: *Magic Skill* vs. 2d6.

Foud is a hermit who avoids contact with the outside world. After an hour of gossip, he will have exhausted all the topics he cares to converse upon. If the Players are especially friendly and trustworthy, he may offer them the hospitality of his house, a camouflaged structure a half-league from here, but that is very doubtful.





The Tale of the Skunk Warriors

If your Players enjoy combat encounters, an attack by these swamp-dwellers could be fun. The Feòcullan will attempt to Ambush unwary travelers (*Ironclaw*, p. 127) and strike from surprise, using their Spray at range and their Spears in close-quarters. See page 109 for their details.

The Feòcullan's goal is to loot the Player-Characters of anything useful, and to take one or more of them as slaves. If the PCs lose this fight, they will find themselves whisked away to a life of dismal labor, toiling in the swamps to build defenses and sow mud-soaked fields with dismal corn. This could be your opportunity to run an escape adventure: other captives will want to escape, inclement weather or a uadh-chrith attack could give opportunity, et cetera.

The Feòcullan aren't really up to negotiation, and they only speak a strange dialect of Bérla Féini. (Communicating with them should require tests of Mind and "Language: Bérla Féini" vs. 2d8 or worse to even understand what they say.) Their ways should be a complete mystery to the Player-Characters. If any are captured, they will try to escape at the earliest opportunity. They will not seek revenge.

The Tale of the Noble and his Slave

After some more travel, the Player-Characters arrive at Cathair Murias, which is detailed on page 34. Once there, the PCs will have to make inquiries on to where to find her. This will call for Gossip Tests (*Ironclaw*, p. 137). You may want to increase the difficulty or include penalties if the Player-Characters are obviously outlanders or if they flout the local customs too much. Some suggestions for role-playing opportunities:

- Streetwise folks will make the acquaintance of Ionracan, a scarred Phelan wolf who hangs out at Thie Oast and is more than willing to talk to outlanders who buy him whiskey. He knows all about the ship that crashed on the coast, and that the only survivor was a raccoon woman who was remanded to Dúr Gilroy as his share of the loot.
- Clergy will probably talk to Master Phillippe at the S'allumer mission. He will be more than happy to receive strangers, and he will also tell of a ship that crashed on the shore and of all the last rites he had to administer to all the corpses. Thankfully, the local folk



were quite willing to help him bury the bodies in the mission's cemetery. He and his acolytes are going through the few personal effects that the looters left behind, to see which ones they can return. Master Phillippe knows that, sadly, Miss Devoisier was given to a disagreeable fellow known as Dúr Gilroy as that man's share of the loot.

- Nobility may go to the main hall, to ask attendance of the chieftain. They probably won't get it — instead, Princess Labhaoise mac Earlene will receive them. Once she has conversed with the nobility enough to be satisfied that they are who they claim to be (I.E. they pass a Gossip Test using Etiquette), she will explain to them that the ship which washed up on their land was rightly claimed as spoils of the sea, to be evenly divided among all the nobles of Cathair Murias. There was only one survivor, and she was given to Noble Dúr Gilroy as his rightful spoils, to be his indentured slave.
- When evening presses in, many Phelan will make attendance at Thie Oast to drink after a hard day of labor. After enough drinks, PCs who can use Carousing may get the locals to Gossip about that strange outlander ship that crashed upon their coast, and how that lucky bastard Dúr Gilroy won't stop bragging about his new outlander slave.

Dúr Gilroy's Farm

Visible from the Cathair walls, and thus not far away, is the farmstead of Noble Dúr Gilroy. He has seven tenants on land that he owns, and he himself and his family have claimed the best spot for themselves.

During the day, Miranda Devoisier is clearly visible, tilling the fields along with the other Phelan peasants. In fact, Dúr Gilroy is quite proud and is showing off to his neighbors his new prize. Miranda approaches her task with aplomb. She will be quite happy to receive the PCs and will gladly talk to them, but the astute will notice that she doesn't stop working as she does so.

Questions the PCs may have for Miranda Devoisier

Who are you and what do you do?

"I am Journeywoman Miranda Devoisier of the Dunwasser College in the free city of Triskellian. I trust you are my rescuers? I am pleased to make your acquaintance, although I do wish they were under different circumstances."



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What happened to you?

"As you may already know, I had booked passage on the ill-starred vessel, the *Chanceux Fil*, to sail around the west coast of Calabria and back home to Triskellian. Sadly, our vessel was shattered upon the inhospitable coast of Cathair Murias. The indigenous Phelan chose to view the incident as a windfall rather than an intrusion, for which I should feel grateful. They decided to divide up the spoils of the wreckage as "bounty of the sea." I, as the only survivor, was included in said bounty. I was able to witness first-hand arbitration by the Chieftain! Such an event is invaluable to my study."

We are here to rescue you. Will you come with us?

"Obviously, I would gladly lay down this hoe and be led away from the place. Unfortunately, I am currently a slave owned by Noble Dúr Gilroy mac Granuaile, who lives in that house on yonder hill. If I were to flee, he would summon his fellows and hunt me



down as a runaway slave. As an anthropologist, I would avoid such a disturbance to their way of life. As a pragmatist, I do not desire to be hunted down by their skilled warriors.

“In order for me to be free, you will have to pay my slave-price.”

What is your “slave price”?

“I believe my value was quoted as ‘two cumalaí’, which means my price is two of their cattle. I’m flattered, frankly — I would have thought my value to be at most one cumal.”

Are you all right? Are you ready to go?

“I am in reasonable health. The only setback I have suffered is that one lens from my glasses is broken. I should be fine if I don’t need to shoot anything.

[Whispering] “As for being ready to go ... I had a few moments to myself before I was captured by their scouts. I took my possessions to that hill over by the cliffs, between those two standing stones, and I buried them under a tree. While most of it is trinkets that are easily replaced, up there is also my life’s work, my treatise on the Phelan and their ways, and we must retrieve it before we leave.”

Dealing with Dúr Gilroy

Everyone who knows him, from the peasants who work his farm to foreigners such as Miranda or Master Phillippe knows that Dúr Gilroy is a stubborn middle-aged wolf who won’t give up his prize lightly. He has been enjoying the prestige of his “strange” slave. The Player-Characters are encouraged to think of some way to convince him to let her leave with them. The coinage of Triskellian will have no value whatsoever to Dúr Gilroy. Neither will weapons or armor — he already has those, and it’s doubtful the PCs have anything that he feels are significantly better than his Banded Mail and his Full-Stone Craoiseach.



This situation is a rich opportunity for role-playing for the PCs. Here are some methods the PCs may try, and some suggestions on how to deal with them.

- Dúr Gilroy will let Miranda go for “two cumalaí.” The PCs could obtain those from other folks. (Perhaps Lugaid can spare those as thanks for saving his life?) Stealing the cumalaí is possible, but the PCs will have to travel far away from Cathair Murias to get them.
- The PCs could replace the slave with someone else. Perhaps they’ve taken a captive or two from one of their previous fights. Unethical PCs may try to turn over their hirelings.
- A PC could challenge Dúr Gilroy to a fight. Dúr Gilroy will not respond to such a challenge unless it is given by someone who can prove that they are nobility. If he does, then his terms are simple: if the challenger wins, Miranda goes free; if Dúr Gilroy wins, then the challenger becomes his slave.

Since Dúr Gilroy is the challenged party, he can choose the weapons of the duel ... and he will choose a *satire* — a duel of bard skills! Each party will sing three songs — first the challenger, then Dúr Gilroy, alternating, before a crowd of people who will use their applause to determine the winner. In Game Terms, this will call for three contests of Mind, Oratory, Singing, Musical Instrument, and Charisma between Dúr Gilroy and his challenger. (Fortunately for the PCs, the crowd they perform in front of will be tired of Dúr Gilroy’s boasting and thus won’t be biased one way or the other.) It will take at least a day to assemble the crowd.



Dúr Gilroy's songs will be two old standards and one improvised rant against the foolishness of the outlanders who dared challenge him. As Game Host, you should encourage the PCs to describe their own songs and to give them bonuses for good preparation and for inspired thinking.

If the PCs can't find a legal method, they may try to steal Miranda away. This course will be very dangerous — the PCs will have to travel many miles back to their home territory, pursued by Dúr Gilroy and his friends every step of the way. At night, Dúr Gilroy will howl threats and insults into the night as he dogs their trail.

Hopefully, the PCs won't try a violent assault upon Dúr Gilroy's home. Even if they slaughter everyone there, they will incur the wrath of the Chieftain himself, who will declare war on these foreigners who dare such mischief in his demesne. The Ululants will cry out into the night of the misdeeds of the Player-Characters, and they will not be safe from any Phelan.

The Tale of the Haunted Hilltop

Miranda will refuse to leave unless they get her treatise first. She has buried outside of southwestern Cathair Murias, on a hill that faces the sea.

On top of this hill are two standing stones that face towards the town, marked with the strange letters of the *Bérta Galláneah*. Anyone who has Augury Skill must test vs. 2d8 — if they Succeed, they will notice that something about these stones is portentous of something greater, that this place “just isn't right.” Those with Second Sight, or those that use spells such as *Scry Magic* or *Scry Spirit*, will detect powerful forces at work.

If there is anyone in the party with *both* the skills of “Language: Bérta Féini” and “Literacy: Bérta Galláneah,” then they will be able to Test vs. 2d8 and (if they Succeed) translate what is written on the stones:

Know this: beyond this way is forbidden to all save those of the Suthainn blood. Know also that here stands Aod Suthainn who can be defeated by no known man, woman or child. Know as well that those who would disobey the law of the Suthainn will have no peace.

If the PCs walk *around* the stones (which can easily be done), they will see a small rocky valley, and *no* sign of the tree that Miranda described earlier.

For folks who walk through the stones, they will find something different. The small valley has a tall tree within it, and someone is standing in front of it — a lean, handsome wolf, clad in unscathed armor and holding a sickle made of gold. He is facing the characters with a resolute expression on his face. If Miranda is with the PCs, she will walk right between the stones without even thinking to walk around them, and she will be quite surprised at the figure they meet.



This warrior is Aod Suthainn. He is under a geis to protect the tree and its mistletoe from all who would approach it. The mistletoe on the tree is no ordinary plant — it is only in bloom from Beltane to Samhain. Whenever it is in bloom, Aod Suthainn appears to guard it from all who would take it.

If Miranda is with the PCs, she will be totally flabbergasted. He wasn't there before! And unfortunately, she has buried her satchel (with her book) at the base of the tree.

If any approach the tree, Aod Suthainn will hold out his sickle and will tell them to stop. He will first speak in Bérta Féini. If it becomes apparent that the PCs do not understand that, he will pause and speak again in fluent Calabrese. Any with Augury Skill may roll vs. 2d6 to





discover that Aod has magically learned to speak their language in an instant! Strange forces are at work here.

Aod will announce to the Player-Characters:

“Stand back and be recognized! Know that you stand before Aod, Champion of the Suthainn race, and that you may come no closer without my leave. I ask you in good faith: who are you and whom do you serve?”

Aod will ask every character what their name is. This is important — the same geis that holds Aod here also makes him invulnerable to anyone, *if he knows their name*. If someone refuses to give their name, he will use his Intimidation skill of d12 & d8 to get them to say it. If someone tries to lie to him, they must pass a test of their Acting Skill Dice vs. Aod’s Mind of d8 and Psychology of 2d12.

Reasoning with Aod Suthainn

The Player-Characters may try to reason with Aod. Here are some sample questions and answers:

Who are you and what do you do?

“I am Aod Suthainn, champion of my people. I guard this tree and its mistletoe from all who would falsely try to claim it as theirs.”

Why do you guard this mistletoe?

“I have been here for more than five times thirty years. The reason is lost to my memory. I remain, and it is my duty that binds me to this place.”

We’re not after your mistletoe, but something buried under the tree. Can we have it?

“My duty is quite clear. I guard the tree when the mistletoe is in bloom. After Samhain, when the mistletoe is gone, then you may have freedom to search about here, as you will. But until then, I stand guard and none shall get within a rod’s length of this tree.”

(A rod, by old Phelan reckoning, is four paces.)

What would convince you that I have rightful claim to the mistletoe?

“Your name would have to be one of the Suthainn. It is not.”

(It is quite unlikely that any of the characters would know any names of the Suthainn family, as they disappeared many years ago. Characters may attempt a roll of Lore: Phelan vs. 4d10 to know. Even then, they would have to get a wolf to lie about his or her identity, and to win a contest of Acting & Disguise Skill Dice vs. Aod’s 2d12 & d8, as mentioned above.)

What are those four swords behind you?

“These swords are the spoils of the four who would challenge me and my right to stand my ground here. They fought well, they died well. They are gone and I remain. This should be testament to my skill and my resolve.”

Fighting Aod Suthainn

Of course, the PCs may just choose to attack Aod Suthainn. He is a formidable combatant — note his Magic Resistance and Sixth Sense!

Aod Suthainn is *Invulnerable* to those people whose names he knows. Their spells will completely fail to affect him. Any attacks of theirs that hit him will fail to cause Wounds or to have any other ill effects. This Invulnerability will be obvious to any who witness it first-hand.



If anyone challenges Aod Suthainn, he will respond. Of course, he will first ask the challenger's name — he will refuse to fight someone under false pretenses, naturally. Then he will choose the weapons for fighting: “one handed blade” will be his choice.

Aod Suthainn will not fight to the death — if he suffers 6 Wounds or more, he will surrender. If defeated in combat, he will give his sickle as a spoil to those who defeated him.

If the PCs are clever, they will somehow anger (or Goad) Aod into challenging *them*. Then they will be able to choose the terms! Wise PCs will choose a satire, or a game of chess, or something that avoids combat altogether. If challenged to a duel of magic, Aod will refuse — he has no magic of his own.

If the PCs figure out that Aod Suthainn is invincible to anyone who knows his name, they may go hunting for someone else to challenge Aod. The local folk know that the tree behind the two standing-stones is “haunted” and they avoid the place.

Other Options

It will be *very* difficult to trick Aod Suthainn, as he stands guard day or night and does not sleep, eat, or drink. If somehow the PCs do find a way to get past him and dig up the satchel, then Aod Suthainn will hunt them to the ends of the earth.

If the PCs wait until after Samhain, then when they return they will discover the tree is there but there is no sign of Aod Suthainn, his swords, or the mistletoe. They can freely dig up the satchel and leave with it. However, that is almost six months away — the satchel may have suffered damage from the elements by then. Miranda will *not* like this course of action at all!

Denouement

The players will have to take Miranda Devoisier back to Triskellian. They can travel back the same way they came, either through the swamp or through the mountains.

The journey back will probably be less eventful than the journey previous, if the PCs have been prudent. If they travel through the swamp and had defeated the Feòcullan, they will not be attacked a second time. If they haven't used up the *Instrument of Vengeance* given to them by Foud, then the zombies of the swamp will leave them be. If they saved Lugaid, they will be more than welcome at his house.

Ua-Dáire the Exile

Just because the PCs have freed Lugaid does not mean that Ua-Dáire has no longer stolen Lugaid's Guise! Someone must find Ua-Dáire and trick him into revealing himself. Lugaid is no fighter, and Ua-Dáire's Body and Speed are much greater, so if forced into a nasty fight, Ua-Dáire may drop his guise to use his superior Traits. (See the *Steal Guise* spell on page 63 for more details.)

If the Player-Characters ruin his scheme to use Lugaid's stolen appearance to sow disorder, Ua-Dáire will be angered, and he is a revengeful sort. He may hire other folks to exact his revenge or he may do it himself. He could either be a constant threat in the shadows, or he could take a more hands-on role in settling his score.

Miranda Devoisier and the Dunwasser College

The Dunwasser College faculty will thank the PCs profusely for returning Journeywoman Devoisier to them. If the Player-Characters went beyond the call of duty (such as recovering the satchel from Aod Suthainn), then Miranda will recommend that they receive an extra reward.



Aod Suthainn, His Golden Sickle, and the Mistletoe

If Aod Suthainn is defeated, then he will give a brief farewell speech, and he will wander off between the two standing stones. Once he is out of sight of the PCs, he will disappear, never to be seen again. If he is not defeated, then he will reappear six months out of the year.

Aod Suthainn fights with a sickle that appears to be made of gold, but it is actually a leftover from a former time. Its hilt and blade are carved with intricate designs and symbols that will baffle scholars. The sickle is not made of gold, but of the mysterious metal known as *orichalcum*, the forging of which has been lost to the ages. It is a magical weapon, and thus it can hurt creatures that can only be hurt by such. Its edge is so fine that, when used properly, it can cut through anything. The sickle has the same combat values as a Half-Stone Axe, except for its *Special* result:

Special: True Cut. You have struck your target with the inner edge of the sickle, which has been magicked so that it can cut through anything. Your target automatically suffers one Wound, beyond all others inflicted in the Damage vs. Soak contest.



Dramatis Personae

What follows is a list of the relevant gaming information for the prominent NPCs in this adventure. Each write-up includes a brief description of the character, their rules and statistics, and their personal “list” of priorities, ranked in order of importance. As Game Host, when you are playing the role of an NPC, check the NPC’s list of Motivations to see what their priorities are, to better help you decide how the character would behave.



Dallóg ag Dael



It is not easy to rise to the rank of Fiann. It is even harder when you are not a wolf. But Dallóg the shrew is not one to be easily dissuaded. It does not hurt that he is gifted with a supernatural ability to instill fear in others by virtue of his unnatural “evil eye”, the birach-derc.

Dallóg and his band spend most of their time traveling the landscape. Their preferred form of looting is seizing outlanders in Doloreaux or Bisclavret territory, and then dragging them back in chains to sell to unscrupulous Cell or Reeoil nobles. Dallóg never apologizes for anything he does and will try anything to get out of capture – he will sell out his companions, he will make up wild promises of ransoms and treasure, et cetera.

Body d10, Speed d10, Mind d10, Will d10

Shrew d10 Weapons: Claws, Teeth Habitat: Plains Sense Tests: Listen, Smell

Slaver d10		Birach-derc d10		
		Skills (with Favorite Use)		
		d10		Area Knowledge Harrowgate & environs (escape routes)
		d10		Augury
		d8		Brawling (with Teeth)
		d6		First Aid (on shrews)
	d10	d8		Haggling (over slaves)
	d10	d10		Intimidation (with threats)
		d10		Mace (with favorite Mace)
		d8		Medicine (de-clawing)
	d10	d4		Psychology (finding out escape plans)
d10		d10		Resolve (vs. magic)
d10		d10		Stealth (when escaping)
	d10	d8		Torture (breaking down the will)

Gifts: Claws; Poison; Robustness +3; Teeth

Flaws: Capricious; Corpulent -1; Gregarious; Ill-Favored; Poor Vision; Wrathful

Armor: Chain Mail (d12 & Soak d12, d4)

Weapons: Three-Quarter Stone Mace (d10, d8 and Strength d10)

Dallóg ag Dael’s Motivations:

1. Survive.
2. Gain wealth and power.
3. Win battles



Morríгна



Is it a bird, or is it a wolf? The Morríгна stands almost thirty hands tall and weighs in at twenty-six stone. Its feathers are as black as the darkest night, and it smells like the loam of the deepest forests. While they are particularly fearsome combatants, they can be easily confused and spooked in combat, often falling into traps. Despite their size, Morrígnai move silently and swiftly.

The Morríгна presented here is a strong one — lesser warriors would have lower Traits and will lack the ability to give their feathers away for summoning. If your Players are particularly strong with magic, you may want to give your Morrígnai the Trait of Magic Resistance.

Body 2d12, Speed d10, Mind d6, Will d12 & d8

Morríгна d12 Weapons: Beak, Claws Habitat: Forest Sense Tests: Spot, Listen

	Skills (with Favorite Use)	
	d10	Brawling (with beak)
d12	d4	Camouflage (at night)
d12	d8	Intimidation (with threats of combat)
	d12	Resolve (when in the forest)
d12	d12	Stealth (in the forest)
	d10	Sword (with favorite sword)
d12	d4	Weather Sense (when in the forest)

Gifts: Break; Claws; Luck; Night Vision; Robustness +2

Flaws: Eerie; Proud; Scofflaw; Skittish; Wrathful

Armor: Light Leather (d6 & Soak 2d12, d6)

Weapons: Full-Stone Sword (2d12 & Strength 2d12)

Special Powers: Immune to Fear and Terror.

Can give its word and a feather to a person to be summoned instantly to a faraway place.

The Morríгна’s Motivations:

1. Survive.
2. Serve those to whom you’ve pledged your word.
3. Be strong and swift in thought and deed.



Foud the Necromancer



Speaking with a strange accent, dressed in strange robes, Foud has traveled many leagues from his homeland to enjoy the relative solitude of the swamps in the Phelan demesne. A former slave, he was first introduced to the ways of magic by his last master, a figure known only as “The Hooded One” who released Foud from bondage after seven years of service. Since then, Foud became more estranged from the normal world. He found living people largely disagreeable, with their uninformed opinions and base appetites. He has been a hermit for more than a dozen years, attended by his undead servants, as he studies his craft to command yet more minions. Unlike the archetypical “evil wizard,” Foud prefers to keep to himself, and when he does have visitors, he is polite and courteous to them.

Body d8, Speed d4, Mind d12, Will d12 & d4

Hyena d6 Weapons: Teeth Habitat: Plains Sense Tests: Listen, Smell

Necromancer 2d12, d4

		Skills (with Favorite Use)
		d8 Cloak (with favorite cloak)
		d6 Etiquette (among scholars)
d6		Hiking
	2d12, d4	Literacy: Calabrese
	2d12, d4	d8 Lore: Black Magic (animating the undead)
	2d12, d4	Meditation
		d6 Night Speech (eavesdropping)
		d8 Staff (with my favorite staff)
		d12 Survival (swamps)
d6		Tactics
d6		Tracking

Gifts: Howl, Keen Ears, Luck, Teeth

Flaws: De-clawed; Eerie; Honorable; Scofflaw

Armor: Light Leather (d6 & Soak d8)

Weapons: Half-Stone Staff (d10 & Strength d8)

Spell Lists: Black Magic — Apprentice, Journeyman, and Master

Magic Points: 44 (but now only 10 because of Delayed Points in Tanglebones and ten Skeletons)





Spell-Casting Skills:

Black Bargain 3 (Adept — roll 2d12, d8, d4 when testing)	Death’s Whisper 3 (Adept)	Speak with the Dead 3 (Adept)
Control Undead 4 (Adept)	Drain the Soul 3 (Adept)	Steal Strength 3 (Adept)
Create Undead 3 (Adept)	Greater Unmaking 5 (Adept)	Vessel of Unlife 4 (Adept)
Curse III 3 (Adept)	Instrument of Vengeance 3 (Adept)	Wrack 3 (Adept)
Death’s Touch 5 (Adept)	Scry Spirit 1 (Adept)	

Foud’s Motivations:

- 1. Survive.
- 2. Further his knowledge of Necromancy.
- 3. Get news of what is going on in the world.

Tanglebones

When Foud first arrived in Calabria, he sneaked into a pauper’s common graveyard and used the spell *Vessel of Unlife* to raise a servant from the dead. Now in an advanced state of decay, Tanglebones has wrapped himself up tightly in rags to keep from losing any more parts of his body. This wretched creature remembers little of his former life, but he is well aware that he owes his entire existence to Foud and serves him loyally.

Body d4, Speed d10, Mind d10, Will d4

Cat d6 *Weapons:* Claws, Teeth *Habitat:* Forest *Sense Tests:* Listen

Servant d4

Undead 2d12, d4

Skills (with Favorite Use)

d6				Acrobatics
		2d12, d4	d8	Augury (when someone is going to die)
d6				Climbing
			d10	Craft: Calligraphy (copying spell-books)
			d8	Cryptography (ancient spell-books)
	d4			Etiquette
	d4			Fast-Talk
			d6	Literacy: Calabrese (ancient spell-books)
	d4			Lore: Heraldry
	d4		d8	Psychology (sensing motives)
		2d12, d4	d12	Resolve (vs. stabbing weapons)
d6		2d12, d4	d12	Stealth (by lying motionless and not breathing)

Gifts: Claws; Teeth

Flaws: Dread (Holy Symbols and Clerics of S’allumer); Eerie; Failing Health; Frail; Ill-Favored; Scofflaw; Taciturn

Armor: Tattered Rags (d4 — no Soak due to Frail)

Weapons: Claws (d6 & Strength d4)

Special Powers: Does not eat, sleep, or breathe. Immune to *Unconsciousness* and *Sleep*. May “see” magic, using his Undead trait of 2d12 & d4. Is vulnerable to magic that affects the *Unholy*.

Tanglebones’ Motivations:

- 1. Serve Foud without question.
- 2. Survive.





Dúr Gilroy



People either love or hate Dúr Gilroy — there is no in between. Those who number him among their friends find that he livens up a party, that he is a man of his word, and that he’s great to have to watch your back. Those who cannot stand his presence find his humor obnoxious and dislike his petty jealousy and constant need for attention and praise.

As a member of the noble class, Dúr Gilroy was entitled to some of the spoils of the shipwreck. He easily saw Miranda as a choice prize, because no one else in Cathair Murias has such an exotic slave. In his heart, however, he knows he won’t be able to keep Miranda for long, so if he loses her to the Player-Characters, he won’t be upset about it for too long. However, his pride prompts him to ask for something quite valuable in trade...

Body d12, Speed d8, Mind d8, Will d8

Wolf d10 Weapons: Claws, Teeth Habitat: Forest Sense Tests: Listen, Smell

Farmer d10

		Skills (with Favorite Use)
	d10	Animal Handling
	d10	Carousing (when he’s buying the drinks)
d10	d10	Hiking
	d6	Language: Bérla Galláneah (marking territory)
	d10	Spear (with his favorite Craoiseach)
d10		Tactics
d10		Tracking
	d10	Trade: Farming
	d10	Weather Sense

Gifts: Nobility; Strength +2

Flaws: Envious; Garrulous; Gregarious; Honorable; Proud; Stubborn

Armor: Banded Mail (2d8 & Soak d12)

Weapons: Full-Stone Craoiseach (2d8, d4 & Strength d12, d6)

Dúr Gilroy’s Motivations:

- 1. Survive.
- 2. Live with honor.
- 3. Show everyone else up.



Aod Suthainn



There is something strange about Aod Suthainn that cannot be clearly explained. Everything about him is larger-than-life: his voice is confident and it carries well; his stance is rigid with discipline yet never looks forced or tired; his eyes observe all without ever wavering. Aod is like a character out of a storybook come to life.

When playing the role of Aod, you should keep in mind that he's fanatic in his purpose. His conversation will be polite but limited in scope.

Body d10, Speed d10, Mind d8, Will d8

Wolf d10 Weapons: Claws, Teeth Habitat: Forest Sense Tests: Listen, Smell

	Fiann d10		Second Sight 2d12		Magic Resistance 2d12	
				Skills (<i>with Favorite Use</i>)		
		2d12			Augury	
				d12	Axe (with the golden sickle)	
				d8	Dodge (vs. magic) *	
				d8	Etiquette (with other Fianna)	
d10				d12	Fast-Talk (to get people to say their names)	
					Hiking	
				d12	Intimidation (vs. outsiders.	
	d10				Language: Bérla Sgairneach	
				d8	Observation (vs. sneaks)	
				d12	Psychology (to find out people's names)	
		2d12		d12	Sixth Sense (vs. Magic)	
	d10				Spear	
	d10				Spear-Throwing	
d10	d10				Tactics	
d10					Tracking	



- Gifts:** Claws; Howl; Keen Nose; Robustness +1; Teeth
- Flaws:** A Thousand Years Out of Time (has no knowledge of the past thousand years; Common, Moderate, Internal); Honorable
- Armor:** Scale Mail (2d10 & Soak d12)
- Weapons:** Golden Sickle (d10 and Strength d10; see page 99 for special)
- Special Powers:** *Magic Resistance:* Aod has 2d12 Magic Resistance (q.v. *Ironclaw*).
Second Sight: Aod can “see” magic (q.v. *Ironclaw*).
Geis: Aod is invulnerable to anyone if he knows their name. See page 97.
Gift of Tongues: Given thirteen words of a foreign language, Aod can understand it enough to hold a conversation.

*Encumbrance limit is d8, so Speed & Dodge Dice is 2d8.

Aod Suthainn's Motivations:

1. Guard the mistletoe from all except the Suthainn.
2. Survive.
3. Maintain his dignity and pride.



Miranda Devoisier, Journeywoman of Dunwasser



In other circumstances, Miss Devoisier might be thought to be nobility, because of her poise, grace, and gentility. In this situation, however, she looks like someone who has survived a shipwreck with little more than the clothes on her back.

Miranda is very much a hands-on person, preferring to deal with things directly and to tackle problems quickly and decisively. People who think of her as a damsel-in-distress will earn her contempt, although she is never rude or insulting, as such coarse behavior is indicative of a small mind.

As an esteemed member of the Dunwasser Academy, Miranda has been made privy to the Dunwasser's secret copy of *On the Virtue of Ken*; such spells have proven quite valuable to her in her researches. (See page 121 for more details on this magic.) Miranda never casts spells in a way that others would be obviously aware — in game terms, she will spend the extra Magic Points to avoid making gestures or speaking aloud (q.v. *Ironclaw*).





Body d8, Speed d8, Mind d10, Will d12

Raccoon d10 *Weapons:* Claws, Teeth *Habitat:* Forest *Sense Tests:* Listen

Spy d10

Kyndranigar’s Virtue of Ken d6

Skills (<i>with Favorite Use</i>)			
		d4	Area Knowledge: Cell lands
		d4	Area Knowledge: Deasaich lands
		d4	Area Knowledge: Iargúl lands
		d4	Area Knowledge: Oirthir lands
		d4	Area Knowledge: Reeoil lands
		d8	Brawling (Teeth)
d10			Climbing
	d10	d8	Cryptography (with Dunwasser’s secret signs)
	d10		Disguise
		d8	Etiquette (among the Phelan)
	d10	d8	Fast-Talk (bluffing)
		d6	First Aid (raccoons)
d10			Fishing
		d4	Forgery (letters of passage)
		d8	Geography (places of historical note)
		d6	Gun (from surprise)
		d6	Holdout (guns)
		d10	Language: Bérla Féini (asking questions)
		d8	Literacy: Bérla Galláneah
	d6		Literacy: Calabrese
	d6		Lore: Kyndranigar
		d12	Lore: Phelan (places of note)
	d6		Meditation
		d8	Sixth Sense (in the forest)
d10		d8	Stealth (when eavesdropping)
	d10		Streetwise
		d8	Survival (Forest)

Gifts: Claws; Guild Membership — Journeyman, Dunwasser Academy; Keen Ears; Keen Nose; Luck; Night Vision; Teeth

Flaws: Curious; Duty to the Dunwasser Academy; Poor Vision; Stubborn

Armor: none (Soak d8)

Weapons: Claws (d6 & Strength d8), Teeth (d6 & Strength d8)

Spell Lists: Kyndranigar’s Virtue of Ken

Magic Points: 18

Spell Casting Skills:

Auspiciousness of Things Extension of Awareness 4 True Seeing 7 (d8)
Revealed 2 (Adept) (Adept)

Miranda’s Motivations:

1. Survive.
2. Maintain her secrecy as a wizard and a spy.
3. Complete her treatise on the Phelan.





Ua-Dáire the Exile



Long ago, the Druids were the wisdom of the Phelan. They interpreted the omens and controlled political policy in a much greater role than today. Ua-Dáire feels he was born a thousand years too late, and he pines for the days when people cowered in superstitious awe of the miracles commanded by the *Aos Daoine*. Ua-Dáire’s attitude earned him few friends and many enemies. Eventually, his outspoken criticisms of the Flatha reached the ears of King Sen-Chormac. When called forth to answer for his minor transgressions, Ua-Dáire’s pride got the better of him and he denounced the rule of warriors over wizards. This was the final straw — Ua-Dáire was declared “Broken” and beyond Phelan law. Furthermore, he was banished from all Phelan demesne, never to return upon penalty of death.

His resentment festering inside his breast, Ua-Dáire has returned to his homeland, with the intent to foment disorder and strife against those who would refuse to recognize his authority ... and to take revenge on those who have crossed him, which may include the Player-Characters.

Body d10*, Speed d10*, Mind d10, Will d10

Wolf d10* Weapons: Claws, Teeth Habitat: Forest Sense Tests: Listen, Smell

Druid d12, d6

		Skills (with Favorite Use)
	d12, d6	Augury
		d8 Bribery (with mercenaries)
		d10 Cloak (with favorite cloak)
		d10 Disguise (as Lugaid)
		d8 Dodge (vs. magic)
		d8 Fast-Talk (using “omens”)
		d12 First Aid (on wolves)
d10		Hiking
		d8 Leadership (when speaking in prophecy, like a druid)
	d12, d6	d8 Lore: Druids (magic use)
		d10 Mace (with favorite Shillelagh)
		d8 Medicine (on wolves)
	d12, d6	d8 Meditation (when in the forest)
		d6 Observation (when in the forest)
		d10 Oratory (when predicting the future)
		d8 Resolve (vs. magic)
d10		Tactics
d10		Tracking





- Gifts:** Claws; Howl; Luck; Teeth
Flaws: Coarse; Greedy; Scofflaw; Superstitious; Wrathful
Armor: Reinforced Leather (d8, d4 & Soak d10)
Weapons: Shillelagh Mace (d10, d4 & Strength d10)
Spell Lists: Way of the Eces; Way of the Fili; Way of the Ollamh
Magic Points: 38 (but only 35 due to Delayed *Steal Guise*)

Spell Casting Skills:

Aos Sí 2 (Adept)	Imman Er Ash 3 (Adept)	Remove Glamour 2 (Adept)
Beannú 3 (Adept)	Leighis 4 (Adept)	Steal Guise 3 (Adept)
Call Raven 3 (Adept)	Neuakinaght 4 (Adept)	Summon Morrigna 5
Cur Mow 4 (Adept)	Rain of Ice 5 (Adept)	(Adept)

Ua-Daire’s Motivations:

- 1. Survive.
- 2. Exact his revenge on the Phelan race.
- 3. Gain personal power.

*While using the stolen guise of Lugaid, Ua-Dáire’s Body, Speed, and Race are only d6.

Feòcullan

As Game Host, you will have to make some judgment calls on how many warriors to use against your PCs. If the party’s combat prowess is suspect, use no more than one Feòcullan per PC. If your Player-Characters are really tough, you may want to use two-on-one odds. You may want to have a “boss” or leader who has unusual ability. If so, then boost all of the leader’s dice from d6 to d8, give him the Gift of Atavism and the Atavist Power of “Searing Spray” (see page 75), and equip him with a Gae Bolga instead (see page 51).

Body d6, Speed d6, Mind d6, Will d6

Skunk d6 *Weapons:* Claws, Teeth *Habitat:* Forest *Sense Tests:* Smell

Bandit d6

		Skills (<i>with Favorite Use</i>)
		d6 Area Knowledge: Swamps
	d6	Intimidation
		d6 Spear
d6	d6	Stealth
	d6	Streetwise
		d6 Survival
	d6	Tactics
		d6 Thrown Spear
		Tracking

- Gifts:** Claws; Spray; Teeth
Flaws: Bad Reputation (as swamp-dwelling weirdoes)
Armor: Light Leather (d6 & Soak d6)
Weapons: Quarter-Stone Spear (2d4 & Strength d6); Spray (To Hit 2d6; see *Ironclaw*, p. 86)





APPENDIX 1: FURTHER ADVENTURES

*Being the Seeds of Additional Escapades, to
be Embellished at the Discretion of the
Game Host*

The Tale of Martienne

While exploring or hunting far from their home village on a cold winter morning, the players hear a faint cry of pain. Upon investigation, they discover a middle-aged Bisclavret noble facedown in the snow. He has been badly injured by an unknown attacker, and a broken spear-haft protrudes from his side. He will not survive long without help.

The noble is conscious but delirious, and he will not respond to questions with anything more coherent than a moan. His scabbard is empty, and he is entirely unarmed. Lying in the snow next to him is a small iron chest, securely locked. If the players search him, they will be unable to find a key for this chest. They will find a small sack containing 20 denarii, however. His wounds are not immediately life-threatening, but he will not survive another day without healing. (In game terms, he has suffered 9 Wounds.)

If one of the players has the skill to treat him, he will most likely live, but will not be rational until he has rested for a few days. They will have to make a litter to carry him to shelter, or construct one on the spot.

If the players are able to heal him, he will be grateful though very suspicious and secretive, especially when it comes to questions about the contents of the iron chest. His name is Martienne, and he will claim to be part of a Bisclavret diplomatic party that was traveling northward to the Keylljeyder. His party was camping for the night, when they were set upon by a pack of berserk skunk warriors. He will try to hire the players to guide him back to the Bisclavret holdings.



Of course, the players may simply decide to loot the poor fellow, or ignore him and leave him to fate. After all, he is clearly a Bisclavret. If they do so, and are able to break open the chest, they will find it contains a land treaty between the Bisclavret Duke and a Keylljeyder chieftain. The treaty permits the Bisclavret to build a mining outpost in the Rothos foothills at the north end of the Ruther River, in exchange for 100 slaves. It is marked with the seal of the Bisclavret duke himself. The treaty may spark a tribal war with the Keylljeyder if it is brought to the attention of a chieftain.

Regardless of how the players deal with Martienne, within a few hours of their discovery of him a party of Screeberagh warriors will arrive on the scene. They will demand that the players turn Martienne and his box over to them, and will attack if they do not. It is up to game host to decide what motivation the cats have for pursuing Martienne.

The Tale of the Raiders of the Muire

The wealth of the world flows along the Via Salutis, a mighty road carved through the Muire woods by the Rinaldi at the height of their power. The Bisclavret now maintains it for much of its length, and it represents a definite northern border to their lands. It connects their principal settlements of Thanon and Harrowgate. Aside from a few well-fortified villages next to the road, the road is a long and treacherous stretch used primarily by merchant caravans who cannot afford the cost of sea transport.

A local Phelan chieftain has heard word that a Bisclavret slave caravan will be making its way down the road at some point in the next week. Normally the Phelan ignore slavers, but this one contains a number of Fianna prisoners captured in a recent skirmish. A number of Phelan groups decide to take part in the rescue attempt, and invite volunteers to join the raiding party. The players can either be asked to join by their chieftain, or offer their services.

Whatever the case, they will find themselves assigned to advance shadow the caravan as it approaches the ambush point, midway between Thanon and Harrowgate. If the group is small or has little in the way of combat skills, have a few NPC warriors along for support.

The slave caravan consists of a few supply wagons, a small column of mercenaries, and a row of about thirty hobbled slaves, trudging miserably through the dust. The scarlet and black banner of the Bisclavret Duke flaps in the breeze above the lead wagon. The sight should be enough to rouse any Phelan to rage.

The adventure will likely be very straightforward, and probably combat heavy. Clever players might be able to free the slaves through clever use of magic, or by waiting for the caravan to stop for the night.

This adventure could form the start of a limited campaign, where the players act as brigand captains preying upon Bisclavret caravans. As their success and notoriety grows, the Bisclavret authorities will intervene. The players will find the caravans are suddenly better defended, or discover that wagons that appear laden with goods actually hide well-armed militia.



The Tale of Helliene the Penitent

Missionaries of S'allumer have a divine quest to cast the gentle light of their faith into the darkest parts of the world. Their divine fervor brings them to every corner of Calabria, and even other lands. However, despite their dedication the Phelan lands are mostly closed to them. There maintain a few monasteries in the larger settlements, and lone missionaries will occasionally disappear into dark woods. Largely, however, the Phelan live without having heard the good news of S'allumer.

Acting on faith alone, one young cleric from Triskellian has decided to change that. The cleric, a fox woman named Hellene, is putting together a holy expedition into the darkest heart of the Phelan lands. She intends to construct a church and monastery in the wilderness.

Hellene's expedition has the full support of the church, and a small group of friars and scholars will accompany her. They will welcome anyone who wishes to join them, but can offer nothing beyond food and traveling expenses. They will especially welcome skilled scouts and artisans.

Hellene will likely travel to Harrowgate first, then north to Cathair Nefenhir. Alternately, she may just head north along the Ruther to its end. Once there, her party will head out into the woods in a randomly chosen direction. They will try to hire local guides along the way with food and small trade goods.

Once they arrive, the party will build a few small wooden buildings and spend their days in prayer and work. They will wait for the local Phelan to approach them. The missionaries are not fanatics, nor will they be very aggressive in their conversion attempts. They will treat the local Phelan with an unusual degree of respect, while at the same time taking every advantage to tell them about S'allumer.

This adventure can also be run from the viewpoint of the Phelan. How will they respond to the sudden appearance of a large party of outsiders, and to the construction of a foreign church? S'allumer faith is inextricably linked in their minds with the treacherous Bisclavret. They may very well end up chasing the peaceful clerics back to Triskellian.

The Tale of the Boastful Man

Braisleach Ua-Magairle may be the greatest warrior the Cell have ever known. Spears cannot stab him, swords cannot cut him, and magic cannot kill him. To match his fighting prowess, Braisleach has the greatest ego as well. The idea that someone else might be considered mightier than him will not sit well.

If your party of Player-Characters has performed any feats of note, Braisleach will eventually hear about it. Bothered that some "mee-ghooghysagh" could be thought of as a greater warrior than Braisleach Ua-Magairle will make the bile rise in his throat.

Eventually, Braisleach and his manservant, Miolasg the Fool, will leave the demesne of the Cell and hunt down the PCs. First Miolasg will use his skill in Mockery to defame and to deride their abilities, then he will challenge them to a fight – for his master, Braisleach.

Braisleach's game statistics can be as fierce as you want them to be. One recommendation is to make him a Supernaut (*Ironclaw*, p. 288) with the Atavisms of Cry of a Thousand Souls, Inner Might, Invulnerable Hide, Reserves of Strength, and Riastradth. Note that two of his





powers cause Fear in their targets, which could end the duel pretty quickly as the other party flees.

This could be an excellent role-playing opportunity to see how your party reacts when a giant savage outlander shows up on their doorstep. Braisleach won't be satisfied until he's challenged every Party-Character in turn and seen them grovel before his feet. As Game Host, you can play up the comedic aspects of a fish out of water, as Braisleach and Miolas display a disdain for all outlander customs and speak with their big mouths whatever is on their minds. (To complete the comedy, Braisleach could be hunted down and dragged back to his farm by his annoyed wife, Ban-Torrunn.)

The Tale of the Recurring Vision

While far away from Phelan demesne, a Player-Character, perhaps one with mystical leanings, has a dream where they see a purple sunset against a thick green canopy of trees, with a small mound of earth marked by five standing-stones. (This vision could persist during an unrelated adventure, thus providing a segue-way from one plot to the next.) These visions should continue until the PC consults with a seer or other mystic who can interpret dreams. The seer will tell the PC that this dream is obviously a place of importance in the PC's life, and they would be advised to visit it at once. But where is it?

The Player-Character will have to learn some way to describe the dream to others, which may be difficult if they do not have good social skills. (This could be an excuse to learn them, as the PC fails die-roll after die-roll trying to explain this to NPCs.) Eventually, they will come across a scholar who will recognize their dream as the Shenn Charnane, one of the oldest and most secret of Phelan holy-places. Before these dreams will end, advises the scholar, the PC must find this place and what otherworldly force guides them to it.

An expedition to Shenn Charnane is not without trepidation. It is not clear which is more difficult: finding someone who claims to know how to get there ... or finding someone who is not a cheat and really *does* know how to get there. Also, if the PC's quest becomes known, they will attract other fortune-hunters who will want to find the place for one reason or another.

So why does the PC have these visions? Perhaps, in a Past Life (see page 45), they were a custodian of the Shenn Charnane and have left unfinished business there. Maybe some supernatural force is calling them to free them from imprisonment, but for good or for ill is not clear. It could also be a ruse by a Green & Purple Mage, who is manipulating the PC's dreams for their own ends: if the PC finds the Shenn Charnane, so does the mage; if the PC fails, there are always more heroes out there.

This adventure makes a good sequel to the Rescue of Miranda Devoisier. Who better to lead an expedition than the greatest Calabrese expert on Phelan lore?



“Nothing had prepared me for the evenings. In the dead of night, the keening began ... first just one cry, in a low song, and then a second, and then more all varied in timbre and duration, yet of a harmony easily realized with both heart and mind. ... My companions then started, craning their heads to the gibbous moon above and crying out with a volume that I could feel in my bones. The euphony of the howls echoed across the landscape such that it was impossible to know just how many Phelan were out there — A dozen? A score? A hundred? In the night, they all spoke as brothers and sisters, with one voice a thousand years old.”

— Miranda Devoisier, from her treatise
On the Phelan of Calabria

APPENDIX 2: LANGUAGES OF THE PHELAN

Including a Pronunciation Guide to the Bérla Féini and the Phelan Methods of Howling

Bérla Féini

It would be convenient if one could say there was a unified “Phelan language.” Unfortunately, with the lack of standardized education and regular literacy, the vernacular and accents of one settlement might as well be a foreign tongue to someone nine leagues away. Scholars at the Dunwasser College have identified at least three different dialects of the Bérla Féini: the “Beurla” dialect of the Deasaich and Reeoil, the “Baarle” dialect of the Iargúl and Reeoil, and the “Bérla” dialect of the Oirthir and some other clans. Even though all three words mean “language,” their pronunciation varies from place to place, which adds to the many difficulties of anthropologists who would study the Phelan clans.

The Dunwasser College of Triskellian had decided that the “Bérla” form was the “official” form of the Phelan language when they first began transcribing the language into written letters, before anyone had considered there might be other forms, so when applicable, the Bérla Féini form is used in this volume.



The Dunwasser academics have tried to transcribe the words using the Calabrese alphabet, often creating bizarre spellings as they do so. These written forms rarely correspond completely to what one might expect to be “proper” pronunciation.

<i>Bér̥la Féine</i>	<i>Pronounced Like</i>	<i>Bér̥la Féine</i>	<i>Pronounced Like</i>
A	“c <u>a</u> t”	G	always hard, as in “g <u>e</u> t”
Á	“f <u>a</u> ll”	I	always soft, as in “h <u>i</u> t”
ÁE, ÓE, OÍ	“b <u>o</u> il”	Í	“f <u>ee</u> t”
AI	“b <u>a</u> il”	MB	“s <u>l</u> am”
AÍ	“ <u>a</u> isle”	ND	“ <u>u</u> nder”
B, M, EV, IV	as written, <i>except</i> in the middle of the word, where it sounds more like “ <u>w</u> oof”	O	“h <u>o</u> t”
C	always hard, as in “c <u>a</u> t”	S	when alone, always soft, as in “s <u>e</u> t”
CH	“l <u>o</u> ch”	SE, SI	“s <u>h</u> ee <u>t</u> ”
DE, DI	“j <u>a</u> il”	TE, TI	“ch <u>u</u> rch”
E	“b <u>e</u> t,” <i>except</i> at the end of a word, where it is barely pronounced	TH	always hard, as in “te <u>e</u> th”
É	“cl <u>i</u> ch <u>e</u> ”	U	“p <u>u</u> t”
		Ú	“m <u>oo</u> n”

Thus, Bér̥la Féini is pronounced “BAY-lahh FAYN-ih.” Curraidh sounds like “KUHR-raydh.” Druid is “DROO-id,” and Morrígna is “Mor-REEGH-naw.”

Bér̥la Galláneah

Literally “the language of the standing stones,” the Bér̥la Galláneah is the “written” language of the Phelan, used almost exclusively for writing on the markers they use to divide up property. It includes both consonants and vowels, with accents and inflections in an attempt to duplicate the sounds wolves can make, in written form. It is largely known only to the Brehona. Bér̥la Galláneah is *never* used for written correspondence or books.

Bér̥la Sgairneach

In the heart of every wolf is the urge to make noise in the darkest night. Howling is a primal form of language — it lacks the abstraction of higher languages. What Howling is very good for is communicating over long distances. Each clan has a specific sound to their howls.

At its most basic level, howling tells other that one is out there, and listening. Pack-mates will usually answer each other’s howls, which is known as howling *in chorus*. Other times, a lone wolf will howl in hopes of being answered by their lost mates. Unfortunately, friend and foe alike can hear him; so it is a risk endeavor to howl when lost in unfamiliar territory.

The Phelan have perfected using tones, duration, and other nuances in their howling into a language to itself: the *Bér̥la Sgairneach*. To use this language, a character must have dice in the skill of Howling of at least d4, as it is very much a learned skill. The Phelan Howling is a sort of “short-hand,” having yips and barks in a short code that stands in for certain feelings or emotions.

Anyone can learn the Bér̥la Sgairneach, but only those with the Gift of Howl can speak it.





Distance of Howls

In order to hear a howl, one must pass a Listen Test — see *Ironclaw*, page 144. The volume of a Howl varies on distance: within 72 paces, a Howl is a *Loud Noise*. From up to a half-league away, a Howl is a *Normal Noise*. In thick forests, Howls do not travel very far; on the open plains or from mountaintops, Howls can travel from one to three leagues. The Gift of Keen Ears will allow one to hear Howls from farther away.

Types of Howls

- **The Cry:** All wolves can Howl if simply to be answered. This is an innate, Racial ability, and is the way the younger clan members can find their way back to their homes.
- **The Challenge:** This Howl serves as a warning to others that *this* clan owns *this* territory. It is a way of telling those in earshot who claims ownership of the land. Such Challenges can define territory better than standing-stones or markers. Phelan from one clan will usually honor the Challenges of others.

A Challenge can be treated like an Influence Test (*Ironclaw*, p. 139), using *Will, Race, Bérla Sgaimeach & Charisma* vs. the listener's *Race, Bérla Sgaimeach & Will*. On a Success, the target will be intimidated.

- **The Chorus:** One or more friends may Howl together. Not only does this build a sense of camaraderie, it can disguise their numbers. If done correctly, two can sound like twenty.

By Phelan tradition, the highest-ranking wolf in the chorus starts the howl. No two participants should howl on the same note. If two do start to howl on the same note, one or both must change to a different note. The leader of the chorus may even refuse to let someone join in the howl, if they are too low in rank or status or if there is a personal dispute. (The Phelan have many politics and feuds among themselves.)

In game terms, Howlers in chorus must test their *Race & Bérla Sgaimeach* Dice vs. each other. Whoever has the highest Score is the leader of the chorus.

- **The Dirge:** One may howl to mourn those who have recently died. A Dirge can be for a single person, such as a lost chieftain or Ollamh. In times of war, in the lulls of battle, Phelan Ululants will mourn the loss of all who have perished, by crying out their names.
- **The News:** Near cathairs and large villages, when night falls, a Noble Ululant will call out the news. The distance their News can be heard depends on the score of the Ululant's *Race & Berla Sgaimeach* and the weather of the day: on a score of 2 or more, one league; on a score of 6 or more, two leagues; on a score of 10 or more, three leagues or even farther.

Those who know the Berla Sgaimeach can listen in. In game terms, listening to the news is a Gossip Test (q.v. *Ironclaw*), using *Berla Sgaimeach* vs. 2d6 (2d4 for those with Keen Ears.) Unlike a two-way Gossip, listening to the news only gets items of general interest, but it still takes an hour.

- **The Message:** Using a code, those highly skilled in Howling can communicate something like a “telegram” of sorts. This kind of call is used by Ululants to communicate details about enemies, such as their camp, their defenses, et cetera. Such a cry is dangerous, because the noise gives away one's position. Skilled Ululants must Howl and then move quickly to a safe position.

To communicate a coded Message, an Ululant rolls their *Bérla Sgaimeach Dice & Cryptography Skill Dice*. The message should be a short sentence, no more than two dozen words. Anyone who can hear the howl can roll their own *Bérla Sgaimeach Skill Dice & Cryptography Skill* to interpret what the message is. (Two professional Ululants from the same clan will *definitely* have extra Skill with a Cryptography Favored Use of ‘my own clan’s Howled messages’.)



One of the basic difficulties facing the historian who strives for accuracy is the reckoning of seasons, years, and eras. The methods of measuring time differ from people to people ... and the astute antiquarian must be aware that these methods also reveal something about the people themselves.

— from Jean de Lean's *Reconciliation of Calendars*,
printed by Dunwasser Press

APPENDIX 3: CALENDARS

The method of measuring the days (or, to use the Phelan custom, measuring the nights) differs from people to people. In the interest of completeness, here presented is the Phelan calendar system, as well as some notes on other Calabrese calendars.

The Phelan Calendar

The Druids of the Phelan study the heavens and the keeping of time for both worldly and spiritual purposes. The practical matters of horticulture and husbandry depend on a keen understanding of the seasons and their changes — and for the Phelan, it is also vital to be aware of the ebb and flow of the sacred. The expression of the divine is everywhere in these harsh lands, and their influences wax and wane with both the seasons of the sun and the phases of the moon. They must be appeased with rituals and festivals at the appropriate times.

The Phelan are children of the night and the moon, and they count her changing faces to order the year. So the Phelan will measure time in nights, rather than days — something that happened last week happened “seven nights ago.”

Each month begins with the new moon. The year begins with winter, the darkest season. However, the faces of the moon turn in their own time, and do not closely follow the course of the sun. Hence, every two and a half years, an extra *intercalate* month is added to the regular course of twelve, and the calendar repeats itself every five years.

The months are categorized as either *Mat* (good) or *An Mat* (bad), and this expression of fortune or misfortune will influence the auguries and general tone of that month's spiritual aspects. *Mat* months are thirty days long,





while *An Mat* months are only 29 days; since the intercalate months are each considered *Mat*, good fortune has a slight edge over bad. The months are divided into *fortnights*, the first from new moon to full moon, and the second from full moon back to new. *Mat* months have two fifteen-day fortnights; in *An Mat* months, a fifteen-day fortnight is followed by one of only fourteen days.

Days of the Week

The Phelan week has seven days — one might refer to something that happened *Dé Luain*, *Dé Máirt*, *Dé Céadaoin*, *Déardaoin*, *Dé hAoine*, *Dé Sathaim*, or *Dé Domhnaigh*. This last day coincides with the Triskellian day of *Dimarche*, which is their day of rest. However, the Phelan do not universally acknowledge a weekend — the day of rest varies from place to place.

Even so, the moon-cycles would eventually overtake the seasons of the sun — to keep the months in relative sync with the yearly calendar, every thirty years, one of the intercalate months is omitted, depending on which one makes the most sense. (Any Druid of the rank of Ollamh could tell you the scheme and why, but it is not likely to make sense to the uninitiated.)

The Five-Year Cycle

Here is the sequence of how the months repeat every five years. Every six cycles, or 30 years, one of the intercalate months will be omitted to make the calendar “synch up” with the seasons again. *Mat* months of 30 days are unshaded; *An Mat* months of 29 days are shaded in gray.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
	Quimon (30 days)				
Wintertime	Samonios (30 days)	Samonios (30 days)	Samonios (30 days)	Samonios (30 days)	Samonios (30 days)
	Duman (29 days)	Duman (29 days)	Duman (29 days)	Duman (29 days)	Duman (29 days)
	Riuros (30 days)	Riuros (30 days)	Riuros (30 days)	Riuros (30 days)	Riuros (30 days)
	Anagantios (29 days)	Anagantios (29 days)	Anagantios (29 days)	Anagantios (29 days)	Anagantios (29 days)
	Ogronios (30 days)	Ogronios (30 days)	Ogronios (30 days)	Ogronios (30 days)	Ogronios (30 days)
	Cutios (30 days)	Cutios (30 days)	Cutios (30 days)	Cutios (30 days)	Cutios (30 days)
			Ciallos (30 days)		
Summertime	Giamonios (29 days)	Giamonios (29 days)	Giamonios (29 days)	Giamonios (29 days)	Giamonios (29 days)
	Simiuisonnos (30 days)	Simiuisonnos (30 days)	Simiuisonnos (30 days)	Simiuisonnos (30 days)	Simiuisonnos (30 days)
	Equos (29 days)	Equos (29 days)	Equos (29 days)	Equos (29 days)	Equos (29 days)
	Elemban (29 days)	Elemban (29 days)	Elemban (29 days)	Elemban (29 days)	Elemban (29 days)
	Edrinios (30 days)	Edrinios (30 days)	Edrinios (30 days)	Edrinios (30 days)	Edrinios (30 days)
	Cantlos (29 days)	Cantlos (29 days)	Cantlos (29 days)	Cantlos (29 days)	Cantlos (29 days)





The names of the months are largely unchanged from the original Bérla Féini:

- *Samonios* is Summer's End, the seed time.
- *Duman* is The Dark Month.
- *Riuros* is the Time of Frost.
- *Anagantios* means “Indoors” — wise advice in the dead of winter.
- *Ogronios* means “Cold.”
- *Cutios* is the Windy Time.
- *Quimon* is the first intercalate month; the meaning of the name is lost.
- *Giamonios* is Winter's End, the time of new shoots.
- *Simiuisonnos* means “Mid-Spring.”
- *Equos* the month of Equity. This is the month that the master Brehona accept new apprentices.
- *Elemban* means “Many Fences.”
- *Edrimios* is simply the “Hot Period.”
- *Cantlos* is the month of Song.
- *Ciallos* is the second intercalate Month, and its meaning, too, has been forgotten.

Holy Days and Festivals

The Phelan divide their year as they do the rest of time, into a dark time and a bright time. They recognize and celebrate the transitions from dark to light and back to dark again with holy days and festivals. The *Albans* mark the Solstices and Equinoxes, but are of concern to few other than the Druids. They are considered times of mystic import, when light and darkness stand in balance, or dominate one over the other. At these times, certain esoteric magical workings become easier or necessary.

Every class and profession across the Phelan realms, however, celebrates the great Fire Festivals. They mark the beginnings of the seasons in Phelan reckoning, and fall roughly midway between the *Albans*. Foremost among these are Samhain, the beginning of Winter and indeed of the Phelan year, and Beltane, the beginning of Summer.

Samhain

The Phelan year begins with the month of Samonios, and Samonios begins with the Festival of *Samhain*, midway between the Autumn Equinox and the Winter Solstice. Traditionally, the festival lasts three days before the beginning of the year, on the first day of the year itself, and for three day thereafter, for a total of seven days. Only the most prosperous regions celebrate the full seven days, however; more commonly, only three days are celebrated.

The last of the harvest has been gathered, and agriculture winds to a halt for the winter. Fairs, markets, races, religious assemblies, and gatherings of all sorts occur at this time. The great chieftains meet to debate the weighty issues of the day. Rituals of mourning are held for the passing of summer. Across the land, the lights in each household are extinguished, to be rekindled from the great ceremonial bonfires in each community. At the end of the festival, select *cumalaí* are sacrificed, their blood returning to fertilize the sleeping earth.

Samhain is a time between times, not entirely of one year or another—and hence, not entirely of one world or another. The veil between this world and the others are at their weakest, and spirits are thought to be abroad. In many communities, the young men will light blazing torches, often from the ceremonial bonfires, and run with them around the borders of their farms to ward off spirits, goblins, and ill-fortune. This time of paradox and transition extends to social roles, as well. Many celebrations involve role-switching — in Cathair Finias, for example, there is a growing tradition to declare a “King or Queen of Misrule” — a Fool who wears a crown of rags and wanders around the countryside pretending to be chieftain.



Imbolc

Imbolc falls at the beginning of Anagantios, between the Winter Solstice and the Spring Equinox. It marks the Coming of Spring — not the *beginning* of Spring, but the first signs that spring is returning. The cumalaí and other livestock grow restless, and often begin to lay their eggs, though the first fertile eggs are still weeks away. Many herdsmen have the custom of breaking the first-lain egg onto the soil as a sacrifice, giving thanks to the earth and preparing it for the returning fertility of Spring. The fires of household and forge are blessed, and farming implements are consecrated for the coming season.

Beltane

Giamonios begins with the festival of *Beltane*, the second-most important holiday after Samhain. Falling between the Spring Equinox and the Summer Solstice, Beltane marks the beginning of Summer's half of the year. The name means "brilliant fire," and, once again bright bonfires are lit, to celebrate the return of warmth and light to the earth, or (by some tales) to coax the returning Sun to give its warmth again. The bonfires are built in pairs, and the cumal herds are driven between them, purifying them for the coming year in hopes of keeping them free from disease.

It is said that the goblin-folk are particularly active at this time of year, and it is dangerous to sleep out of doors. Small children and the heedless have been known to vanish, never to be seen again.

Lughnasadh

Lughnasadh falls at the beginning of Elemban, between the Summer Solstice and the Autumn Equinox. Like Samhain and Beltane, it is a harvest festival — it marks the beginning of the harvest season. To dig roots or cut grain before this day is considered to be at best the sign of a poor farmer or householder, and at worst one with a callous disregard for the spirits of earth and green. Races, contests and fairs mark this holiday, along with pageants intended to persuade the greedy earth-spirits to relinquish the fruits of the soil so that the harvest might begin. The figure of the "Corn King" often plays a major role in these: an effigy that is burned, tossed into a lake, or otherwise sacrificed to ensure the prosperity of the clan through the harsh winter months, to later be reborn. It is believed the "Corn King" tradition started with the Keylljeyder, and to them this King is a deity of major importance.

Use of the Calendar in Phelan Demesne

The Fiach are a constant sight in Phelan lands, and they freely participate in all holiday celebrations — their attendance is actively encouraged, as the Fiach have a ken for omens unlike most other races.

The Keylljeyder often come out of their forest haunts to join the festivities on the four Phelan holidays. In many villages, the Phelan look forward to Lughnasadh and seeing the giant, antlered effigy their neighbors will bring for the sacrifice. The Screeberagh usually have their own private celebrations, as they do not get along very well with the other tribes. It is not known what rites the Feòcullan practice.

The Bisclavret have adopted the S'allumer system of dating, at the very beginning of their written records. Their lords discourage the practice or observance of any of the Phelan holidays — some by law, others by more subtle methods. Bisclavret Penitents try to disguise the four Phelan holidays with religious celebrations of their own, but the stoic denial of S'allumer is pale in comparison to the ecstatic passion of Phelan rites.



“A wizard knows how to perceive with a sense uncommon.”

— Kyndranigar the Shadow-Mage, in regards to Ken

APPENDIX 4: THE KEN SPELL LIST

Describing the Esoteric Magic List, “The Ken of Kyndranigar”

The legends say that after Kyndranigar the Shadow-Mage created the School of Thaumaturgy, he was still disappointed that his many students failed to embrace his ideal of what the “ultimate wizard” should be. To this end, he wrote seven spell lists, often called the *Seven Virtues of Kyndranigar*, and that he taught these spells to those pupils that he felt had the most promise.

Whereas the practice of Thaumaturgy is relatively common, with numerous practitioners to be found, only a select few have learned even one Virtue. Kyndranigar forbade having any of techniques of casting the Virtue spells written down ... but that failed to stop a few brave souls. Books on the Seven Virtues are very rare, and when found they command a heavy price.

After finding the book *On the Virtue of Ken*, any character with Literacy may study the book to learn its secrets. To cast these seven spells, one must buy the “Virtue of Ken” Trait, which applies to Literacy, Meditation, and Kyndranigar Lore. It is a Wizard Trait, so it adds to one’s Magic Points. Once the character has at least a d4 in “The Virtue of Ken” (or simply “Ken”), they may cast these following spells. (Refer to the Magic chapter in *Ironclaw*, p. 193, for rules on casting spells.)



The Interdiction of Ken

Cost: 1 Difficulty: 1d8 Type: Defense Effect: Cancel any one Ken spell as it is cast.

You can cancel any one spell from this Virtue of Ken List, as it is cast. No opposed roll is needed — the spell is *instantly* cancelled. Can be used as a Defense upon any target that you can see.

Works on all seven spells in this list, including another person’s casting of *The Interdiction of Ken*. Naturally, someone else may cast Interdiction of Ken against *your* Interdiction. Two rival wizards can “burn” Magic Points at each other to counter each other’s Interdictions, until one of them yields or runs out of Magic to spend.

The Auspiciousness of Things Revealed

Cost: 2 Difficulty: 2d6 Type: Regular Effect: Include Ken trait with your very next Ambush Test or Assessment Test

You can invoke a steady awareness of those things that normally go beyond the perception of others. The *very next* time you must pass an Ambush Test (q.v. *Ironclaw*), or the *very next* time you make a roll involving an Assessment Test (q.v. *Ironclaw*), include your Ken Trait dice with your other dice. Then the spell ends. At the Game Host’s option, this spell may apply to other tests that involve discerning the future value of a person, item, or place.



The Knowing of One's Peers

Cost: 3 *Difficulty:* 3d6 *Type:* Regular *Effect:* Target must test Mind vs. your Ken & Mind, or you know what Spell Lists they can cast.

By this magic, you can briefly peer into a target's brain to find out what magic spells they are capable of. As a simple contest, roll your Ken Trait Dice and Mind Dice.

To resist, your target rolls their Mind Dice. If they have any, they may roll their Magic Resistance Dice (q.v. *Ironclaw*), their Kyndranigar's Virtue of Mystery Dice (as yet unknown to most folk), and any dice they claim as defense against magic, such as from a current *Protection* spell (q.v. *Ironclaw*).

If you *Succeed*, you become aware of all the Magic Spell Lists your target is capable of casting. Common lists such as Elementalism, White Magic, Green and Purple Magic, and Thaumaturgy will be obvious to you. More obscure lists, such as Black Magic, Druid Magic, or the other Virtues of Kyndranigar, may not be obvious to you — the Host may call for a test of your Mind & Magic Lore vs. 2d6 for you to know what those lists are, and if you fail then you just have a "vague idea."

If you *Overwhelmingly Succeed*, you become aware not only of what lists your target can cast, but also what their Wizard Trait dice are. (You do not become aware of their Mind or Will Traits.)

This spell only lets you know a target's Wizardly Magic. It does not reveal to you any other supernatural abilities of the target, such as Magic Resistance, Second Sight, Atavisms, Fool Powers, or Blessed Paths (q.v. *Doloreaux*).

The Extension of Awareness

Cost: 4 *Difficulty:* 4d6 *Type:* Regular *Effect:* One and only one target may include your Ken Trait will all Observation Rolls, until they fail.

You can magically increase someone's ability to see what's going on. The target of this spell (yourself or someone else) may include your Ken Dice with all uses of the Observation skill (q.v. *Ironclaw*). This includes but is not limited to Spot Tests, Listen Tests, and Smell Tests.

Only *one* target may benefit from your casting of this spell at any one time. If you cast this spell on someone else, the former casting is instantly dispelled. Likewise, if someone else casts *The Extension of Awareness* on your target, his spell dispels yours automatically.

The spell lasts until the target *Fails* or *Botches* a roll using the Ken Trait Dice. Also, a target may only have one *Extension* spell on them at any one time — a newer casting dispels an older one.

Clairsentience

Cost: 5 *Difficulty:* 5d6 *Type:* Regular *Effect:* Use your Ken & Mind to observe what surrounds a Favorite object.

This powerful spell lets you alter your perception to a place far away.

For this spell to work, it must be on an object or a place very well known to you. In game terms, this spell works on things that are the *Favorite Use* of your skill. For example, if you have a *Favorite Weapon: Sword*, you can cast this spell to perceive where your sword is. If your Meditation skill has a Favored Use of "back in my personal lab," you can cast this spell for use with your lab. If you have an Area Knowledge Skill with a *very* specific place in mind (no more than seven paces square), you can use this spell on that location. As always, the Game Host is the final judge on what this spell can work on and what it can't.





When you cast this spell, you must close your eyes, ears, and other perceptions from where you are. You must stand in *Concentration*, totally unaware of your current surroundings. If attacked while in this state, you automatically *Botch* any *Ambush Tests* (q.v. *Ironclaw*).

While this spell is active, your perceptions change to the “favorite place” targeted by this spell. You can see, hear, smell, and feel as if you were right there. If the object targeted by this spell moves, you move with it. If the target is a place, you can “move about” in the seven-paces square. However, you’re not “really there” — only your perceptions have been moved to that place.

Unfortunately, those that you observe are not completely unaware of your attentions. Anyone observed by you may roll his *Sixth Sense Dice* (if any) and *Wizard Trait Dice* (if any) vs. 5d6. If they *Succeed*, they become aware that they are being watched. If they know any *Synecdoche* spells (q.v. *Ironclaw*), they may cast them at you as long as you remain actively observing this place.

The spell ends if it is dispelled, if it is *Interdicted* (by *The Interdiction of Ken*, above), if your *Concentration* is disturbed for any reason, or the *Scene* ends (e.g., after about five minutes).

The Quickening of the Senses

Cost: 6 *Difficulty:* 6d6 *Type:* Regular *Effect:* All of the target’s *Sense Rolls* improve by one step.

The target of this spell, you or someone else, gains a phenomenal advantage when it comes to perceiving things.

For the duration of this *Scene*, the target’s ability to pass *Spot Tests*, *Listen Tests*, *Smell Test*, and *Search Tests* improves. When rolling, treat all *Failures* as *Ties*, all *Ties* as *Successes*, and all *Successes* as *Overwhelming Successes*. (Sadly, *Botches* are still treated as *Botches*.) This advantage may extend to other *Tests* that involve perception as well, at the *Game Host*’s discretion.

True Seeing

Cost: 7 *Difficulty:* 7d6 *Type:* Regular *Effect:* Target gains your *Ken Trait* as *Second Sight*, for *Psychology*, and against attempts to play them false.

The ultimate expression of the virtue of *Ken*, this spell gives the target an edge in perceiving the “true nature” of things. For the duration of this *Scene*, the target (you or someone else) gains the following advantages:

- The target gains *Second Sight Trait Dice* (q.v. *Ironclaw*) equal to your *Ken Trait*. This includes not only the ability to “see” magic, but also more dice for *Sixth Sense* and *Augury* rolls.
- The target may roll your *Ken Trait Dice* when resisting attempts to be played false. This includes, but is not limited to, when someone tries to lie to the target with a *Bluff Test* (q.v. *Ironclaw*), with all uses of *Psychology Skill Dice*, and when someone tries to affect the target’s mind using *Green & Purple Magic*.
- *Illusion* magic has no affect on the target. They will be able to see through any *Illusion* spells automatically. This includes, but is not limited to, *Druid* spells such as *Steal Guise* (page 63) and *Neuakinaght* (page 60).

Any one target may only have one *True Seeing* spell on them at one time — a newer casting dispels an older one.





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HIS FEET AND HIS SHINS AND HIS KNEES CAME TO THE BACK; HIS HEELS AND HIS CALVES AND HIS HAMS CAME TO THE FRONT... HIS MOUTH WAS TWISTED BACK FEARSOMELY. HE DREW THE CHEEK BACK FROM THE JAWBONE UNTIL HIS INNER GULLET WAS SEEN... A STRANGE HEAT RADIATED FROM HIS BODY, SUCH THAT THE SNOW UPON THE GROUND MELTED AWAY IN A CIRCLE SEVEN PACES AROUND HIM.

*—from The Song of Conas Mac Gadhar,
describing the Atavism of Rlastradh*

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