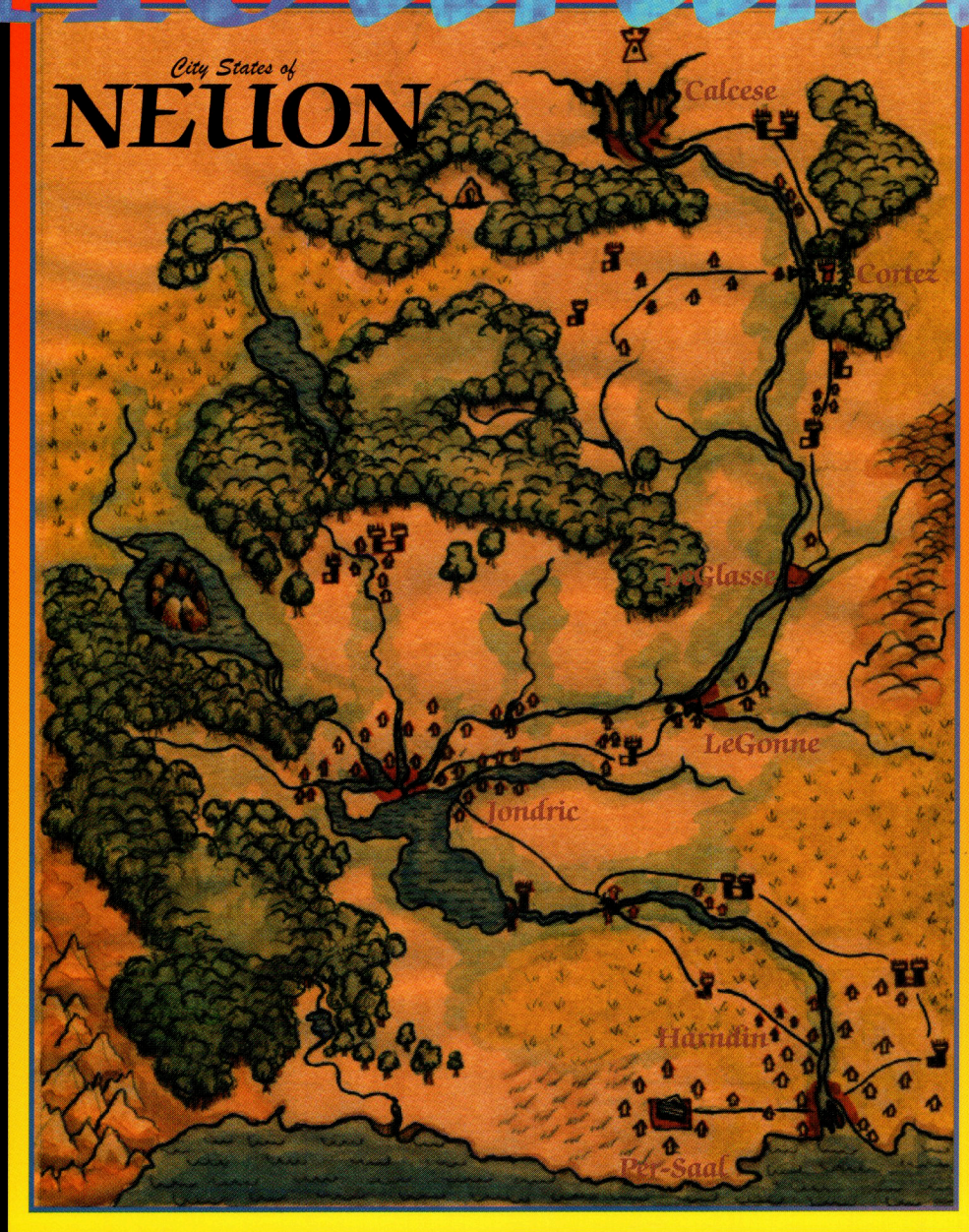


Culturebook: Hourani™

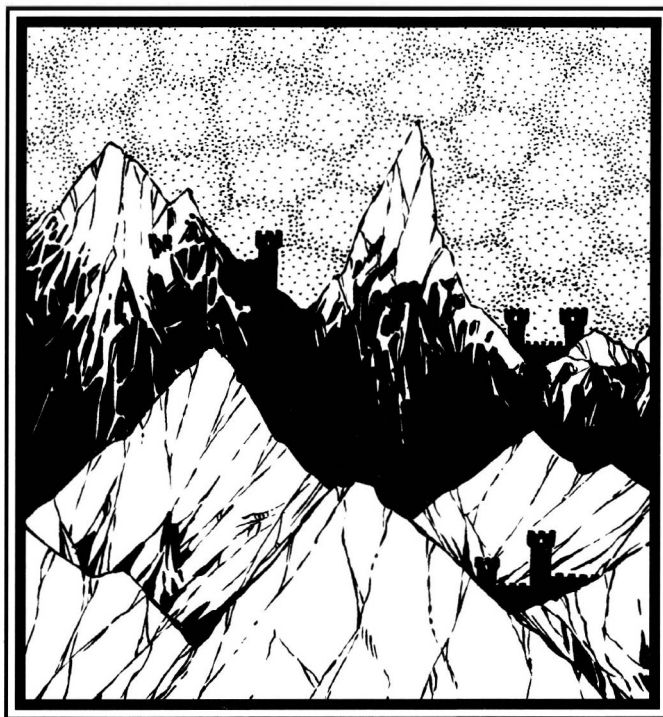


Metamorphouns in the City States of Neuon

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NeverWorld's Culturebook: Hourani



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Prologue

"Night of Secrets"



his solo adventure works similar to the popular "choose your own adventure" concept. Simply read paragraph #1, choose among your options, and turn to the specified paragraph until your adventure reaches its end. To find out more about House Porter after you finish up, read Chapter 2.

Statistics for the Thug and the City Guard are listed at the end of the Prologue.

#1. Your name is Kyle Menthas Aorik, and for ten generations before you your family has served House Porter. You have waited all of your life, trained long and hard, just to reach this night when the agents of the House will judge your worth and either take you into their fold or... such things should neither be written nor spoken.

"Keep the night at your back," were your father's last words to you as he locked you out of your family's house to be left alone on the dark night streets of Cortez. You smiled slightly at his last words of wisdom to you, for to wish you good luck would certainly bring misfortune.

The streets in your district of Cortez are largely unlit, allowing your senses to play tricks with the light of the moon. You wait more than an hour outside your door and still no one has come for you. The paranoia taught you so well by your father begins to set in.

Make an Awareness check.

If you get a D+ success, go to #63

If you get lower than a D success, go to #21

#2. Your journey through the backstreets ends as you step from an alleyway onto a well-lit walkway. You are on the main streets now, a place that still holds danger around every turn. The only real difference is that the dangers of the main streets are less subtle than the backways.

Go to #58

#3. Deciding that discretion is the better part of valor (especially where House Porter is concerned) you stay in the shadows until the thug passes. With a self-satisfied smile you move out of the alcove.

Go to #2

#4. You are immediately brought down to your hands and knees by a forceful blow to your back, just between the shoulders, delivered by one of your escorts. "Never offer anyone such an easy target, boy!" the man behind the desk scolds.

Take 10 WPs of damage.

If you ignore the pain and bring yourself to your feet, go to #49

If you leap and try to attack the man at the desk, go to #60

#5. "Though I am sure that you hold high renown in some circles, sir, I cannot say that I have heard mention of your name," you tell him, slyly.

Make an Avoidance roll.

If you score an F+ success, go to #37

If you score below an F success, go to #28

#6. The "beggar" is upon you. Use the NPC 1 template for this combat. Your only weapons are your body and knife. Determine his initiative and yours and roll attacks for both you and the thug as normal.

If you win (bring him to 0 HPs or WPs), go to #9

If you lose (you reach 0 HPs or WPs), go to #62

#7. You expertly guide your hands between hers catching just the right balls so that you can step away from her and pass the balls between you. The entertainer is slightly befuddled but misses only a beat as you join in with her act. The guards actually stop to watch for a few moments before continuing on with their nightly vigil.

With a smile you juggle the balls back to the woman and continue on your way.

Go to #43

#8. You slide the parchment back in and try to forget about it all, even though the curiosity gnaws at your insides.

Go to #65

#9. The thug is at your mercy, whimpering slightly as his own blood stains his clothing. It is obvious that he carries nothing of value.

If you finish him off, go to #79

If you leave him broken and bleeding, go to #20

Prologue



#10. The beggar snarls at you and sloughs off his rags to reveal common clothes underneath. And then--now not seeming so very old--he leaps at you.

Go to #6

#11. Running as fast as your legs will take you, you make your way down the nearly deserted streets, attracting the attention of the few people walking by.

Go to #36

#12. Use the NPC 1 template for this combat. You get a free attack on him, your only weapons being your body and the knife. From there on, determine his initiative and yours and roll attacks for both you and the thug as normal.

If you win (bring him to 0 HPs or WPs), go to #9

If you lose (your reach 0 HPs or WPs), go to #62

#13. You carefully put the knife under your belt and your escorts put the black hood over your head and take you back to your home where the hood is removed. From your home you know that the castle district is quite a ways away and will take most of the night to reach. You are on your own now and it is time to go. Knowing the city of Cortez as you do, you realize that your trip will take you first through the dark backstreets and then to the lighted main streets of the city.

Go to #64

#14. You make your way away from the guard at a hurried pace, wanting to put some distance behind you and hoping that you don't run into anyone else that you have a history with.

Go to #53

#15. The woman gives you a look that says, "How dare you so much as look in my general direction." Flustered, you try your best to look as if you are just taking a seat for a meal as the guards go by. They pass without so much as a glance at you. Excusing yourself from the table, you stand and continue on your way.

Go to #43

#16. Selling the knife at a local pawnshop, you use the money to buy basic travelling supplies and leave the city of Cortez, never to return. From now on no matter where you go you realize that you will be considered a marked man by House Porter. You curse your fate and realize that "keeping the night at your back" has changed its meaning for you now and forever. This adventure is over, though the adventure that is your life (how ever long or short that may be) has just begun!

#17. The guardsman smirks. "What do we have here?" he asks, fingering the pommel of his shortsword. "Last time I saw you, you were stealing mead from the Rat's Nest pub. I believe that it's time that I taught you a

lesson in lawfulness." With that he, ironically, begins to draw his sword.

If you take out the pass as quickly as possible, go to #48

If you say, "No, I will be teaching you the lesson tonight," go to #66

#18. The thug sees you coming. Use the NPC 1 template for this combat. Your only weapons are your body and knife. Determine his initiative and yours and roll attacks for both you and the thug as normal.

If you win (bring him to 0 HPs or WPs), go to #9

If you lose (you reach 0 HPs or WPs), go to #62

#19. You decide that the best way to wander around this neighborhood is to simply try to be as unobtrusive and normal-looking as possible while not looking like easy prey at the same time. But you also remember that no matter how familiar you are with the streets, there is danger.

Go to #61

#20. You decide that his tales of your fighting prowess are worth keeping him alive for. Perhaps one day you will have the same reputation as Victor the Knife! With one last kick, you leave him be.

Gain 200 Social Points.

Go to #2

#21. You stand at your locked door, tapping your toe for lack of anything better to do when you feel a sudden pain in the back of your head accompanied by a seeming flash of light. Something is put over your head as you are overpowered by at least three monstrosly strong people and put in the back of a cart. After a short ride you are lifted from the cart and the black hood over your head is removed.

Take 10 WPs of damage and go to #72

#22. A Human woman wearing slightly better than common clothing sits at one of the tables drinking wine and taking in the night air. She starts as you sit down, but you simply smile and say, "I hate to see a beautiful woman unaccompanied."

Make a Social Save.

If you score a D+ success on the roll, go to #26

If you score lower than a D success, go to #15

#23. "Well then," Victor continues, "I have the documents from your father showing that you are indeed his pup. If they are forgeries I cannot tell, which makes them valid for acceptance by House Porter. My job ends with that documentation. From here I will send you to the man who will test you and decide whether you are prepared to join us." He takes a very well-worked, unsheathed knife from the folds of his robes and holds it towards you, blade first. "Take this to the leathersmith's shop in the Castle District, knock once at the

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rear door, and present this knife as-is to the man who answers the door. On your journey, stay in unnatural form unless it is unavoidable. Am I understood? Good."

Go to #13

#24. You leave the area leaving behind a mortally wounded but still breathing guardsman. Who knows what the future will bring? Live men tell tales.

Go to #14

#25. You decide that the best course of action is to stick to the shadows and weave your way down the street.

Make a Concealment & Camouflage roll.

If you score a D+ success on the roll, go to #56

If you score lower than a D success, go to #78

#26. She smiles back at you demurely and offers you a drink from her cup. "It is amazing what the night brings you," she says. You make casual conversation, mostly consisting of you complementing every aspect of her beauty, and the guards pass by and take no note of your presence. You hide your look of satisfaction and continue conversing with the woman until you are sure that the guards are out of sight and not just trying to draw you out.

Go to #44

#27. "Ah," the nondescript man at the desk says, "this one has spirit. Straight to the point--I like that in an agent as well as in a victim."

Go to #49

#28. The man at the desk eyes you slowly and a razor-sharp smile touches his lips. "Hm, this one knows how to keep a secret," he comments to your escorts as he begins writing on a piece of parchment. He then rolls it up and plays around under his robes for a moment. "Very good, my boy," Victor says as he looks up again.

Go to #23

#29. "You are obviously going somewhere and are nervous in the going," he replies. "Skulking down the street will only get you in trouble with the first watchman that happens to spot you. And spot you one shall, pup. You are just a novice...they are experts."

You nod and take in the strange beggar's wisdom. You heed his advice.

Go to #19

#30. Glancing around the street, you are able to see a thug following you in your peripheral vision. He is quickly gaining on you and you decide that a fight is unavoidable. But at least he does not know that you see him coming. "Savor every advantage that you can," your father always said.

Go to #12

#31. "Have you, now?" the man intones. "Very resourceful. Your father has tutored you well, boy." He carefully takes notes on a piece of parchment, rolls it up and plays around under his robes for a moment. He then looks up at you again. "Just remember when to keep your mouth shut and when to boast!"

Go to #23

#32. *Make an Awareness check.*

If you score a D+ success, go to #30

If you score less than a D success, go to #52

#33. The guardsman laughs as you lie on the cold ground, the coppery taste of your own blood strong in your mouth. "Stupid pup," he mutters to himself as he raises his sword for the last strike--the coup-de-grace. In your last moments you contemplate how combat with such a well-trained warrior was probably not the smartest thing for you to consider.

Go back to #1 and learn from your mistakes.

#34. *Make a Concealment & Camouflage roll.*

If you score a D+ success on the roll, go to #3

If you score lower than a D success, go to #57

#35. The door opens and you find yourself face-to-face with a hooded man. The shadows obscure his face from your vision. "Do you have something for me?" he asks.

You nod slightly and hand him the knife hilt first. Automatically, the figure opens the secret compartment and reads the parchment. Then, slipping the message back into the hilt, he gestures for you to come inside.

Go to #68

#36. You must have attracted more attention than you thought. Rounding a corner you see the thug leaning up against a wall waiting for you.

Go to #18

#37. "Then perhaps it is best that I not elucidate for now, pup," he says, taking notes on parchment, his quill making grand loops, then rolls it up and plays around under his robes for a moment.

Go to #23

#38. You make your way down the street more confidently now. Several groups of Cortez guardsmen pass you by, not giving you a second glance as they continue with their evening rounds. Nearing the castle district, however, a guard who you recognize all too well stops you and looks like he would be only too happy if you put up a fight.

Go to #17

#39. The guardsman smirks. "What do we have here?" he asks, fingering the pommel of his shortsword. "Last time I saw you, you were stealing mead from the Rat's

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Nest pub. I believe that it's time that I taught you a lesson in lawfulness." With that he, ironically, begins to draw his sword.

If you decide to give in to the inevitable and fight the guardsman, go to #66

If you try to reason your way out of this one, go to #69

#40. When you come around, you are still dazed and have no idea what time it is. Picking yourself up, you decide that you'll leave the head-to-head fighting to House Cortez and stay in the shadows where you belong.

Go to #2

#41. The entertainer, a lithe woman in her early twenties, is juggling five balls as you step in, trying to join her in the juggling going back and forth.

Make a juggling skill roll.

If you score a D+ success on the roll, go to #7

If you score lower than a D success, go to #67

#42. You slam the pommel of the knife into his throat, shattering his windpipe. You walk away listening to sickly gurgling and croaking sounds.

Go to #14

#43. Your paranoia working overtime, you make your way down the street looking over your shoulder and half expecting to see an enraged mob of guards following you at every turn. It is as you are looking over your shoulder that you nearly run into a guardsman that looks entirely too familiar.

Go to #39

#44. As you stand from the table the woman looks at you with angelic eyes and asks, "Why are you leaving so soon?"

If you respond, "You are no longer useful to me, Human," go to #71

If you respond, "I must go, but will cherish this meeting always," go to #47

#45. Unfurling the parchment and reading it, you nearly drop the knife on your foot as your fingers turn to ice. It reads: The bearer of this message is Kyle Menthas Aorik. Kill him as soon as it is convenient for you. My regards, Victor.

Go to #80

#46. With a bit of wit and logic you are leave the guardsman contemplating his place in the universe as you skulk away.

Go to #14

#47. She smiles and takes a small sheaf of paper from her sash "My name is Janet Tasker," she says, and you immediately recognize her name as being a member of the oh-so-rich Tasker family that lives on the outskirts

of Cortez. "Take this to pass by the city guards as my home...I would appreciate a visit."

You gladly take the pass with the realization that it will also grant you safe passage from the guardsmen within the city proper. Yet another of your father's words of wisdom paid off--On the manipulation of others: "Intimidate those who understand only violence, plead ignorance to those who think themselves to be superior, and be polite to all others." You tuck the pass under your belt and take your leave.

Go to #38

#48. Hurriedly unfolding the pass for the guardsman you shove it in his face for him to read. You can't see his face past the parchment, but he slowly but surely releases his grip on his weapon. "Says here that you are going to the Tasker villa," he comments. "Funny how you are going in exactly the opposite direction to get there."

If you decide to give in to the inevitable and fight the guardsman, go to #66

If you try to reason your way out of this one, go to #69

#49. "I am Victor the Knife," says the man behind the desk. "Have you heard of me?"

Make a Grapevine roll.

If you score an F+ success, go to #76

If you score lower than an F success, go to #50

#50. "No, sir, I have never heard your name," you answer honestly. The name does not strike a bell, though he must be of some renown to be wearing the House Porter robes in front of you, identifying his affiliation so plainly.

Go to #37

#51. Their conversation stops abruptly as they notice you approaching, all eyes focused on you and looking for bulges of money or food. Walking past the trio, you notice by their stench and mannerisms that they have lived on the streets by their wits for some time. Taking a deep breath of fresh air after passing them and continue on your way.

Go to #32

#52. You notice someone passing you up on the street but only recognize him at the last moment--a thug. Oh, well...

Go to #57

#53. As you walk, finally entering the Castle District, you hear a strange clicking sound coming from your belt. It takes little investigation to discern that there is something wrong with the knife. Slipping into a concealed corner you draw the knife from its place at your belt and find that the pommel has come loose on

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its concealed hinge revealing a secret compartment in the hilt.

You open the compartment completely and use a finger to probe inside. Pulling slightly you find that there is a rolled piece of parchment concealed inside. It looks suspiciously like the piece of parchment that Victor the Knife wrote on--the notes that he was taking on you when you were in his office.

If you read what was written on the parchment, go to #45

If you slide the parchment back in and close the compartment, go to #8

#54. "Greetings, young Hourani," comes the voice from behind you. Startled, you turn bringing the knife to bear out of sheer instinct. You face a venerable beggar, probably a Human, with eyes as big as moons wearing shredded rags for clothing. "No," the beggar says almost calmly, "I just mean to help you, young one."

If you say, "Shut up, Human scum! I know what I am doing!," go to #10

If you say, "You do not even know what I am doing," go to #29

#55. You make your way safely down the streets for quite some time with very little effort. The street is peaceful, a local pub with outside tables and a street entertainer being the most interesting sights. Rounding a corner, however, is a group of three city guardsmen. They carry shortswords but wear no armor. As they get closer and closer, you see that they wear the colors of House Cortez. You've had your run-ins with the city guard on one occasion or another (or two, or three, or four...) and you think that, perhaps, there is the chance of one recognizing you.

If you go to a table and begin talking with the woman sitting there, go to #22

If you try to join in the entertainer's act in order to blend in, go to #41

#56. You make your way down the street by blending into the multitude of shadows along the side of the street itself. A couple, probably a prostitute and her "friend," pass by you at one point, failing to notice your presence. A sense of accomplishment flows through you and you wish that your father could see you now.

Go to #81

#57. The thug walks almost past you when suddenly he lunges at you and attacks. He has the jump on you, and therefore gets a free attack! Use the NPC 1 template for this combat. Your only weapons are your body and knife. Determine his initiative and yours and roll attacks for both you and the thug as normal.

If you win (bring him to 0 HPs or WPs), go to #9

If you lose (you reach 0 HPs or WPs), go to #62

#58. The main streets of Cortez are very well lit, an oil lamp at nearly every corner to light a nocturnal pedestrian's way. The main streets take you out of the shadows that you are accustomed to, but as your father once told you, "It is sometimes better to hide in plain view."

Go to #55

#59. You find a small alcove between two buildings and do your best to "become one" with your surroundings.

Make a Concealment & Camouflage roll.

If you score a D+ success, go to #82

If you score lower than a D success, go to #57

#60. Midway through your leap you are pounced on by your escorts who were standing right behind you at the door (as you well knew). The man behind the desk follows suit almost immediately and you are overwhelmed by unbeatable odds. "Foolish boy. Never attack an agent of House Porter on his own terms," were the last words that you ever heard. The metal of the knife stung as it ran through the flesh of your throat...you probably got blood on his robes if that is any consolation.

Start over at #1 and learn from your experiences.

#61. Continuing along the street for a while you turn the corner and see that there is a group of three men talking in a near huddle just a few feet away.

If you cross the street to the other side and continue on your way, go to #70

If you walk straight through the small group, go to #51

If you change to natural form for long enough to intimidate them, go to #77

#62. The thug laughs as he checks over your body, missing the knife as you are now laying on it. Finding nothing of real worth, he spits on you and leaves you to bleed on yourself.

Go to #40

#63. You notice two shadows which seem to be moving along a nearby wall of their own volition. Two figures, either Humans or Hourani in unnatural form, step out of the darkness wearing wry smiles as they see that you have noticed their presence. "Come with us, young Kyle," one of them says to you, and they each take a place on either side of you. And then, watching their backs, they start you on your journey.

Go to #72

#64. As you begin to walk about the rough and tumble backstreets of Cortez you are surrounded by shadows formed of the dull light of the half moon. This neighborhood is nothing new to you, but whereas you will

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stay out of the city guard's way you will also have to worry more about backstreet ruffians and the like.

Make a Cities roll.

If you score a D+ success on the roll, go to #19

If you score lower than a D success, go to #25

#65. You find the leathersmith's shop much too easily and with a deep breath, a drop of sweat running down your cheek (or was it a tear?), you knock once at the door. The suspense between your knock and the opening of the door is nervewracking.

Go to #35

#66. You enter into mortal combat with the guardsman. Watch out for that razor-sharp sword! Use the NPC 2 template for this combat. Your only weapons are your body and knife. Determine his initiative and yours and roll attacks for both you and the guardsman as normal.

If you win (bring him to 0 HPs or WPs), go to #74

If you lose (you reach 0 HPs or WPs), go to #33

#67. As you try to get a hand on the juggling balls you err slightly and, er, grab something entirely different. The woman, shocked by your sudden grope at her, throws all of the balls in the air at one time sending them all raining down on you a moment later. The guards get a good laugh of it all as they pass, thinking that it was all done intentionally as a comedy act, and actually throw several coins in the woman's hat.

Apologizing quickly you continue on your way.

Go to #43

#68. Stepping into the building you suddenly get a funny feeling. Abruptly, several candles light simultaneously. Standing in the room are your escorts from before, the hooded figure, and your father. Your father's face remains neutral as the hooded man comes almost nose-to-nose with you.

The cloaked man pulls back his hood to reveal the face of Victor the Knife.

"You've done well, young Hourani. Your test is over and you have passed."

"But," you stammer, "I was supposed to come here to be tested."

"And in coming you have been tested," Victor counters. "You have proved that you are honorable towards your own and that you possess a high degree of tenacity. Welcome to House Porter! Your initiation begins as of now..."

Taking another deep breath, you shiver in anticipation of what is to come next.

This adventure ends here, but your character's journey through life has just begun!

#69. You decide that it might be best to orate and philosophize a way out of this situation.

Make a Mental Save.

If you score a D+ success on the roll, go to #46

If you score lower than a D success, go to #75

#70. As you get to the other side of the street you notice one of the men eyeing you. You watch out of the corner of your eye as his gaze follows you until you turn another corner.

If you begging to run once you are out of sight, go to #11

If you decide to hide and see what happens, go to #59

If you continue walking as normal, watching your back, go to #32

#71. She looks aghast at you and runs into the pub, tears beginning to stream down her face.

Go to #43 before she gets someone from the pub to brutalize you...

#72. You stand in front of an unobtrusive-looking building that could have been located in any number of districts in Cortez. The oaken door to this building opens in front of you and your escorts push you in its general direction, going inside and remaining behind you. Upon entering the candle-lit entry room you see a man sitting behind a desk wearing the black and gray of House Porter.

If you say, "I am here to be tested by House Porter!" go to #27

If you bow deeply and respectfully to the man at the desk, go to #4

#73. *Make and Ambush roll.*

If you score a D+ success, go to #12

If you score less than a D success, go to #18

#74. You send him to his knees, bleeding from mortal wounds. As he falls forward he slams the flat of his sword against the ground, shattering the blade. He spits blood on your boot as he attempts to push himself up.

If you decide to finish him off, go to #42

If you decide to let nature take its course with him, go to #24

#75. The guard sneers at you as you fail to persuade him to let bygones be bygones. Prepare for combat!

Go to #66

#76. You have indeed heard of him--he is a highly respected man in dark circles, though no one outside of House Porter has any idea of what he looks like, or if he is even Hourani.

If you tell him that you have heard of him on the streets, go to #31

If you keep the fact that you have heard of him to yourself, go to #5

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#77. Their conversation stops abruptly as they notice you approaching, all eyes focused on you and looking for bulges of money or food. When you change briefly into natural form and the street is bathed by the eerie-red light emanating from your eyes, they avert their attention from you and quickly disperse into the shadows.

Go to #32

#78. You begin making your way down the street, but your nerves seem to be getting to you and you creak on every boarded walkway you stand on and scuffle on the dirt ones. Still trying, though, you make it to an alleyway to rest and think for a moment. Then, abruptly, you realize that you are not the only inhabitant of the alley.

Go to #54

#79. You stab him straight through the eye. His body twitches one last time and then he is still. And dead men tell no tales. You feel slightly jittery, as this is your first kill, but you put it out of your mind and continue on your mission just as your father had taught you. To fail the House is to invite death.

Go to #2

#80. Grimly, you realize that there are only two options available to you:

If you leave the city, go to #16

If you proceed to the leathersmith's shop and accept your fate, go to #65

#81. Continuing down the street via the shadows, you draw back into an alleyway to avoid an extremely lonely city guard who could probably use the "assistance" of the woman that you had seen earlier. You remain under the cover of two barrels, one on either side of you, when you notice the alternating crack of a fist and then a stifled moan of pain. Slowly turning back you see one man beating another to death. And moments later he completes his task, standing from the husk of what was once a man. He is now moving in your direction, leaving the alley.

If you decide to attack the thug, go to #73

If you decide to remain hidden and hope he passes, go to #34

#82. You wait for a few minutes until, lo-and-behold, the shifty man from the group skulks by where you are concealed.

If you attack the man from hiding, go to #73

If you wait until he passes safely by and then continue on your way, go to #3

NPC #1: Thug (Neuonian)

LL: 2

HPs: 25

WPs: 150

Soak: 4

Move: 5.4

Advantages: Stre 1, Dext 2, Agil 2, Refl 1, Awar 2, Pers 2, Avoi 1

Initiative base: +15

Initiative cost: Stiletto (WC4): Att 20, Par 8

Brawling (WC11): Att 44, Par 22

OCF: Stiletto 45, Brawling 50

DCF: Stiletto 25, Brawling 30

Damage: Stiletto: A1 B1 C2 D3 E4 F5 G10 H18

Brawling (non-lethal): A3 B6 C9 D18 E30 F45 G60 H75

Dodge: +45

Duck: +40

NPC #2: City Guard (Neuonian)

LL: 4

HPs: 25

WPs: 150

Soak: 6

Move: 5.4

Advantages: Stre 2, Stam 2, Refl 12 Awar 2, Conf 1, Pers 2

Initiative base: +20

Initiative cost: Shortsword (WC6): Att 30, Par 16

Brawling (WC11): Att 44, Par 22

OCF: Shortsword 45, Brawling 50

DCF: Shortsword 25, Brawling 30

Damage: Stiletto: A1 B2 C4 D6 E8 F13 G16 H24

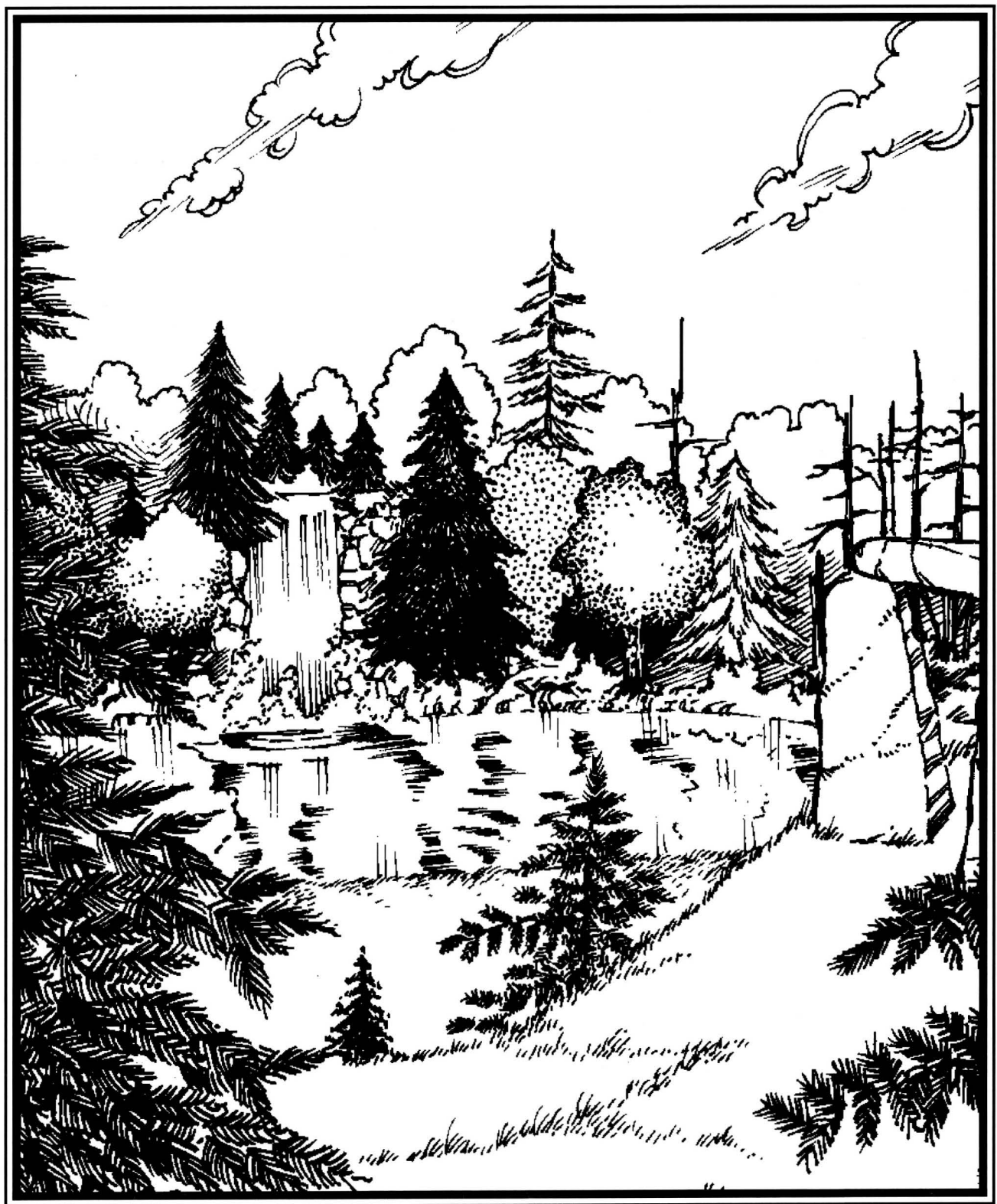
Brawling (non-lethal): A3 B6 C9 D18 E30 F45 G60 H75

Dodge: +40

Duck: +50

PC#1: Kyle Menthas Aorik (Hourani)

Kyle's detailed character sheet, with information needed for these combats and actions and much more, is included in the back of this book.



Chapter One

The Hourani culture

Alas, we are the fortunate few to have survived the passing of an age. The Age of Myth was cold and hard, fraught with war and chaos. We children of the Hourani now live in the Age of Discovery, the Third Age since Creation, and must now discover what changes the Great Cataclysm has made for us.

This age has brought wisdom to our people. By our code, we must indeed remember the words of our forefathers, for they have taught us much with their sacrifices. First, we must stand together. Never again shall brother fight brother, for we have learned too well that only the strong and united survive in this strange and mystical world. Aye, I remember the words of my father well: "Guard well my son, for the sinister eyes of chaos are ever upon us. Never lose hope, for that is your shield. Always have courage, for that is your armor. Never stray in purpose, for that is your lance. Always endure hardship, for that is your steed. And never neglect the truth, for that is your sword. Learn from the mistakes of your father, my son, so that you may surpass him in word and deed. Though no one is perfect, always strive to do your best, and you shall never truly fail. Remember these words, my son, and you shall bring great honor to our family and our House. May the dreams of our fathers be realized through our children.

So here we find ourselves, fulfilling the dreams our fathers dared to imagine. The blood and sweat of their labor has made our race majestic and strong. As we boldly set forth in this new age, proudly holding our banners aloft, we shall remember well the wise words of our forefathers so that we may honor their memories. So let our eyes guide the way, and let our enemies tremble with fear as they feel the heat of our breath on their backs—for we are the Hourani!"

—From the "Chronicles of Kyle Driskel Aorik",
dedicated to the memory of Connor Driskel Aorik

Race: Metamorphoun

Homeland: The City States of Neuron



eing metamorphouns, Hourani are similar in biological construction to both humans and Wolfihn, and the word *Hourani* has come to be known as "one who is both man and beast." All Hourani can alternate between their natural (wolf-like) and unnatural (human) forms once they leave childhood behind. Female Hourani can actually assume a third shape—that of a real, extremely predatory wolf, with the same hunter instincts, keener senses, speed, agility, cunning, and physical appearance.

The Hourani's unnatural human form has enabled them to survive being such a young race among the others. Urban Hourani spend most of their time in human form to develop peace and trust with their human co-inhabitants. Rural Hourani are more at liberty to change shape when they feel like it but still conduct contacts with other races in human form (although many younger Hourani view such an act as a lack of pride in one's heritage and bristle at the compromise).

The Hourani wolf form resembles that of an actual Wolfihn, with some minor differences. First, the Hourani's natural form does not have the backwards legs characteristic of Wolfihn. In addition, Hourani in natural form are shorter than Wolfihn, and their eyes also emit a red glow (something that has led them to being labelled as demons in the past by humans). Their senses are dramatically heightened, as well as their Strength, Stamina, Awareness, and Confidence. Nowadays, the higher races (namely, elves, dwarves, and other metamorphouns) recognize the Hourani for what they truly are: an honorable and courageous race. Unfortunately, some lesser races still consider Hourani to be "demons from within" due to their intimidating natural appearance.

Note that Hourani are not related to werewolves in any way—their abilities are not related to lycanthropy—except in the fact that they can assume a humanoid wolf shape at will.

Chapter One



Names

Every adult Hourani has three names. The first is chosen when they become adults, during the Rite of Passage, and it is by this name that their family and close friends refer to them. The second name is their family name, denoting lineage; a child will always take its father's second name. The third and last name is symbolic and shared by all Hourani who believe in the Code: Aorik. A tribute to the Hourani forefather (Groam Aorik), this name is considered such a great honor to wear that Hourani who are banished (usually as a result of breaking the Code) are stripped of it. Banished Hourani are treated as criminals wherever they go, and this shame passes down to their progeny as well. A family line can be so disgraced for multiple generations, until some future family member dedicates herself to restoring the missing honor. Needless to say, insults against the name Aorik are not taken well by any faithful Hourani.

Common first (personal) names: Adam, Amanda, Angela, Arnet, Ansel, Author, Beatrice, Bellin, Bernadine, Beverly, Brian, Brittany, Byome, Candice, Cathleen, Christopher, Cinthia, Colleen, Connor, Darwin, Dawn, Debra, Denise, Dillian, Dorothy, Dougless, Edward, Egonne, Elizabeth, Ellen, Erwin, Feserik, Fredrick, Frey, Ganther, Geoffrey, Gerald, Hane, Herold, Ike, Ishmael, Ivan, Jacob, James, Janice, Johnathan, Julianne, Karen, Keefer, Kirk, Kyle, Lance, Loraine, Maria, Marilyn, Melissa, Michael, Mishander, Nicholas, Pamela, Paulette, Peter, Phillip, Qashar, Richard,

Rodger, Samuel, Sandra, Sharon, Sierra, Silmar, Stephanie, Theodore, Thomas, Victor, William, Zecker

Common second (family) names: Allistar, Angelic, Ammon, Balentin, Biaganna, Borone, Cortez, Capriti, Cuzamoli, Dettar, Dassling, Dorgonne, Eristin, Edel, Evermore, Feznoth, Fybini, Fescuno, Grandarn, Grayvern, Groam, Harn, Holstead, Hulogue, Illiomis, Isczyn, Iramick, Jorden, Jotan, Los-thard, Lonewind, Lirna, Mescin, Moreneth, Mevapo, Nassan, Nicoletti, Nearnamen, Orest, Olevetempo, Oscure, Porter, Pizan, Pierenial, Qataris, Rosenthal, Richi, Sovi, Sudrama, Sappan, Tirimiri, Waternil, Wayne

Age & character generation

Although Hourani characters can begin at any age, the majority should begin between ages 13-16, to allow a more interesting playing experience. At this point, Hourani are still attempting to master the change from human to natural form, and failed rolls reflect either not being able to change when most desired or changing uncontrollably in a stressful situation. Check Table 1 for all important statistics for beginning characters based on age. See Table 2 for the Hourani family trade table, to be used for Hourani characters (the one in the Tome is a generic table). Also included here, on page 6, is the Hourani template to help players generate beginning Hourani characters. (See the Tome for more information about character generation.)

Table 1. Hourani age delineations.

Stage	Youngster	Young adult	Adulthood	Midlife	Elderly	Old	Legendary
Starting skill points	122	203	405	790	1296	1731	2228
Age	1-11	12-20	21-300	301-500	506-675	676-800	801+
Advantages from growth	+1 Refl	+1 Pers, +1 Stre	+1 Pers	None	-1 Refl	-1 Stre	None
Size level	2-3	3-4	4	4	4	4	4
Movement rate	1/1	4/5	5/6	5/6	4/5	3/3	2/2
Height	1-4'	4-6'	5-6'	5-6'	5-6'	5'	5'
Weight	90 lbs	180 lbs	200 lbs	220 lbs	210 lbs	180 lbs	160 lbs
Health base	10	20	25	25	20	15	10
Willpower base	130	115	105	100	90	75	60

The Hourani culture

Table 2. Family trade table

Roll	Family trade choices	Base genus level	Bonus
01-10	Peasant/Farmer, Illegitimate birth	0	4 advantages
11-30	Medic, Recruit, Initiate, Apprentice, Itinerant, Employee, Servant,	1	3 advantages
31-50	Mimic, Warrior/Destrier/Archer, Acolyte, Ronin Wizard, Painter/Sculptor, Bodyguard, Monitor, Maiden	2	2 advantages
51-55	Sage, Sergeant, Temple Guard (White/Black), Alchemist, Juggler, Mercenary, Monastery Guard, Merchant, Orphan: Raised by Monks at the House Wayne, Curator, Messenger, Disciple	3	1 advantage or 50 skill points
56-65	Guardian, Sergeant at Arms, Holy Warrior, Demonologist, Musician/Poet/Actor, Foreman, Unholy Warrior, Specialist	4	75 skill points
66-70	Meta Spy, Master Sergeant, Pastor, Journeyman Wizard, Artist, Spy, Librarian, Village Elder	5	100 skill points
71-75	Surgeon, Ivory Guard, Acrobat, Thief, Scribe, Priestess	6	150 skill points
76-80	Paladin, Bard/Troubadour/Minstrel	7	200 skill points
81-90	Mind Master, Knight/Lieutenant, Wizard Adept	8	300 skill points
91-95	Sheriff/Captain, Priest, Inquisitor, Master Librarian, Overseer	9	350 skill points
96-98	Master Meta Spy, Commander, Master Wizard, Baron	10	400 skill points
99	General, High Priest, Guildmaster, Dark Magus, Earl	10	450 skill points
100	House Lord, Duke, Maternal Mother	10	500 skill points

Description

Movement rate: 5/6

Size level: 4

Lifting capacity (average): 200/1160 lbs

Encumbrance (average): 80/400 lbs

Build: Fit and healthy. Most Hourani pride themselves on being in good physical shape. Their natural form has wider shoulders, larger chests, thicker arms and waists, and longer thicker legs.

Height: 5'10' (males), 5'4' (females); 10% larger in natural form

Weight: 180 lbs (male), 120 (female); 40% larger in natural form

Health factor: 4/5

HPs: 25/47

WPs: 105/135

Power tolerance: 40

Damage bonus: +1/+5

Pathway: Giver or Takers. Taker Hourani are subject to the bloodlust.

Eye color: Usually blue, brown, green or hazel, but will glow red in natural Form. (See "Natural Form" in under cultural abilities.)

Hair color: Red, brown, or blonde.

Skin/fur color: Hair grown by a Hourani changing to natural form resembles that of a short-haired dog--a thin layer of thick, coarse hair. Color is usually reminiscent of hair color but does not necessarily have to.

Handedness: Hourani are right-handed 85% of the time.

First impression: Hourani in unnatural form look completely human, except with a dark cast to the eyes. In natural form, their entire body sprouts light fur, and the nose and teeth become very canine. The ears extend, and the mouth area becomes partially muzzle-like (although nothing like a true wolf's). The body tends to lose its fat cushion and look more muscular in appearance. In predator form (females only), Hourani resemble a timber wolf, with the same fur color as that of their human hair color. Only their eyes--glowing brilliant blue--

Chapter One

Table 3. Hourani weapons chart.

Weapon			ROC damage								Missile range					
	WC	Lbs	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	S	M	L			
L E T H A L W E A P O N S																
Steel Axe (M)	11	7.5	4	7	10	16	22	29	37	45	5 10 15					
Glaive (M)	15	10	3	5	8	14	22	30	40	50						
Throwing spear (T)	6	4	0	1	3	6	10	14	20	26						
Long spear (M)	10	6	2	4	7	11	15	20	30	40						
Lance (C)	16	15	5	10	16	22	28	36	54	75						
Stiletto (M)	4	.5	1	1	2	3	4	5	10	18						
Throwing dagger (T)	2	.8	0	0	2	4	5	6	8	15	5	10	20			
Shortsword (M)	6	3	1	2	4	6	8	12	18	24						
Bastard sword (M)	12	7.5	4	7	10	15	20	25	31	38						
Longsword (M)	10	6	3	6	9	12	15	18	22	30						
Broadsword (M)	12	7.5	4	7	10	15	20	25	31	38						
Greatsword (M)	16	25	5	10	15	20	27	34	42	50						
Metal mace (M)	8	5	4	4	6	12	18	24	30	36						
Flail (M)	12	15	4	4	6	12	18	24	30	36	25 80 250					
Longbow (F)	12	9	4	8	12	16	20	24	28	36						
Crossbow (F)	10	15	3	6	9	12	15	18	21	30						
Howling Wind (M)	10	---	1	2	4	7	10	14	18	25						
N A T U R A L W E A P O N S (non-lethal)																
Fist * (M)	10	---	0	1	4	8	14	20	35	50						
C = Charging weapon, counted as a missile fire attack when calculating OCF/DCF and Init cost F = Fired missile weapon, cannot be used effectively under 3 yards M = Melee weapon, cannot be used when opponent is farther away than twice wielder's height T = Thrown weapon, usually can be used as a melee weapon as well * Only subtracts damage from WPs, instead of from HPs. Hourani in unnatural (human) form use the Fist statistics for Howling Wind damage, doing damage to WPs only.																

suggests that perhaps the creature is *not* a wolf. The glow is bright enough to be unmistakable.

General appearance: Male Hourani in unnatural (human) form tend to be well-muscled and in good physical shape. Most are tanned, although those who have never seen the light of day have a white or pale cast to their skin. Most males wear their hair short and neat, while those with longer locks will tie them back or braid them. In natural form, males take on a dark cast (looking incredibly wolflike and barbaric) but do not change a great

deal in height or weight.

Females in unnatural (human) form have fair complexions and generally thin builds. Most have very long hair and usually pull it up or style it in some manner. While maturing, females dress very conservatively, garbing themselves in long flowing gowns or dresses. After maturing, most wear tighter and more revealing clothes, usually made of some fine cloth. In natural form, females change very little in height or weight but take on a very wild and bestial nature.

The Hourani culture

Table 4. Hourani armor chart.

Armor type	Prowl****	Worth (FPs)	Absorption	Maximum	Weight (lbs)
Padding	---	100	5*	---	3
Soft leather	---	200	2	16	4
Hard leather	---	400	4	32	8
Studded leather	---	1000	5	40	12
Chain & leather	5	4400	8	64	30
Plated leather	10	20,500	10	80	55
Full chainmail	20	14,000	14**	84	70
Double mail	20	15,000	15**	90	90
Plate & mail	40	45,000	18**	108	120
Full plate	60	100,000	25**	250	150
Field plate	60	140,000	35**	350	180
Heater shield (wooden)	5	1000	10***	60	10
Heater shield (metal)	10	10,000	20	200	30
Kite shield (wooden)	5	1500	15***	90	18
Kite shield (metal)	10	12,500	25	250	40
Tower shield (metal)	15	15,000	30	300	50

* Padding is worn under armor ranging from full chain mail to field plate, because it will absorb blows from bludgeoning weapons like maces, staves, or fists/feet. Padding does not absorb damage from any other sorts of weapons, however, and has no maximum absorption rate. It can absorb unlimited amounts of bludgeoning damage and is easily torn apart by slashing weapons.

**All of these armors absorbs only half damage from bludgeoning weapons, plus another 5 from padding (if used).

***Wooden shields can actually sustain twice as much damage from wooden weapons as normal and do not lose points from maximum absorption in the process.

**** The listed number is an additional difficulty figured into any Prowl rolls while wearing armor.

Racial advantages (adulthood): Stre 1, Pers 2, Refl 1.

When in natural form, add 3 levels to Stre, Stam, Conf, and Awar; subtract 2 levels from Logic, Etic, and Char; subtract 3 from Avoi.

Maximum Advantage Limits: These maximums apply to adult Hourani in unnatural (human) form. Those advantages marked with asterisks are capable of temporarily going above the normal Advantage Limit.

Stre 5*	Comp 7	App 6
Agil 5	Awar 10*	Char 4*
Dext 5	Logic 8*	Etic 4*
Stam 5*	Pers 8	Style 6
Refl 6	Conf 8*	Avoi 3*

Native skills

All Hourani begin with the following skills:

- ☞ Cultural: Natural Form (0-100, depending on age), +80 to Low Speech, +20 High Speech, +50 Hourani
- ☞ +50 Domestic: Home: Repair
- ☞ +30 Entertainment: Athletics: Cultural Games and Wrestling, +20 Running
- ☞ +10 Entertainment: Drama: Captivating & Seduction
- ☞ +40 to Myth & Lore: Fabled Lands: City States of Neuon, +30 to Heroes & Heroines: Hourani, +10 Humans

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Character Sheet

Character Name:	Pathway: ①	Extra Chances:
Played by:	Attitude:	

Race: Metamorphoun	Current Life Level: (PL + FL + SL) / 3
Culture: Hourani	Maximum Achieved Life Level:
Sub Culture: ③	Career:

ADVANTAGES

PHYSICAL	current/max/ adjust	MENTAL	current/max/ adjust	SOCIAL	current/max/ adjust
Strength:	{ 1 } / [5] /	Comprehension:	{ } / [7] /	Appearance:	{ } / [6] /
Agility:	{ } / [5] /	Awareness:	{ } / [10] /	Charisma:	{ } / [4] /
Dexterity:	{ } / [5] /	Logic:	{ } / [8] /	Etiquette:	{ } / [4] /
Stamina:	{ } / [5] /	Perseverance:	{ 2 } / [8] /	Style:	{ } / [6] /
Reflex:	{ 1 } / [6] /	Confidence:	{ } / [8] /	Avoidance:	{ } / [3] /

Physical Save:		Mental Save:		Social Save:	
Age:	Movement Rate: ⑦	Professional Level (PL):	Heal Rate: ⑩		
Gender: ②	Size Level: 4	Social Pts:	Max Health Points: ① ①		
Eye Color: ④	Lifting Capacity:	Social Level (SL):	Max Willpower Pts: ① ②		
Hair Color: ⑤	Encumbrance Max:	Fiscal Pts:	Power Tolerance: 40		
Skin/Fur Color: ⑥	Build:	Fiscal Level (FL):	Magical Powerbase:		
Handedness:	Sleep Level:	Experience Points:	Channeling Pbse:		
Birth Date:	Height: ⑧ Weight: ⑨	EP Bonus:	Metaphysical Pbse:		

① **Pathway:** Neutral Taker or Assertive Giver. (See pages 33 and 34 in the Tome.)

② **Gender:** Male or female (females must belong to House Raidir)

③ **Subculture:** Houses Balentin, Cortez, Feznoth, Groam, Illiomis, Porter, Raidir, Rosenthal, Wayne

④ **Eye color:** Blue, brown, green, or hazel

⑤ **Hair color:** Red, brown, or blonde

⑥ **Skin/Fur color:** Tan to fair (unnatural), same as hair color (natural)

⑦ **Base movement rate:** 5 (unnatural), 6 (natural)

⑧ **Height (adult):** 5-6'

⑨ **Weight (adult):** 180-200 lbs (male), 120-140 lbs (female)

⑩ **Health rate:** 4 (unnatural), 5 (natural), affected by Stam

①① **HP base:** 25 (unnatural), 47 (natural), affected by Stam

①② **WP base:** 105 (unnatural), 135 (natural), affected by Conf, Pers, & Stam

See pages 5-7 for beginning native Hourani skills. See page 7 for extra native skills as per subculture (House); note that these House native skills do not change even if a character switches Houses at some point in his or her life.

The Hourani culture



- ☞ +20 Professional Crafts: Arts: Poetry, Prose & Calligraphy
- ☞ +50 to Religion: Church: Theology of Church of Fidei Draconus
- ☞ +75 to Travel: Terrain Knowledge: City and Field.

In addition, each House offers some native skills. Even if a Hourani switches Houses (professions) at some point, he still keeps the native skills of his original House. For more information about each house, read Chapter 2.

- ☞ Balentin is exclusive to Hourani who have the "gift of sight"—metapsychics. It offers +40 Leadership: Statecraft: Public Relations; and +20 Myth & Lore: Fabled Lands: any 10 skills.
- ☞ Cortez is made entirely of men-at-arms, primarily knights and paladins. It offers +10 Combat: HTH: Howling Wind; +50 Archaic Science: History: Heraldry; and +10 all Leadership: Military Skills.
- ☞ Feznoth is comprised of priests of various denominations, the most common of which is called Fidei Draconus (the Dragon Faith). It offers +10 Religion: Church OR Gods: all skills.
- ☞ Groam consists of Hourani who dedicate themselves to the pursuit of magic (no matter the type or source). It offers +30 Archaic Science: Research: Experimentation & Sage Science; and +10 all Religion: Demonology skills.
- ☞ Illiomis is comprised of the entertainers of the Hourani. It offers +50 Professional Crafts: any one skill; +10 Myth & Lore: Fabled Lands: any 5 skills; +10 Travel: Terrain Knowledge: any 3 skills; and +30 Dark Arts: any 1 Prestidigitation skill.
- ☞ Porter is the dark House of Hourani, full of misfits, assassins, and thieves. It offers +10 Dark Arts: any 3 Prestidigitation skills; +10 Dark Arts: any 2 Subterfuge Skills; +10 Combat: HTH: Howling Wind; and +5 Entertainment: Athletics: Tumbling.
- ☞ Rosenthal is completely made up of Lunar priests to the Dragon Faith. It offers +10 Religion: Gods: any 2 skills; +10 Religion: Demonology: any 2 skills; +5 Combat: HTH: Howling Wind; and +5 Dark Arts: Subterfuge: Pass without Trace and Concealment & Camouflage.
- ☞ Wayne is the monk Hourani historians. It offers +50 Scholastics: History OR Research: all skills.
- ☞ Raidir comprises all female Hourani and also contains the priestesses of the Dragonfay Terran sect. It offers +10 Leadership: Statecraft: all skills; +20 Leadership: Civilian: Grapevine; +15

Domestic: Farm: Plant & Cultivate; and +20 Myth & Lore: Heroes & Heroines: Hourani.

Unknown skills

Hourani also suffer the following limitations as far as initial skill choice goes:

- ☞ Can only choose Wizardry from Magic
- ☞ Can only choose City-States of Neoun from Myth & Lore: Fabled Lands
- ☞ Can only choose Human and Hourani from Myth & Lore: Heroes and Heroines.
- ☞ Cannot learn languages besides Low Speech, High Speech, and Hourani
- ☞ Cannot become literate in any other but Olde Human and Hourani
- ☞ Cannot learn the Terrain Knowledge & Tactics: Arctic, Desert, or Swamp skills.

Weapons & armor

All characters with access to the Hourani culture can arm and equip themselves with the weapons and armor shown in Tables 3 and 4 (back on pages 4 and 5).

Hourani cultural skills

HTH Combat (10): The Hourani version of unarmed combat is called the Howling Wind and resembles brawling maneuvers when the Hourani are in human form, doing non-lethal (WP) fist damage with all attacks. In natural form, however, the Howling Wind involves a great deal of dodging and rolling, with quick slashes to face, tendons, arteries, as well as bite attacks to the forearms, knees, and throat. Damage is lethal (affects HPs) and appears as Howling Wind HTH on the Weapons table.

Natural Form (12): Hourani are born resembling human babies and only "discover" their natural form when reaching puberty. During adolescence, Hourani have a hard time controlling their change. This skill starts out with 0 at age 13 and increases by 5 for every 3 months after that (or 20 points every year), until the Hourani is 18 and has total control over the change (i.e., a 100 in the skill). Control can be earned earlier, at a cost of 10 times the normal EPs needed per skill point.

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Hourani who fail an attempt to change are stuck in their current form for one hour before trying again. Hourani who critically fail their change become a mindless raging beast of unequal proportion for one hour, attacking everything in sight and not remembering any of it when they return to normal. This enraged, mindless state is extremely dangerous, due to the possibility of contracting the bloodlust curse.

As mentioned back in the "Description" section, when in natural form, Hourani undergo the following modifications:

- ✎ +2 to Strength and Stamina
- ✎ +3 to Awareness and Confidence
- ✎ -2 to Logic, Etiquette, and Charisma
- ✎ -3 to Avoidance
- ✎ Nightvision (120'), lending a lantern-red cast to the eyes visible up to 20' away.
- ✎ +10 to Tracking rolls
- ✎ Claws and fangs, both used in Howling Wind, using that HTH skill as the base. Strength bonuses to damage are only added to claws.

Grobber Gestures (4): This group of hand gestures represents what little "literacy" grobbers possess and offers an effective method of silent communication. The skill is common among the lower class, especially with thieves.

High Speech (10): The elicit pronunciation of High Speech comes from the lost Southern Human Empire, derived from the lands of Olde Mulgra. High Speech is very easy to understand but increasingly difficult to use properly amongst the higher castes of humans.

Hourani Speech (10): The spoken language of the Hourani is a well-kept secret, much like the other Hourani traditions, and is a more sophisticated version of High Speech.

Hourani Literacy (12): Originally comprised of the Neuonian alphabet, this language has now adopted its own set of 128 different characters.

Low Speech (6): The language of the commoner and the poor, Low Speech is a hybrid of High Speech and the forgotten languages of the grobber races, mixed with a smattering of Shattered Dwarven and laced with Elven. Low Speech was the common language of everyone in the Age of Myth. Understandably, when races intermingle, it forms the basis of most understandable communication. Hourani never converse with each other (only with outsiders) in Low Speech. Low Speech does not have a written form.

Olde Human Literacy (12): This is the written version of High Speech, similar to Earth's Old Latin, and using

the equivalent of the roman alphabet (with twenty-six similar but more archaic letters). Only the upper class and a small portion of the middle class can actually read Olde Human, which predates the Age of Discovery. The form of Olde Human surviving the Great Cataclysm is called the Scripta Finalis, or "the last runes".

Predator form: Female Hourani (and only female) can choose among human, Hourani, and predator form, this last being the shape of a huge timber wolf. Their fur color remains the same as that of their Hourani form, but their eyes become a brilliant blue.

Size level: 4

HPs: 1/2 human form

WPs: Same as human form

Soak: Same as human form

Height: 4' at shoulder

Weight: Same as human form

Movement: 14

Initiative base: Normal

Damage bonus: +20

Initiative cost: Claw+bite (WC6): Att 30

Damage: Claw/Bite: A2 B4 C7 D10 E14 F19 G25 H30

OCF: Claw/Bite: HTH OCF + 30

Dodge: Human DCF + 30

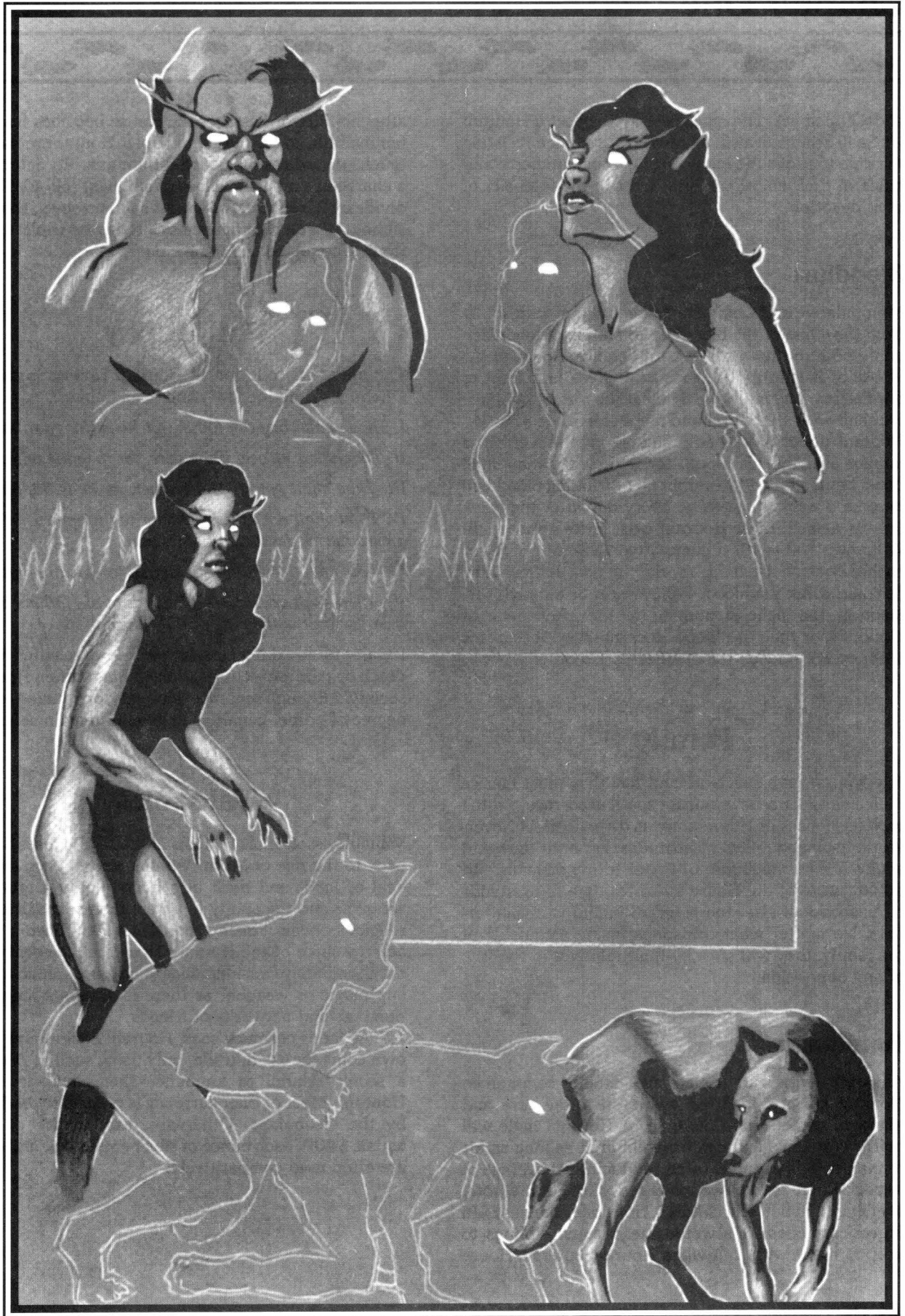
Special: +60 to all Subterfuge skills. Predator Raidirs can knock down foes, just as real timber wolves.

Call Wolf: Gather d10 wolves per half hour of howling. When the howling stops, the Hourani may command the wolves by successfully making a Confidence check, with a difficulty of the number of wolves present. If the roll fails, the wolves leave; a critical failure means the wolves try to rip the Hourani apart. A critical success makes the strongest wolf present the Hourani's companion/familiar for its lifetime.

Psychology

As far as gender stereotypes go, Hourani society was once completely male-dominated, so many concepts of courtesy and respect have derived from strict human etiquette learned by the Hourani during the Age of Myth. The male Hourani are still trying to adjust to the appearance of the ninth female-based House but refuse to let the outside world know this. Due to their upbringing, Hourani males have a hard time treating women as full equals but are respectful and total loyal to their wives and the members of House Raidir.

As far as personal psychology goes, Hourani believe in honor, personal wisdom, and strength of mind,



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body, and spirit. The quickest way to upset a Hourani is to call him a coward, as he has a hard time resisting the urge to prove the insult wrong. Most are fierce and quick in their emotions, or at least in the intensity of their devotion.

Bloodlust

Manipulative and Complete Taker Hourani suffer fully from the curse of the bloodlust by the time they reach adulthood. In the words of Lord Balentin Aorik, of the House of Balentin, "The gods have given us a limit to our desires. As long as we dwell at the side of humans, we shall wear their form and not drink of their blood." Hourani under the bloodlust curse must never kill a human or drink his blood, for if they do, they shall crave human blood forever. In fact, drinking blood will become a weekly necessity. Every day after the week limit is passed, these Hourani must make a successful Willpower roll, with a cumulative difficulty of 1 for each day after the limit, or kill the next human they find and drink the blood. Willpower rolls must also be made at the sight of humans or the smell/taste of blood. Note that the blood does nothing special for them except quench the madness for another week.

Family

The Hourani are survivors and feel they must ensure their safety as a new and inexperienced race, so the various Houses of Hourani are as diversified as Never-World itself and reflect all attitudes. From the dark and sticky side of the House of Porter to the majestic and noble nature of the House of Cortez, one thing stands clear above all else: the Hourani family is unshatterable. No matter what transpires inside or outside of the family, they will stick by their relatives in the face of any opposition.

Family size

Although twins and triplets are actually common in Hourani society, identical twins are quite rare and identical triplets even more so. A Hourani male will marry only once and can have children as long as his human wife is capable, often producing an average of two children every two or three years, for a total average of about ten children from one marriage. In human societies, this would mean many siblings to keep in touch with, but when Hourani enters a House

after his Rite of Passage, the House becomes his new family. Still, many twin and triplet Hourani remain in touch, regardless of House differences. To determine a character's actual number of siblings, roll 4d10 and divide by 2, rounding down. As said, however, the only sibling of true significance are twins or triplets, and those who joined the same House.

Philosophy

The universal code for all Hourani Houses is the *Jus Divinum* or "divine law", and is as follows:

I. Thou shalt obey thy father, for he is thy guardian.

II. Thou shalt respect thy elders, for they art wise.

III. Thou shalt not kill thy brother, for he is thy blood.

IV. Thou shalt not bring dishonor to thy name, for thou art an Aorik, descendent of Groam.

V. Thou shalt not shame thy House, for it is thy provider.

VI. Thou shalt remember the words of thy fathers before thee, for that is the way of the Hourani.

Penalty for breaking most of these laws remains either death by public execution or banishment from Hourani society. Although sentence does vary, depending on the degree of crime, penalties in general remain severe.

Valuables

Valuable assets include items of the nine Houses dating back to the Age of Myth. Various Houses own a great deal of land, and most also have quality armor and weapons and the ability to access intense magical and religious power. Finally, good allies have been a valuable resource of the Hourani since their young beginnings, and they consider allies to be more valuable than any magic or weapon, as there is always strength in numbers and networks of friends.

As far as currency goes, Hourani do not mint their own coins for use in trade, only using such as perhaps a secret symbol to announce themselves to other Hourani. Most of their currency is minted or produced by the Neunionians. Otherwise, each ounce of gold equals \$400, each ounce of silver equals \$5, and gems are often used comparatively.

The Hourani culture



Society

Social relations

All Houses except Porter and Rosenthal (and a few from the House of Groam) tend to follow the Giver pathway. Members of a Giver House accept responsibility for themselves and freely donate their time and efforts to the causes of the Hourani race. A member of a Taker House is still brutally efficient in getting his job done but has no conscience as to how he goes about it.

- ✧ *Strife:* Some believe the Houses of Cortez and Porter to be enemies of each other, but animosity has greatly declined between the two due to the Jus Divinum. As far as external sources of strife go, the culture's enemies have long since disappeared with the Unholy Ages. Yet, Hourani still remember how humans persecuted them in the Age of Myth; some remain very bitter, and even those who are not still do not wear their natural forms around humans (including even Houses Porter and Rosenthal, who like the other Houses do not support ignorant and rebellious displays of power).
- ✧ *Pawns:* Pawns are only found with the Porters, Rosenthals, and Black Mages of Groam, usually consisting of weak-willed humans but also including Orcs and Goblins. The Porters have an entire network of pawns in both cultures who are too afraid to try and escape their social shackles.
- ✧ *Followers:* Hourani prefer their followers to have a high degree of integrity and honor, and even then will only choose those who are ambitious. Followers must have strong wills and indomitable spirits that give them courage to face their fears, as well as strong perception to open their minds to wisdom.

Cultural obligations

The Dragon Faith religion is strong--so much so that that most of the culture believes they are symbolically connected to Dragons. Whether or not this is true, many Priests turn to the help of lesser Dragons when dealing with powerful enemies and usually pay a high price for their services. As far as commitment goes, most Hourani are devoted to their own culture and will die to protect any secrets that have given Hourani power throughout history (such as the laboratory of Groam or knowledge of the runeswords Dalinius and Jeremia).

Racial goals

Hourani strive to preserve harmony between themselves and humans (namely, the Neuonians), and to build stronger family lines that will eventually provide a great dynasty.

Civilian formations

Hourani were said to be born during the Age of Myth. Supposedly, a Wolfihn wizard named Groam and his shapeshifter lover conceived Kahlil Aorik, the first of the Hourani race in recorded history. Kahlil in turn married a human female and produced eight sons. Each son had a different profession to follow and eventually set out to establish a House both of their name and task. And from that auspicious beginning did the Hourani race bloom like a flower in the morning sun, growing and prospering with each new generation. Though the father and his original eight sons have long since passed away, the Houses bearing their names still exist as the Hourani continue their struggle for survival and recognition.

Traditionally, the Hourani have always been a race of diversity and adventurousness. After the Great Cataclysm that marked the end of the Age of Myth and began the current Age of Discovery, the various Houses mended their differences and ended any traditional rivalries, resulting in an internal harmony unlike that of other races. For a long time, the fact that all Hourani were male created a unique fraternal bond between members, and the recent appearance of the female House Raidir has not broken this bond but hopefully matured and expanded it to include both genders. And the fierce loyalty of this bond is strongly reinforced with the code of honor called the Jus Divinum.

The jewel of the Hourani is their capital city, Cortez, home to the House of Cortez, a thriving center for trade and adventure. Many ancient buildings from the Age of Myth still stand tall and proud within this city. The remaining Houses are spread throughout the Neuon city-states, concentrated in the capitals (except for the House of Wayne, secluded in a monastery in a distant mountain range).

All Hourani, regardless of religious affiliation (or lack thereof), have one belief in common, viewed with grave sincerity: the Dies Irae, which means "the day of wrath". Every NeverWorld culture has its own version of this day of judgment, although each treats it differently. With the Hourani, Armageddon is considered the final event of the world, although it may be postponed indefinitely. The scriptures of Fidei Draconus, as foretold by Jeremia (the Prophet of Armageddon) state that

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When the world has sinned too grievously, so shall come the Day of Wrath. There shall be great floods as the tears of the Gods fall from the heavens, the land shall be frozen as Death steals the warmth of life from the very earth, and the sun shall not shine as the shadow of evil is cast over the world. Man and beast alike shall tremble with fear as the False Prophet releases the army of the dead to destroy the living. So shall mankind perish, by the hands of his own sins, and the Dragons shall leave the world forever.

Arma Devorare or "the weapon which devours" is what Hourani call weapons of the rune. The Hourani's fate as a race has been inexorably intertwined with that of runed weapons for as long as anyone can remember, and over the course of time, Hourani have become the self-appointed guardians of two: Dalinius, the Third Eye of the Gods, and Jeremia, the Prophet of Armageddon. Both of these Devorare weapons have been handed down from one Hourani wielder to the next, from generation to generation, and as a result have become integral to Hourani history and culture. Unfortunately, the weapons' current whereabouts and the identities of their respective wielders are presently unknown.

Hourani children are generally raised by their father, grandfather, or any number of elder grandfathers within direct descent of the family name--possible because Hourani live (on the average) for 800+ years. Although the mother may care for the boy domestically, it is not considered her place to educate him, and it is through the paternal guidance that he will learn the Hourani ways and professions.

When the Hourani boy reaches puberty (at about age 13), he begins to develop the ability to shapechange into his natural form--something that gets easier to control with age. At the same time, the boy is allowed (and required) to choose his desired career. It is neither uncommon nor unfavorable for a Hourani to choose a career different from that of his father, although everyone knows that choosing a different career will likely mean that the child will be taken from his parent to the appropriate House. In these cases, a sponsor or "foster" father assumes the responsibility to teach him.

During the teen years, the Hourani is said to be "on the path to manhood," and when he finally reaches the age of 18, he performs his "rites of passage" into manhood. At this point, the youth has now "mastered the beast"--gained complete control of his shapechange ability--and has also finished being educated in the basic knowledge of his chosen career. Being firmly indoctrinated in the Hourani ways, it is now time for him to begin his adult life as a full House member.

Comparatively speaking, Hourani reach adulthood quickly and retain their youth for quite some time, at least compared to humans. The estimated life span of a Hourani is about 800 years, and the six surviving children of Kahlil Aorik were all between 600-700 years old when they perished in the Great Cataclysm. Strangely enough, the fate of Kahlil Aorik himself remains a nagging mystery for the Hourani to this day.

Military formation

The House of Cortez requires a slightly more complicated ranking system between each of its two armies (Armata Nobilitas--"Army of Nobility"--and Armata Draconus--"Army of the Dragon"), but the titles are comparable as to allow smooth personnel transfers from one army to the other. The Army of Nobility is the all-purpose force used to protect and secure Hourani interests from foreign enemies, while the Army of the Dragon (or the Holy Army of Dragonfay, as it is also known) is used specifically to protect the Dragon Faith's religious interests. Serving in either army is a great honor and a position of great respect. Furthermore, entrance into the Army of Nobility is extremely competitive, and even Hourani desiring to join the Army of the Dragon must first successfully complete ten years of service in the Army of Nobility. Also, the Holy Army is comprised only of officers, with those not actually holding a rank considered to be knights in that army instead.

Government

The leader of each House is the oldest and wisest member, and usually a direct descendent of the House nobility (i.e., descended from the appropriate son of Kahlil). These nine House leaders form the Council of Elders and are responsible for all internal and external matters of Hourani affairs, such as the passing and enforcing of laws, the making of treaties with humans, and the warring with other nations. Each Lord (or Lady, in the case of Raidir) lives in one of the city-states, with the exception of the Lord of House Porter whose whereabouts are unknown. Currently, there are only seven House Lords and the Lady of House Raidir, as House Cortez has not appointed anyone to the position (although the Duke of Cortez generally serves as spokesman for that House and its political interests). The Duke also rules the City-State of Cortez, as part of a communal government with the dukes of the other six city-states. Ranking systems for each House can be found in Chapter 2.



Science/Technology

Neunionians and Hourani are completely medieval and have not yet perfected things like black powder, nor applied scientific reasoning to everything under the realm of physics (which is more myth right now than science). The few schools of true study tend to be under the magic colleges, so many people confuse the properties of physics with those of Wizardry and do not know what the word "science" really means as per today's Earth definition. Still, water power is used for mills, and wind power is used for sailing, drilling, and pumping (via windmills). The printing press is not far away, and clocks are actually just around the corner.

Myth & legend

Dark pawns

Takers in Hourani society rely on human pawns to do their bidding. They are also known to use undead, but such servants are rare and therefore too valuable to send off on lengthy quests. Hourani of House Porter are masters of manipulation and deception, and enjoy using humans against other humans. Hourani of House Rosenthal work in more mysterious (but more satisfying) ways.

Lesser demons

This list includes Baal-Rogs, Cretans, Cacodaemons, Succubus of Satan, Incubus of Jixxism, Paannns, and Fire Wyrms. The only difference in known evils plaguing the culture is that Hourani have become acquainted with a particular greater demon known as Gorenger the Cruel, who has supposedly made a home for himself in the frozen wastelands of Redwood. Though none have yet journeyed there to validate the rumor, demonologists of House Groam are said to be looking into the matter.

Greater demons

Jixxism, Purl, Yllynix, Wyrxcun

Devils

Satan, Beelzebub, Nicodemis, Archimedes

Legendary evil: The Krulak

Size level: 6

HPs: 370

WPs: 100

Soak: 15

Movement rate: 20

Height: 12' 6"

Weight: 700 lbs

Advantages: Stre 4, Agil 10, Stam 9, Refl 10, Awar 10, Appe -9, Avoi 5

Damage bonus: +34

Initiative base: +100

Initiative costs: Claw/Bite: Att 60, Par 24

Weapon damage:

Claw: A5 B10 C14 D18 E28 F40 G54 H70

Bite: A8 B14 C20 D26 E42 F60 G82 H105

OCF: Claw/Bite (WC12): 80

DCF: Claw (WC12): 80

Dodge: +100

Armor: 6

Magic/Metaphysics: None

Skills: Low Speech, Hourani Language, Ambush, Pass w/o Trace, Prowling, Pursuit & Evasion, Scaling, Terrain Knowledge (all)

Special: Natural invisibility, ultravision, Sense Power, natural regeneration (10 HPs / round), impervious to normal weapons and poison, half-damage from magical weapons and normal fire

Number appearing: 1 (unique)

Location: City States of Neuron

Diet: Any meat (prefers Hourani)

Treasure: None

The Krulak is over twelve feet tall and four feet wide at the shoulders. It has the backwards legs of a canine, ending in the clawed feet of a reptile. Its muscular arms end in hands with long multi-jointed fingers, tipped with barbed claws the size of daggers. Its huge body is covered in a coarse, shaggy gray fur with black and dark gray streaks, thinning out near its forearms and calves. Its nebulous eyes actually shed darkness, and its two-foot maw is filled with dozens of long razor sharp teeth. Even its blood is as black as coal. The Krulak is strong enough to rip a horse in half, its teeth and claws sharp enough to tear through plate armor like wet paper, and its body quick and agile enough to outrun a Thelis on the open plain or a Driseti in the trees. Very versatile, it can adapt to any terrain, performing with equal proficiency no matter its whereabouts.

If the Krulak is ever reduced to 0 HPs or less, it will lapse into unconsciousness until natural regeneration revives it. Even being completely obliterated, it can still regenerate, although needing a substantially

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longer time. The Krulak recovers WPs according to standard Tome rules. It takes full damage only from magical fire, spells, and rune weapons. The creature can also remove its own invisibility if desired, so as to terrify its victims before killing them.

The Krulak is a creature of such immense evil and malevolence that the Hourani regard it as an enemy of their race. They believe the beast to have been spawned during the Unholy Ages. Some rumor it to be a Hourani named Serrek, unioned with a demon, while others believe it to be some dark angel of a demon lord, cast out as a threat to hell itself. In any case, the Krulak is a creature of immense power, with cruelty beyond measure and existing only to destroy. It pleasures in inflicting pain and inspiring fear in all mortal creatures and devours those it slays. Its penchant for Hourani flesh has led to the race's eternal enmity for it.

No known weapon forged by man can harm the Krulak, and even burning it to ashes and scattering the remains upon the four winds would only stop it temporarily, until it reformed. Only weapons of the rune or the cleansing fire of a god are thought to be able to destroy it forever. It can perceive auras at will and can see in the ultraviolet spectrum. It is naturally invisible and capable of astoundingly fast regeneration. Worst of all, the Krulak is swift and cunning, intelligent and even capable of speech.

The Krulak is thought to have been sealed away for the last several centuries, locked in some mystical prison created by several Dragonfay High Priests who perished in the process. To many young Hourani, the Krulak is nothing more than a fairy tale told to scare disobedient children. Yet, its known cruelty is a very terrifying reality, and those who believe it to exist fear the evil the Krulak could cause if it ever escapes its mystical bonds.

Travelling

The majority of the Hourani population travels on foot, with mules and horses being used to carry tools or packs, etc. Only a small percentage of people ride horseback, and doing so in the streets of any city state is only allowed by cavalry, city guard, militia and royalty.

Carriages and coaches are used for travel between major cities, and Hourani maintain several travel services that can be chartered by any citizen of the city states. Those people of importance who travel outside the city walls always go with a guard entourage, to protect against ambush (commonly by goblins and orcs).

Boats and ships are used mainly for trade, not for travel. Other than certain spell magic, Hourani have not developed any form of flying or underground transportation.

Applicable terrain information

Hourani dwell in the Neuonian city-states. While inside a city, one is relatively safe. Housing and land is expensive, true, but each city has delights and pleasures unknown to the rural survivalist. In general, city gates open at dawn and closes one hour after sunset. The major cities are located at least 100 miles apart from each other, with small towns and villages inbetween. The Great River and the Coachman's Highway are the most secure travel routes. Other lesser-travelled routes are susceptible to Goblin and Orc raids, especially at night. Anywhere more than five miles away from civilization (a town or city) should be considered dangerous.

The land itself is comprised of small forests and expansive fields. High hills stretch down from the World's Crown mountain range, and on occasion a stretch of canyon can be discovered. The Great River splits the city states in half, from north to southeast.

Final words

Despite their great abilities, Hourani do have their weaknesses, just like any other race. For one, Hourani are generally hated and feared by all rural humans and will be hunted by them if recognized as such. For another, the actual transformation is not always a controlled process and can cause trouble in stressful situations, where the change is not desired. The transformation itself, in addition to the glowing red eyes, canine teeth, Wolfihn features, and long claws, will either cause other races--including peasants and low-level adventurers--to attack or flee in terror, no exception, making it difficult to relate to other cultures. Thus, the life of a Hourani is often one of secrecy, fearing rejection from others.

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Houses & careers



Jobs and Professions that should be possible for a generated character to begin with include the following: Medic, Mimic, Sage, Guardian, Recruit, Warrior, Initiate, Acolyte, Wizards Apprentice, Ronin Wizard, Itinerant, Musician, Actor, Painter/Sculptor, Poet, Juggler, Employee, Bodyguard, Merc, Black Pawn, Fleshmaster, Monk, Monitor, and Monastery Guard.

Because Hourani coexist with Neunionians in most city-states, they are able to acquire any career a Neunionian could have, although they can only rise to the rank of Duke (and then only in Cortez). Careers mean a great deal to Hourani, and they strive hard to be the best in their professional fields. The first major decision a Hourani makes, the career can be chosen anytime after he has made his first transformation into natural form. Note that careers in Hourani culture are delineated by House, and when a Hourani chooses a career, he changes affiliation to the House overseeing that career.

For more information about how Jobs, Professions, and careers fit into game play, reference Chapter 1 ("Fleshing out characters") in the Tome.

House of Balentin

Uno animo ("with one mind")

Colors: A green border on a field of black

The home of all Hourani who possess the superhuman ability of psionics, Balentin is located in the Homeland Bay area, five miles north east of Harndin. This House, like all others that once lived in the Grasslands, was driven south by the first ogre invasions on the human kingdom. Balentin Aorik, the first son of Kahlil, was a master metapsychic who went to the Homeland Bay area with his eight sons to start a new sort of life, mixing the strength of mind with physical spirit. Balentin believed that, because of the continuing purity in the Hourani race, it was possible to birth a completely psionic strain. So far, over the last four hundred years, his scientific documentation shows

that the appearance of psionics in Hourani offspring has still been a random process.

The House of Balentin has been responsible for keeping the blood pact honest among all Houses, ensuring that Hourani do not fight each other without especially good reason. With the ability to clearly see future events, they have managed to avoid heavy conflicts that would have led to certain Hourani extinction. Even the evil Houses of Porter and Rosenthal are considered full Hourani brothers and deserve the care and attention of Balentin. Still, there are times when even the strength of the House of Balentin becomes taxed while they keep peace, and occasionally the Houses of Cortez and Rosenthal become very hostile with each other.

Balentin is also the home to the Skull of Krienou Illatiu—called the Skull of Krienou by those few who know of it. Belonging to a ghastly psionic, the skull was found at the outskirts of Ft. Mirr after the Battle of Groam and Raven versus Tezlokian the Syvyn and the Darkelf. This skull has been known to do a number of things. For one, any psionic who drinks the blood of a doppelganger from the skull and makes a successful Physical save with a 50 difficulty will have his powerbase automatically doubled. If the save fails, nothing happens unless the psionic drinks again—and this time he instantly dies, no save allowed. (Note that Balentin has not released this fact as general knowledge, believing that worthy psionics should be able to foresee their own potential futures.) Second, if any non-psionic drinks his own blood from the casing and makes a successful Physical save with a 100 difficulty, he will be granted psionic power with Sphere 10 potential. Those who fail the save die instantly as their own brains explode due to the overload of metaphysical power. Note that even those who make the save and become psionics have the potential to become possessed by Krienou Illatiu himself, for Krienou's spirit waits patiently for a chance to strike out through the guise of someone's good intentions.

The House of Balentin has no rank structure aside from the distinction of the Lord of the House. Balentin is responsible for ensuring that members of the other Houses honor the code of Divine Law, and little escapes their notice due to their metaphysical abilities. They

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are also responsible for arresting, apprehending, and prosecuting Hourani who break the code, as they and they alone can fulfill the burden of proof with their extensive powers.

Balentin jobs

Medic

Masteries: Scholastics: Archaic Science 4

Pathways: Any

Advantages: Comp 3, Logic 2

Income: 1 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, quarters, surgical tools, medical supplies, horse, livery, basic equipment

Prerequisite: None

Medics are responsible for healing available injuries and keeping ailing patients alive. They are capable of performing some surgery and thwarting disease, and thus always carry equipment with them, even though they are not proper surgeons. Those with greater metaphysical powers work to understand the body from a scientific viewpoint as well, and have actually pondered possibilities of blood transfusion and bad tissue removal. Even though most metapsychics can heal themselves without scientific medicine, the Medic aims to teach the non-psychic, which in turn supports the community. Medics are always found at tournaments, festivals, high social gatherings, and are given a great deal of respect.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL4, +1 every 2 PL after

- ☞ +1 Comprehension
- ☞ +60 in *Sense Injury* (20): Allows the Medic to determine whether an injury is physical or mental, as well its location and severity. Multiple injuries require multiple rolls (diagnoses).
- ☞ +30 in Scholastics: Archaic Science: Bandage & Bones
- ☞ +10 in Scholastics: Archaic Science: Disease
- ☞ +15 in Scholastics: Archaic Science: Surgery

Mimic (Mind Master's Apprentice)

Masteries: Scholastics 2, Leadership 2

Pathways: Any

Advantages: Awar 2, Conf 1, Logic 1

Income: 10 silver/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, quarters, personal tutor, library access, basic equipment, livery

Prerequisite: Metaphysics (complete S1)

The Mimic is one of thousands of fresh young students who wish to become a disciplined and powerful Mind Master. They must know all beginning powers of Sphere 1 and be granted entrance into the Academy for Metaphysics. A dime a dozen in the House Balentin, Mimics are usually quite cocky and arrogant. Although no entrance fee must be paid, only 3% of first-year students continue to actually become Mind Masters. Those Mimics who drop out usually switch to another house (typically Porter).

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL2, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Awareness
- ☞ +1 Confidence
- ☞ +5 Power Tolerance
- ☞ +20 Scholastics: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +10 Leadership: Any 1 skill

Sage

Masteries: Scholastics 6

Pathways: Any

Advantages: Comp 2, Logic 4, Awar 2

Income: 5 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, quarters, assistants, local Balentin library, livery, basic equipment

Prerequisite: Metaphysics (complete S2), Mimic (PL5)

Although similar to other sages—grand of stature in knowledge and wisdom—Balentin Sages are Mimics who have continued in the study and not the actual practice of metaphysics. Sages work to uncover the relations between mind and universe, in order to help people better master their powers. Sages of House Balentin often hold positions as travelling advisers to important officials or powerful adventurers, and those who do not travel often are caretakers of local libraries.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL6, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Awareness or Comprehension
- ☞ +60 in *Speedreading* (10): Allows the Sage to read volumes of information in 25% of the normal time. The Sage can also halve the time required for learning any skill that can be learned through reading.
- ☞ +15 Scholastics: Research: Any 1 skill



Guardian

Masteries: Combat 4, Leadership 4

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Refl 2, Awar 2, Logic 1, Conf 1, Pers 1, Etiq 1

Income: 3 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, private quarters, horse, weapons, armor, livery, basic equipment

Prerequisite: None

Guardians are protectors and diplomats for House Balentin and are seen everywhere around the libraries and at the walls and doors of the Balentin learning temples, dressed in their green and black armor. Guardians are those who deal with the general public and help to avoid conflicts with the ignorantly powerful. (In other words, they help to keep away nosy humans too bored and overconfident for their own good.)

Guardians serve for any military or policing actions needed by the House and are under strict orders to answer only to the head of the Temple or Library. They are quite serious about their job, and most await the time when they qualify to be a Mimic.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL4, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Reflex or Awareness
- ☞ +20 Combat: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +10 Leadership: Military: Discipline

Meta Spy

Masteries: Dark Arts 5, Travel 3

Pathways: Any

Advantages: Awar 4, Avoi 2

Income: PL in gold/mission

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, lodging, basic equipment, horse, livery

Prerequisite: Metaphysics (complete S3)

Meta Spies are messengers and watchers of the Lord of House Balentin, as well as tools for political manipulation in MetaWorld. Their most common mission involves projecting into MetaWorld and dealing with those who break the Hierarchy of Power within the Balentin fortress (for more info, see Chapter 4 in the Tome). Meta Spies are not always appreciated by those they spy on or intrude on, but they are still generally tolerated.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL4, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Awareness or Avoidance

☞ +60 in *Sense Deception* (14): Through keen observation of body language, the Meta Spy can determine whether or not a person is lying

☞ +15 Dark Arts: Subterfuge: Any 1 skill

☞ +10 Travel: Any 1 skill

Balentin professions

Surgeon

Masteries: Scholastics 7

Pathways: Any

Advantages: Pers 3, Dext 3, Logic 5

Income: LL in gold per operation/day

Required gear: None

Career assets: Surgical tools, medical supplies, horse, cart, assistants, livery, basic equipment, large home, servants, medical facilities

Prerequisite: Metaphysics (complete S5), Medic (PL7)

Surgeons are more than just the Neunionian surgeon equivalents. Those Surgeons of the House Balentin use metaphysics to increase the healing process and the patient's subsequent health. Any operation performable on 20th-century Earth can be performed these doctors, usually at a rate of one operation per day. Every wealthy, high-ranking Hourani has his own personal Surgeon at beck and call, and those Surgeons who travel with or work for a specific person get paid their LL in gold per week instead of per operation.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL7, +1 every 1PL

- ☞ +1 Pers
- ☞ +1 Dext
- ☞ +60 in *Analgesia* (20): The Surgeon can disconnect the patient's consciousness from any pain being felt.
- ☞ +20 Scholastics: Archaic Science: Any 1 skill

Mind Master (Instructor/Traveler)

Masteries:

Instructor: Scholastics 7 (all), Leadership 4, Entertainment 4

Traveler: Scholastics 5, Leadership 3, Dark Arts 3, Travel 4

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Awar 7 Conf 1, Pers 2, Logic 5 (instructor) or 3 (traveler)

Income: LLx2 in gold per month

Required gear:None

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Career assets: Food, temple, personal Surgeon, personal guard, supplies, livery, basic equipment

Prerequisite: Metaphysics (complete S5), Mimic (PL7)

There are two types of Mind Masters: those who remain at their local temple and instruct others in metaphysics, and those who travel the countryside trying to locate those willing to expand their minds. The temple Master enforces a strict code set by the Lord of the House to select only the most worthy applicants as pupils, and these pupils become Mimics—hopefully to ascend to future roles of leadership and eventually become Mind Masters. In this way, Mind Masters pass the torch of enabling the Hourani to solve its internal problems throughout the centuries.

Some Masters take on Mimics who are turned away after their first year, in order to teach them more about themselves. These Masters are personally involved with many such people and do not hesitate to step into political matters. They are generally honorable and used to setting good examples for others.

All Mind Masters are highly respected—they have reached at least S5 in metaphysics—and this gives them the ability and authority to scrutinize Hourani of others Houses, in order to enforce the brotherhood laws—primarily the Jus Divinum ("divine law"). The ultimate wish for Master Balentin before he died was to see the Hourani live in peaceful coexistence with one another, allowing all nine Houses to become one. Although the Houses are still separate and Balentin's dream might never be realized, the Masters still work hard to fulfill his wishes.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL5, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Awareness
- ☞ +5 power tolerance
- ☞ +60 in *Unconscious Thought* (20): Allows the Mind Master to maintain any one metaphysical power without having to concentrate on it or spend more WPs. WPs must only be spent (minus PT) to trigger the power, and when the Unconscious Thought power is rolled for successfully, the affected power can be maintained indefinitely, getting its energy straight from MetaWorld. The Mind Master can only maintain one power at a time, and all other powers used must be paid for and maintained at the normal cost. Unconscious Thought is a higher form of Imagination Engine.
- ☞ +20 Scholastics: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +15 Leadership: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +10 Entertainment: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +10 Dark Arts: Any 1 skill

☞ +5 Travel: Any 1 skill

Master Meta Spy

Masteries: Dark Arts 6, Leadership 6, Travel 4, Myth & Lore: Cities of Neuron 4

Pathways: Any

Advantages: Awar 7, Conf 3, Logic 2 Avoi 3, Pers 4

Income: PLx2 in gold per mission

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, lodging, basic equipment, horse, audience priority, livery

Prerequisite: Metaphysics (complete S5), Meta Spy (PL6)

The Master Meta Spy forges out into the rest of the world, seeking the unknown—something considered a suicidal job by most Balentins because most Meta Spies who travel that far never return. Some rumors suggest that Master Meta Spies have discovered other unknown races and become so intrigued by them that they take a permanent vacation from Hourani society. The Master Meta Spy has been granted audience priority with the Lord of the House in any matter of great importance, so as to facilitate the timely dissemination of information.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL5, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Awareness or Confidence
- ☞ +1 Avoidance or Perseverance
- ☞ +60 in *Sense Metaphysical Power* (20): The Master Meta Spy can sense not only when and where a metaphysical Power is being used, but also which power is being employed in a 10-yard radius per point of skill.
- ☞ +20 Dark Arts: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +5 Leadership: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +10 Travel: Any 1 skill

House Lord (Meta Lord)

Masteries: Leadership 10, Scholastics 10, Dark Arts 5

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Awar 10, Pers 5, Etic 3, Logic 8, Char 3, Comp 3, Conf 6

Income: 1000 gold/year

Required gear: None

Career assets: Control of House Balentin

Prerequisite: Metaphysics (complete S9), Mind Master or Master Meta Spy (PL10)

The Meta Lord knows all and tells little, operating a vast network of spies and guards to watch the Hourani



race and keep the Houses in balance. Note that the House Lord is not an adventuring position, unless the GM is running a "Lords of the Hourani" campaign where everyone plays an extremely powerful figure.

The House Lord spends every day receiving the latest information, responding with orders, and then spending his time examining the universe through metaphysics to better comprehend the true path of the Hourani. He spends most of his time in MetaWorld, in the Grand Fortress, making deals with lesser travelers and expanding the reach of his power. The House Lord has spies in every Hourani household and human town, village, and city, and can even cause the downfall of a noble or create a king if desired, due to his contacts. The only persons he does not have control over are the other seven Lords of the Hourani Houses, who are immune to his powers under normal circumstances—unless he decides to use Adjust Total Reality (S10).

House of Cortez

Aut vincere aut mori ("victory or death")

House colors: A blue border on a field of black

Army of Nobility colors: A gray border on a field of black

Holy Army of Dragonfay: A gold border on a field of white

The House of Cortez was originally the first army of the Church of Fidei Draconus and the supporting battalion to Castle Xarnasis until the time of the ogre invasions. At that point, the brother of Nightslayer arranged the assassination of Cortez Aorik I, which in turn began the immediate breakup of his House. Only the efforts of Lord General Connor Driskel, who called upon the remaining House members to defend Per-Saal, kept the surviving members of Cortez from spreading throughout the world for their fortunes, driving them instead to band together to protect those fleeing the defeated human kingdom and thus keeping them intact as a House throughout the long centuries.

The family of Cortez now resides in many different areas within the City-States of Neuon but still keeps in daily contact. Some live in the Hourani-built city of Cortez, founded by General Driskel and named after his House, while most others live in Harndin and Calcese. A few have attained the status of provincial sheriff and keep law and order in the more hostile areas of the Neuon city-states.

The word of a Cortez family member is an unbreakable promise, and as such is usually only given to those

who command the same respect and hold the same virtues as a member of the House. Those Hourani of Cortez who break their word are automatically banished from the House, forced to wander stripped of their names or else join the House of Porter—full of thieves, assassins, and the cruelest of knights and paladins.

During the Golden Years of the Human Kingdom, the House of Cortez held the holy armor of the Dragonfay, worn by Cortez Aorik himself until his assassination. After that, the armor was stolen by the House of Porter and then lost again. Some say it was sold to a collector in the Cities of Neuon, while others say that Porter Aorik still hides it amongst his treasure of ill-gotten trophies.

Many who wish to join House Cortez find themselves unworthy of the alignment and code, and over two-thirds turn to House Porter and become corrupt. Accordingly, the House of Cortez grows slowly but strongly, with their greatest feat being their shared leadership. Since the death of Cortez Aorik, no one has attempted to ascend to the seat of Lord of the House, partly because the brothers of the House can act uncannily as if possessing one will. As of January 1, 2244 AM, Lord General Connor Driskel (House spokesman) declared that no one would ascend to Lord of the House.

Cortez members constitute most of the Army of Nobility, as well as all the Holy Army of the Dragonfay. Service in the Army of Nobility is mandatory for at least one solid term, and any proper citizen of the Neuon city states is eligible to join. The House of Cortez imposes its principles of truth and the chivalric code on Hourani and non-Hourani alike. Conversely, service in the Holy Army is completely volunteer and restricted to Dragonfay followers of the Sun. In addition, only those who have been knighted and have served at least ten years in the Army of Nobility have a chance of being accepted into the Holy Army. It should be known that it is considered a great honor to serve in either army, and that during any Ultima Ratio Regum ("time of war" both armies' membership criteria become much less stringent.

Cortez's ranking system is the most complicated of the eight Houses, with three distinct systems. The first ranking system, of their military structure for the Army of Nobility, is as follows:

- ☞ Recruit
- ☞ Warrior / Destrier / Archer
- ☞ Sergeant
- ☞ Sergeant at Arms
- ☞ Master Sergeant
- ☞ Lieutenant

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- ♣ Captain
- ♣ Commander
- ♣ General
- ♣ Martial Lord/Lord of the House

The second ranking system, of the Holy Army of the Dragon Faith's military structure, is as follows:

- ♣ Knight
- ♣ Lieutenant
- ♣ Captain
- ♣ Commander
- ♣ General

The third ranking system, for those in Cortez not affiliated with either army, is as follows:

- ♣ Recruit
- ♣ Warrior / Destrier / Archer
- ♣ Ivory Guard
- ♣ Paladin
- ♣ Knight
- ♣ Sheriff
- ♣ Martial Lord/Lord of the House

Cortez Jobs

Recruit (Porter)

Masteries: Combat 3

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Stam 1, Refl 1, Stre 1

Income: 10 silver/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, quarters, basic equipment, livery

Prerequisite: None

All Cortez Hourani must begin as Recruits and eventually move on from there. As with all Houses, those Hourani not born into Cortez must be sponsored by an adopted Cortez family, who provides for their basic needs and training. Other than focusing on his studies, the aspiring Hourani performs the duties of Porter for his adopted family, to earn his keep. Those Hourani born into Cortez need not work for their real families in this manner.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL3, +1 every 2PL

- ♣ +1 Stamina
- ♣ +1 Reflex or Strength
- ♣ +20 Combat: Any 1 skill
- ♣ +15 Dark Arts: Subterfuge: Any 1 skill

- ♣ +10 Leadership: Military: Any 1 skill
- ♣ +5 Scholastics: History: Any 1 skill
- ♣ +10 Travel: Any 1 skill

Cortez professions

The mandatory one-term enlistment for Cortez members in the Army of Nobility can be entered at any point during adulthood, after age 18. Providing the Hourani applicant passes the screening process (a review board), he can join the army under a contract of service for at least five years—a length of time ensuring that the army receives some time in service from the individual in return for the time and money spent in training him. Unless the individual is released from service, failing to complete the five-year obligation is considered desertion and subject to judgment under the Jus Divinum or (as it is better known) the Code of the Hourani.

Upon enlistment, the recruit is placed in one of three entry level positions, depending on the branch he chooses to train in (infantry, cavalry, or artillery). Each branch has certain training requirements that must be met before the prospective soldier is fully accepted into its ranks, with three phases of training per branch. For each phase, the Recruit receives a title representing his current level of training in that branch, and the duties of his title are commensurate with his level of training. Once the individual has fulfilled his initial service obligation, he is free to leave or to continue his service under no further obligation or stipulation.

Warrior (Footman, Infantryman)

Masteries: Combat: Blades 5, Dark Arts: Subterfuge 3

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Stam 3, Refl 2, Stre 2

Income: 1 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, private barracks, armor, weapons, livery

Prerequisite: +2 to current age (for training and duty); Recruit (PL5)

The Footman is the beginning of the Warrior's path and one of three entry level positions into the Army of Nobility. The first phase of training is accomplished over a six-month period, after which the recruit is given the title of Footman and has learned the special skill Forced March, with a 60 rating. During peacetime, Footmen share duty as Escorts.

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After the second training phase ends in six more months, the Footman is given the title of Infantryman and has learned the special skill Paired Weapons. Infantrymen have moved beyond basic ranks and established themselves as superior ground troops. During peacetime, Infantrymen perform rotating duty as City Guard for Cortez. An Infantryman performs generally as the best fighter in a unit of Footmen, but occasionally special units of Infantrymen will be formed to employ certain tactical maneuvers.

Forced March (6): The Footman can travel on foot for long distances without rest, with the exact amount of time he can move at a particular rate (before requiring rest) increased as follows: walking, x4; jogging, x3; and running, x2. Note that this is not an increase in the movement rate but in the amount of time that rate can be maintained. When the march is complete, normal rest is required. Footmen who neglect to rest will suffer normal Willpower loss, times the multiplier of the movement rate he performed.

Flourentine Weapons: The Infantryman has developed his fighting skills enough that he can simultaneously use two weapons of the same type. The weapon chosen cannot be larger than a shortsword. Infantrymen first learn the shortsword, but they can elect to take this skill again for each additional weapon desired. The Init cost for paired weapons is half-normal for attacks and parries only, and there is no off-hand weapon penalty.

The third and last phase of training for this branch takes one year to complete, after which the Infantryman is given the title of Warrior and officially begins his soldier career. Warriors are shock troops for the Army of Nobility and are sometimes divided into specific areas of skills and combat capability for special missions. During peacetime, Warriors perform rotating duty as Royal Guard for the Duke of Cortez. They are trained as the next generation of leaders in the Army of Nobility, are capable of handling themselves in all combat situations, and have earned the well-deserved reputation of being unstoppable fighting forces. A Warrior can command a unit of four men if necessary.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL4, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Stamina
- ☞ +1 Confidence or Perseverance
- ☞ **Weapon Mastery:** Has learned his weapon well enough that he can practically wield it in his sleep. The Warrior can choose one specific weapon in which he has received training (Blades only) to use in combat at 3/4 the normal WC.
- ☞ +20 Combat: HTH: Howling Wind
- ☞ +20 Combat: Blades: Any 1 skill

- ☞ +10 Dark Arts: Subterfuge: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +10 Leadership: Military: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +5 Travel: Terrain Knowledge: City

Destrier (Horseman, Cavalryman)

Masteries: Combat: Lances/Pole Arms 5, Blades 4; Travel: Animalship 3

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Agil 2, Refl 3, Stre 2

Income: 1 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, private barracks, livery, warhorse, barding, armor, basic equipment, weapons

Prerequisite: +2.5 to age (to account for training/duty); Recruit (PL5)

The Horseman is the beginning of the Destrier's path and is the second entry-level position into the Army of Nobility (and, in some respects, the most challenging). Following a full year of rigorous training, the recruit earns the title of Horseman, in addition to learning the special skill of Forced Riding. More time is spent in this entry-level position than in similar ones because the Horseman is expected to learn both about his weapons and how to tend his warhorse. Horseman are not expected to perform collateral duties as their contemporaries are, due to the intense nature of their training. They are each assigned a young charger of which they must first break and then train. Each charger is kept throughout the training and raised to maturity by the Horseman to which it was assigned, which ensures familiarity and forms a bond of kinship between the eventual Destrier and the mount.

With the basics learned, the Horseman spends the next six months combining combat maneuvers with horsemanship. When finished with his second phase of training, the Horseman is given the title of Cavalryman and has learned the special skill Jousting. The Cavalryman is the complete horsed warrior of the Army of Nobility—a swift and decisive force when choreographed against the enemy's ground troops. During peacetime, Cavalrymen perform rotating duty in and around Cortez as Grounds Patrol.

The last training phases lasts a year, after which the Cavalryman is given the title of Destrier, and it is from here that his career truly begins. The Destrier are the best all-around troops the Army of Nobility has to offer and are usually the first Hourani to encounter enemy in any battle, used to perform almost surgical strikes against foes at lightning speeds. During peacetime, Destrier perform rotating duty as Border Patrol. Groomed as possible future leaders in the army, these soldiers are also considered the most likely to become

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knighted. A Destrier can command a unit of four men, if necessary.

Forced Riding (10): After spending nearly every waking moment with their assigned charger, the training Destrier learns to become resourceful with standard horse equipment and the horse itself, allowing him to sleep on the back of a moving mount without falling, ride twice the normal distance before resting the horse, or use the horse for shelter during rough weather. The difficulty for "sleep-riding" is determined by the horse's speed and terrain type (GM's Creation). A horse that travels twice its normal range limitation requires only normal rest to recover. (Note that horses not specifically trained to double their range without rest can still do so but will die afterwards.)

Jousting: The Calvaryman understands how to increase the effects of lances and long swinging weapons while on horseback, adding a +2 shift to damage with these weapons from his warhorse.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL4, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Reflex
- ☞ +1 Confidence or Perseverance
- ☞ +20 Combat: HTH: Howling Wind
- ☞ +20 Combat: Lances/Pole Arms: Lance
- ☞ +10 Leadership: Military: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +10 Travel: Animalship: Combat, Riding, or Training
- ☞ +5 Travel: Terrain Knowledge: Fields/Plains
- ☞ **Weapon Mastery:** The Destrier is well-practiced enough with the lance or polearm that he can practically wield it in his sleep. With this ability, he can master one specific weapon in the lance/polearm category, reducing its WC by 25%.

Archer (Bowman, Long/Short/Crossbowman)

Masteries: Combat: Fired Weapons 5, Blades 4;
Travel: Terrain Knowledge 3

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Dext 3, Stam 2, Conf 2

Income: 1 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Materials for bow construction, personal barracks, food, armor, weapons, horse, livery

Prerequisite: +2.5 to age (for training and duty); Recruit (PL5)

The Bowman is the third entry-level position into the Army of Nobility. The first training phase lasts one year, during which all recruits choose a particular bow weapon as their specialty and in which to receive

training. Part of this training includes how to make the appropriate bow implements, as bows are complicated to make and difficult to maintain. After the first year, the recruit is given the title of Bowman and has learned the special skill Forced March with a 60 rating. During peacetime, Bowman perform a rotating duty as Search Parties.

After one more year of training, the Bowman receives the title of Longbowman, Shortbowman, or Crossbowman (depending on bow type) and has learned the special skill Fast Draw. Longbowmen are used primarily for medium-to-long range attacks, Shortbowman are used primarily for short-to-medium range attacks, and Crossbowman primarily find themselves in melee or short-range skirmishes. The most common variety is the Crossbowman, trained to form the classical yet effective staggered-interval firing ranks and to function as skirmishing lines if need be. During peacetime, these men perform rotating duty as Tower Guard.

The third phase of training lasts only six months long—comparatively shorter than the other branches, due to the limited selection of bow weapons in which to train, and the abundance of qualified trainers. At the end of the training, the Shortbowman, Longbowman, or Crossbowman is given the title of Archer, and it is here that his career in the Army of Nobility actually begins. The Archer is deadly when alone and devastating when in force, generally deployed on special missions to resolve certain undisclosed matters. These men are also crack shots—snipers who act as assassins for the Army of Nobility against important enemy targets. They also receive the benefit of leadership training in preparation for future positions of power. During peacetime, Archers work (by random selection) as Anti-assassins for the Duke of Cortez and other prominent members of the Hourani race. It is rumored that even some of the Hourani House Lords entrust these marksmen to keep them safe and secure. An Archer can command a unit of four men if necessary.

Forced March (6): The Bowman can travel on foot for long distances without rest, with the exact amount of time he can move at a particular rate (before requiring rest) increased as follows: walking, x4; jogging, x3; and running, x2. Note that this is not an increase in the movement rate but in the amount of time that rate can be maintained. When the march is complete, normal rest is required. Footmen who neglect to rest will suffer normal Willpower loss, times the multiplier of the movement rate he performed.

Fast Draw: The Bowman can quickly change up weapons without discarding them, spending only one-tenth of their normal attack Init cost. Typically, this change

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involves slinging the (cross)bow and drawing a sword, but the ability and lowered cost can be applied to *any* weapon change.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL4, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Dexterity
- ☞ +1 Confidence or Perseverance
- ☞ +20 Combat: Fired Weapons: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +10 Combat: HTH: Howling Wind
- ☞ +10 Combat: Blades: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +10 Leadership: Military: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +30 Professional Crafts: Weaponsmithing: Bowyer/Fletcher
- ☞ +15 Travel: Terrain Knowledge: Desert, Forestry, or Navigation
- ☞ *Weapon Mastery:* The Archer is well-practiced enough with a bow weapon that he can practically wield it in his sleep. With this ability, he can master one specific weapon in the Fired Weapons category, reducing its WC by 25%.

Sergeant

Masteries: Combat 6; Leadership: Military 2

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Conf 2, Pers 2

Income: 1.5 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, quarters, weapons, armor, horse, livery

Prerequisite: Warrior, Destrier, or Archer (any, at PL6)

The Sergeant is the first rung in the ladder of leadership in the Army of Nobility, responsible for writing the guard duty roster and overseeing the men. She is the first line supervisor in matters of organization and decision-making and thus an integral link in the chain of command. During peacetime, the Sergeant will perform duty as Sergeant of the Watch and can command a squad of ten men.

Retired Sergeants revert back to their former profession (e.g., Warrior, Destrier, or Archer) but do not lose any special skills gained by being a Sergeant.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL4, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Confidence or Perseverance
- ☞ +10 Combat: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +30 Leadership: Military: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +10 Scholastics: History: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +60 in *Pain Mastery (15)*: Can master pain, rather than be mastered by it, due to years of familiarity with being wounded. Although she cannot reduce

the actual damage taken nor stop bloodloss from occurring, the Sergeant can ignore the wounds effects (the pain) and act normally. The difficulty of the roll is determined by the wound's severity. A critical failure results in immediate unconsciousness, due to the great pain, while a critical success actually stops bloodloss and prevents further complications.

Sergeant at Arms

Masteries: Combat 7; Leadership: Military 3; Scholastics: History 1

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Conf 3, Pers 3

Income: 1.5 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, private quarters, horse, weapons, armor, livery

Prerequisite: Sergeant PL7

The Sergeant at Arms is one of the most respected men in the Army of Nobility, in charge of training new arrivals in the fine art of war. During peacetime, the Sergeant at Arms serves as an Instructor, and his responsibilities outside the training arena are kept to a minimum. Sergeant at Arms can command a squad of ten men when necessary.

Retired Sergeants at Arms revert back to their former profession (e.g., Warrior, Destrier, or Archer) but do not lose any special skills gained by being a Sergeant at Arms.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL3, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Etiquette or Style
- ☞ +5 Combat: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +30 Leadership: Military: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +20 Scholastics: History: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +15 Travel: Any 1 skill
- ☞ *Vital Points:* Through years of combat, practice, and training others in the art of war, the Sergeant at Arms has gained a keen sense of the more vulnerable parts of the human/Hourani body. Using Vital Points, he is able to make "called shots" during melee combat to vital points with no additional complexity (difficulty). This ability can only be applied to cultures in which the Sergeant at Arms has an emphasis.

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Master Sergeant

Masteries: Combat 7; Leadership: Military 4; Scholastics: History 2; Travel 2

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Conf 3, Pers 3, Etic 1, Style 1, Logic 1

Income: 2 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Private suite, small home, food, weapons, armor, horses, livery

Prerequisite: Sergeant at Arms (PL7)

The Master Sergeant is the highest attainable enlisted rank within the Army of Nobility. In peacetime, the army has only four Master Sergeants, although this number dramatically increases during war. Master Sergeants alone control the recruitment and admission rate for the Army of Nobility. When not dealing with logistics, their primary duties are to see to the training of Sergeants, as well as the army in general. They are also ultimately responsible for morale and discipline in the enlisted ranks. Despite their numerous administrative duties, these crafty men are capable fighters in any arena, more than eligible to become knighted and subsequently commissioned as an officer. The Master Sergeant can personally command a company of 50 men (five squads).

Retired Master Sergeants revert back to their former profession (e.g., Warrior, Destrier, or Archer) but do not lose any special skills gained by being a Master Sergeant.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL4, +1 every 2PL

☞ +1 Strength or Stamina

☞ +1 Confidence or Perseverance

☞ +20 Religion: Church: Education

☞ +10 Leadership: Military: Any 1 skill

☞ +20 Scholastics: History: Any 1 skill

☞ +10 Travel: Any 1 skill

☞ *Art of War:* By this time, the Master Sergeant has become so well acquainted with combat idiosyncrasies that he can teach any combat-related skill or improve any physical advantage in half the time. However, this skill can only be used to teach others; he cannot use the ability to improve himself. This bonus does not apply once the student reaches the same level (point-wise) as the Master Sergeant in the particular skill or advantage.

Lieutenant

Masteries: Combat 7; Leadership: Military 5; Scholastics: History 5; Travel 4

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Conf 3, Pers 3, Char 1, Etic 1, Logic 3

Income: LLx 2 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: All Knight assets; access to any reasonable item in the culture (GM decides item's availability)

Prerequisite: Knight (PL6)

The Lieutenant is the lowest-ranking officer in the Army but still an integral link in the chain of command. He works closely with the Master Sergeants, usually giving them a great deal of leeway in running the enlisted ranks and supporting their decisions when necessary. The Lieutenant's primary duties are maintaining discipline in the enlisted ranks, as well as coordinating the various patrols and guard duties performed in and around Cortez. A Lieutenant can command a battalion of 100 men (two companies).

Due to the special access that the Lieutenant has to goods and manpower, they receive no special skills. Retired Lieutenants revert back to their former profession of Knight.

Captain

Masteries: Combat 8; Leadership: Military 6; Scholastics: History 6; Travel 4

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Conf 3, Pers 3, Char 2 Etic 2, Logic 4, Style 1, Avoi 1

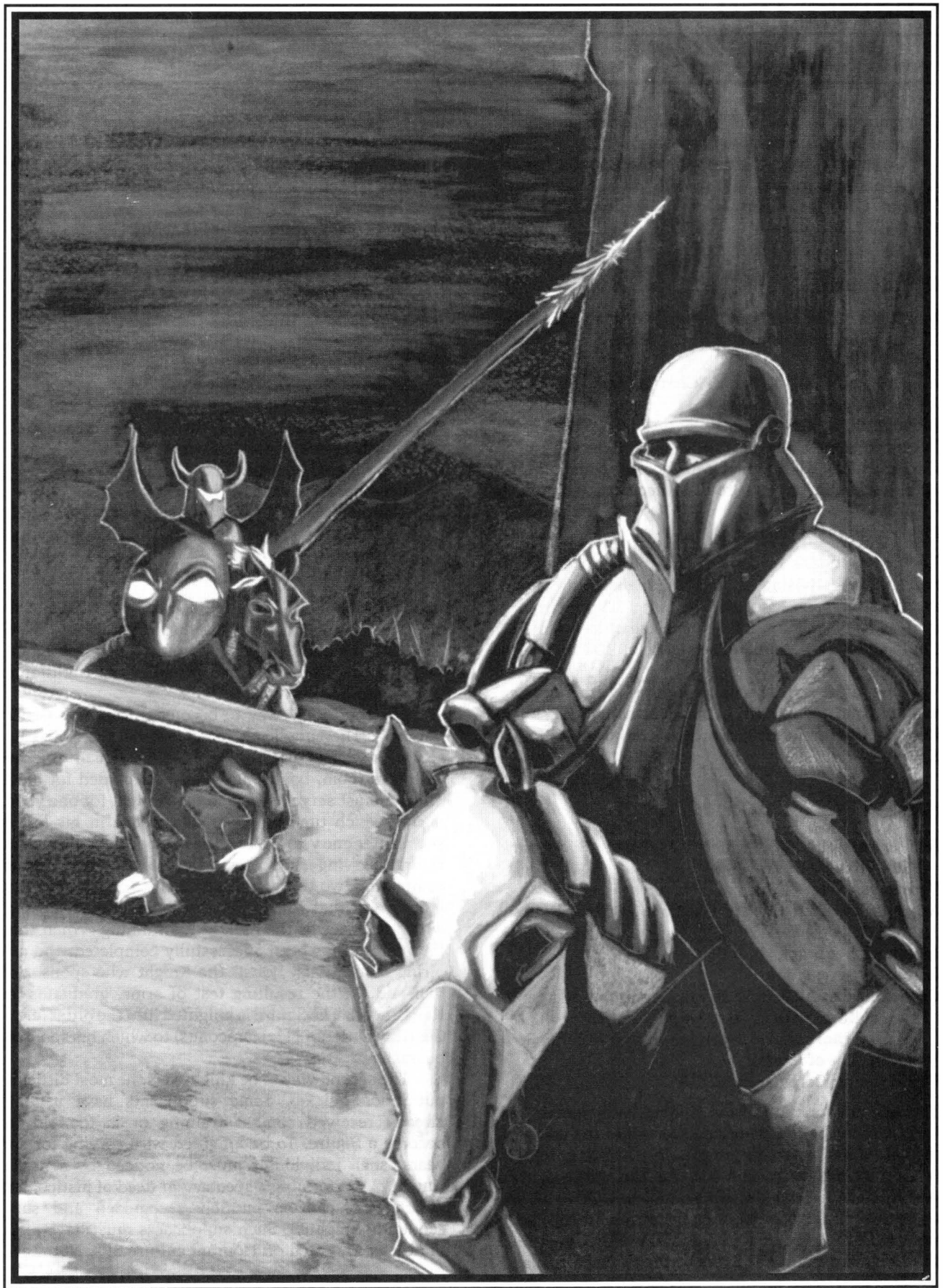
Income: LL x 3 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: All Knight assets; access to any reasonable item in the culture (GM decides item's availability)

Prerequisite: Lieutenant (PL7)

The most common rank in the officer corps is the Captain, who functions as an all-purpose officer, performing various duties including supervising the Lieutenants, overseeing the training and performance of the enlisted ranks, logistics, and undertaking special missions. The only true distinguishing office at this rank is the position of Captain of the Guard, of which there is only ever one at a time and who is chosen directly by the Duke of Cortez. The Captain of the Guard functions as the House of Cortez's Champion and is in charge of the Royal Guard in the castle proper. No one but the Duke and the House Lord himself has authority over the Captain of the Guard—not even



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Commanders or Generals. A Captain can command a regiment of 200 men (two battalions).

Due to the special access that the Captain has to goods and manpower, he receives no special skills. Retired Captains revert back to the profession of Knight.

Commander

Masteries: Combat 8; Leadership: Military 7; Scholastics: History 7; Travel 5

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Conf 4, Pers 3 Char 2, Etic 2 Style 2, Avoi 2, Logic 5

Income: LL x 4 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: All Knight assets; access to any reasonable item in the culture (GM decides item's availability)

Prerequisite: Captain (PL8)

The Commander's responsibilities mainly involve administering, advising the General on state affairs and army matters, and enforcing the General's policies. He is also responsible for discipline in the officer ranks. A Commander can command a brigade of 400 men (two regiments).

Due to the special access that the Commander has to goods and manpower, he receives no special skills. Retired Commanders revert to the profession of Knight.

General

Masteries: Combat 8; Leadership: Military 8; Scholastics: History 8; Travel 6

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Conf 5, Pers 4 Char 3, Etic 3 Style 2, Avoi 2, Logic 6

Income: LL x 5 gold/month.

Required gear: None

Career assets: All Knight assets; access to any item in any culture (with a fee to be paid for items outside the Hourani culture); a private villa on Nobility Row in the city of Cortez.

Prerequisite: Commander (PL9)

The primary function of the General is diplomacy, as he is responsible for enforcing the will of the state (or the will of the Dragonfay, in the Holy Army's case). He is also ultimately responsible for the entire army's performance. During peacetime, only two Generals are needed—one for the Army of Nobility and the other for the Holy Army of the Dragonfay. The General of the Army of Nobility answers to the Cortez Duke and

the House Cortez Lord. The Holy Army's General answers only to the Lord of the House of Feznoth. During wartime, each army can have more than one General. Generals can command a division of 800 men (two brigades).

Due to the special access that the General has to goods and manpower, he receives no special skills. Retired Generals revert to the profession of Knight.

Knight

Masteries: Combat 6; Culture 4; Leadership 4; Scholastics: History 4; Travel: 4

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Stam 2, Refl 2, Stre 2, Awar 1, Logic 2, Conf 2, Pers 2, Char 1, Style 1, Etic 1

Income: LL gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Small keep, land, servants, farm, food, domestic beasts, warhorse, draft horses, weapons, armor, livery

Prerequisite: See description

The Knight is the most essential element in the House of Cortez, for many of the founding codes of honor are based on the chivalric codes sworn to by all Knights. Knighthood can be achieved in either the traditional way or the hard way.

The traditional way to become a Knight is easier but long. The supplicant must first be sponsored by someone who is already knighted, in which case he will have room, board, and clothes provided for him. The lad must serve as Page to that Knight for one year, during which time he cooks and cleans in his lord's keep. After one year passes, the boy becomes a Knight's Errant, serving as a messenger for his lord. After completing two years in this capacity, the lad becomes a Squire of that Knight for three more years, during which he receives the bulk of his training. When this final tenure has been successfully completed, the aspiring Squire must "joust" the Knight who sponsored him and, in the resulting test of arms, graduates to Knighthood. The Squire is knighted into the order (e.g., the Holy Order of Fidei Draconus) to which his sponsor belongs.

The second way to be knighted is the most difficult but much quicker. Some supplicants have usually already received combat training or is too old to become a Squire. To be knighted with serving for six years, such individuals must be noticed by a noble Knight by performing a spectacular deed of justice, for which they can be publicly recognized and subsequently knighted. Such supplicants must have a SL of at least 5, based on Hourani culture SPs. Note that

it is the right of any Knight to joust such an individual, in a test of arms, before permitting him to be knighted.

Once ordained into his new order, the Knight is given a white sword belt, spurs, and a coat of arms. No matter the specific order, all Knights share the same code of honor. Hourani chivalry is similar but not identical to human chivalry:

- ☞ Protect thy land
- ☞ Defend thy people
- ☞ Enforce the laws of thy land
- ☞ Temper judgment with fairness
- ☞ Show mercy to those asking for it
- ☞ Give respect to those worthy of it
- ☞ Be honorable in word and deed
- ☞ Exhibit courage in the face of adversity
- ☞ Be true to thyself
- ☞ Never betray thy Order

Only Knights can hold an officer's commission in the Army of Nobility, and only Knights who have served at least ten years in the Army of Nobility are permitted to join the Holy Army of the Dragonfay.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL5, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Strength or Stamina
- ☞ +1 Confidence or Perseverance
- ☞ +20 Combat: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +15 Leadership: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +15 Scholastics: History: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +10 Travel: Animalship: Any 1 skill
- ☞ *Allies:* With this ability, any Giver with a Life Level lower than that of the Knight's will automatically become that Knight's ally, willing to help the Knight in any way possible.

Sheriff

Masteries: Combat 6; Leadership: Statecraft 4; Domestic: Home 4; Travel 6

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Stam 3, Agil 1 Awar 2, Conf 2 Char 1, Avoi 1 Logic 1, Pers 3

Income: LL x 3 gold/month.

Required gear: None

Career assets: All Knight career assets

Prerequisite: Knight (PL7)

The Sheriff is the official law enforcement agent of a specific region in the city state, and his duties include enforcing laws, supporting the Duke's interests, and bringing criminals to justice. Sheriffs are appointed by the Duke and therefore answer only to him, but they

only have jurisdiction over civil (not military) affairs. Sheriffs are obligated to serve the Duke for a period of 20 years, at which time they may renew their obligation or retire.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL5, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Stamina or Awareness
- ☞ +1 Confidence or Perseverance
- ☞ +60 in *Sense Deception (14)*: The Sheriff can determine whether or not a person is lying by keenly observing his body language. An additional difficulty of 5 x the liar's Avoidance should be applied.
- ☞ +10 Combat: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +10 Domestic: Home: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +15 Leadership: Statecraft: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +20 Travel: Any 1 skill

Ivory Guard (Sentinel)

Masteries: Combat 7; Leadership: Military 5; Scholastics: History 3

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Stam 3, Refl 3, Stre 3 Agil 3, Awar 3, Conf 2, Char 2, Logic 1, Pers 2

Income: 3 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, quarters, basic equipment, weapons, armor, livery

Prerequisite: Warrior (PL7)

Also known as Sentinels, the primary function of the Ivory Guard is to protect the White Tree in the castle courtyard in Cortez. The White Tree was a magical gift from the local druids of the area in the Age of Myth when Cortez was first founded, representing the purity of the land and the hearts of the men who protect it. Once a year it bears silver fruit said to cure any ailment or affliction with just one bite. The Sentinels are perhaps the most elite guard that the House of Cortez has to offer, and they answer only to the Duke of Cortez. They wear separate colors—a silver border on a field of white—on their livery to distinguish them from the rest of the House.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL5, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Awareness
- ☞ +1 Reflex
- ☞ +60 in *Blindfighting (10)*: The Ivory Guard can fight while blinded or sight-impaired without suffering any penalties. Due to his highly honed combat skills, the Sentinel is rarely surprised and can fight invisible or hidden opponents, and is

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even able to sense surprise attacks, for which the GM can decide difficulty. (Note that all subsequent attacks made by the "surprising" opponent do not require a roll.) The ability to detect invisible or hidden opponents is determined similar to surprise attacks, with the nature of the opponent's obfuscation (e.g. invisibility, camouflage, etc.) as well as his proximity deciding the difficulty (GM's Creation). The Sentinel must be in natural form when using this ability; otherwise, all difficulties are doubled. A critical failure against a surprise attack means that the Sentinel cannot react and also loses his initiative for the first combat round; a critical success means that the Sentinel can react and also gains a free action at no Init cost in the first combat round.

- ☞ +30 Combat: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +10 Leadership: Military: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +10 Scholastics: History: Any 1 skill

Paladin

Masteries: Combat 8; Culture 4; Dark Arts: Subterfuge: 6; Scholastics: History 6; Travel 6

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Stam 3, Refl 3, Stre 3 Agil 2, Awar 2, Logic 4, Conf 2, Pers 2 Style 2, Avoi 2

Income: PL gold/month (if employed in an army)

Required gear: Land, large keep, servants, farm, food, domestic animals, draft horses, war-horse, weapons, armor, basic equipment, livery

Career assets: None

Prerequisite: Must be able to support himself and fund his own quests. Although not a requirement, most Paladins come from House Cortez.

The Paladin is perhaps one of the greatest fighting men to be found but lacks the representation and influence that other professions have. He is an adventurer at heart, who has severed all ties of obligation to king and country and instead pursues his own noble cause, seeking out the farthest reaches of civilization to lend his services or sword arm.

Note that some Paladins are less noble than others. While most will help those in need without hesitation, others prefer to sell their skills to the needy. Either way, one thing remains a constant: Paladins strive to uncover all the mysteries of the world around them. More importantly, they have the skills necessary to survive such a journey of knowledge and adventure. Seldom can Paladins band together under one cause, but such a sight would indeed be awesome to behold.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL6, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Stamina or Reflex
- ☞ +1 Style or Avoidance
- ☞ +10 Combat: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +20 Culture: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +5 Dark Arts: Subterfuge: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +10 Scholastics: History: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +10 Travel: Any 1 skill
- ☞ Choose any one currently unpossessed special ability/skill from any House of Cortez profession

House Lord (Martial Lord)

No House Lord currently officiates over the House of Cortez. In political matters with other Houses, one prominent Cortez is usually selected as spokesperson. The current acting spokesman for Cortez is the Duke. Should a true descendant of Cortez ever decide to step forward and claim his birthright, he would be considered the Martial Lord of the House and would have all rights and privileges thereof.

House of Feznoth

Fiat lux ("Let there be light")

Church of Morning Light colors: An orange border on a field of white

Sun sect of the Dragon Faith colors: A gold border on a field of white

All good-aligned Hourani priests believe in the Dragon god Zariah or in the Pantheon Gods of Iedras belonging to the House of Feznoth (located in the city of Harndin), with the two religions being the Church of Morning Light and the Church of Fidei Draconus. The Church of Fidei Draconus is the most heavily emphasized of the two, with a membership of over two-thirds of the Feznoth House and steadily growing as each generation is born. The upswing of the good side of the faith can be contributed to the fact that grandfather Groam chose the priesthood as his second occupation and passed the legacy down to his son Kahlil.

Other priests and acolytes still retain as much respect as any Fidei Draconus worshiper, because their ideology and philosophy strikes an important balance within the House. As Feznoth Aorik himself said, "Do not turn away from that which you do not understand or believe in, for you will miss the most precious of all things: Unity." So the current religious diversity is considered a strength, not a weakness, by the Hourani culture.



From Feznoth Aorik's birth onwards, the Church of the Fidei Draconus has grown quickly and with great strength due to their inspired book referred to as the Holy Tome by worshipers. The highest priests who read and learn from this book, however, know is as the Blil—one of the few runed tomes of power and knowledge in existence. The Blil is filled with historical transcriptions between the first father Iod Stien (a human born in the 6th century AM) and the Dragon gods Rabahd, Varrak, and Zariah. Also, many illustrations depict scenes of historical significance, such as the reception of the Holy Armor, the Chalice, and the Holy Weapon (named Dalinius). These images also portray how Father Iod brought peace, protection, and health to his people using the artifacts given to him.

In these days, men have learned not to rely on things that can be lost or misused, and so the Council of the Dragonfay was formed. The Council is a group of four men—including the highest-ranked representative from each Dragon sect, plus the General of the Holy Army of the Dragon—who select applicants considered worthy enough to undertake the quest for the Sword of Light/Darkness and subsequently become Champion of the Dragonfay. The Council convenes to review applicants once a year at the Sanctuary of the Dragon Faith, located in the city of Cortez. Only one applicant is chosen per year, and his quest begins at the graveyard of Mount Kabi (the tallest peak in the Cyclopunomin Range). Although the Council choose who will have the opportunity to quest for the Sword of Light/Darkness, it is the Gods of the Dragon Faith who ultimately make the decision. Hundreds of courageous men have travelled to the graveyard over the centuries, but none have successfully completed the full quest since the last Champion was appointed in the Age of Myth. Unsuccessful questers are always found in the graveyard, either dead or paralyzed due to mind-numbing apathy. Understandably, this poor success rate has weeded out the weak-minded or weak-spirited, for no one wants to attempt something that even the greatest men have failed at.

As an extension of the Hourani families, the House of Feznoth is respected by all except the Houses of Porter and Rosenthal, which remain their bitter enemies. As the history books attest, "For many years during the Age of Myth, Porter and Rosenthal had attacked mankind and blackened the shine of the Hourani people, making the entire race seem as monsters with a bloodlust, not as the blended creature of nature they are meant to be. For this reason Feznoth and Rosenthal declared war on each other."

Balentin said that this hatred ran deeper than just the different religions: "Their opposing faith is just a tool for the twins to continue in their fury. Since

childhood, Feznoth and Rosenthal have despised each other—Rosenthal always jealous of Feznoth's beauty and Feznoth hating his brother for the cruel jokes he had played while growing up. There may never be a reunification of the twins in brotherhood, and the wars between church and cult only stand to further separate them." Unfortunately the wars only ended with the death of Rosenthal, at the very hands of Rabahd—the Lunaris Dragon god and Rosenthal's own patron deity.

At that point, it was realized that the Dragon gods had become one again, forming the Fidei Draconus, and this unity brought the remaining members of the Church and Cult together in spirit, although priests still belong to their respective Houses. The Church of Fidei Draconis (Dragon Faith) is divided into three sects: Solaris (sun), Lunaris (moon), and Terra (earth). The Solaris sect is represented in the House of Feznoth and the Lunaris sect in the House of Rosenthal, whereas the Terra sect does not have the organization and religious representation the others do.

The Houses of Feznoth and Rosenthal share a common ranking system, in order to maintain the equality of their priests in the different sects of the Dragon Faith, and only the actual titles differ:

- ~ Initiate
- ~ Acolyte
- ~ Temple Guard
- ~ Holy Warrior
- ~ Pastor
- ~ Priest
- ~ High Priest
- ~ Lord High Priest/Lord of the House

Feznoth Jobs

Initiate

Masteries: Religion 2

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Comp 1, Conf 1, Pers 1

Income: 10 silver/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, quarters, religious habit, holy book of chosen faith

Prerequisite: None

The Initiate is the first and only entry-level position in the House of Feznoth. Initiates spend all their time in religious study and performing chores in their home church. The training prepares the Initiate for eventual priesthood, and his character and religious integrity

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are constantly under the scrutiny of the priests who train him. All priests equally share the task of training Initiates.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL3, + 1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Comprehension or Confidence
- ☞ +1 Perseverance
- ☞ +15 Religion: Church: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +20 Religion: Gods: Any 1 skill

Acolyte

Masteries: Religion 3

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Comp 2, Conf 2, Pers 2

Income: 40 silver/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, quarters, religious habit

Prerequisite: Initiate (PL3)

The next step in the religious path of enlightenment is the Acolyte, and it is at this time that the student first begins to understand the necessary role his religion plays in the grand scheme of NeverWorld. As an Acolyte, he is still expected to continue his studies, but his chores have taken on a greater weight of responsibility. He now assists in the preparation of religious ceremonies and rituals, which simultaneously trains him.

Acolytes receive 1 endowment at PL8, with a starting skill level of 10.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL4, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Comprehension or Confidence
- ☞ +1 Perseverance
- ☞ +10 Leadership: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +15 Religion: Church: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +20 Religion: Gods: Any 1 skill

Temple Guard (White Guard)

Masteries: Combat 3; Religion 3

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Refl 1, Awar 1, Conf 3, Pers 3

Income: 1 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, quarters, pole arm, basic equipment, studded leather armor, religious habit

Prerequisite: Acolyte (PL4)

Those who want to diversify their Church skills or who simply are not ready yet to become a Pastor can supplement their religious training with combat training, choosing to become a Temple Guard instead of a

Pastor. The Temple Guard is charged with protecting his church, and those of the Morning Light faith are not permitted to wear armor.

At PL4 and PL8, Temple Guards can choose an endowment at skill level 10.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL3, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Reflex or Awareness
- ☞ +1 Confidence or Perseverance
- ☞ +30 Combat: HTH: Howling Wind
- ☞ +10 Leadership: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +15 Religion: Church: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +10 Religion: Gods: Any 1 skill

Holy Warrior (Warrior Priest)

Masteries: Combat 5; Religion 4; Leadership: Military 3

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Stre 1, Stam 1, Refl 2, Awar 2, Conf 4, Pers 4

Income: 3 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, quarters, chain mail, weapons, basic equipment, religious habit

Prerequisite: Temple Guard (PL6)

Temple Guards who enjoy their combat training can proceed to the job of Holy Warrior. This warrior-priest is well-rounded, having developed extensive combat and religious studies. Holy Warriors are entrusted with guarding the church holy items and those of the Morning Light faith are still not permitted to wear armor.

At PL4 and PL8, the Holy Warrior can choose an endowment starting at skill level 10.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL4, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Reflex or Awareness
- ☞ +1 Confidence or Perseverance
- ☞ +20 Combat: HTH: Howling Wind
- ☞ +10 Leadership: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +10 Religion: Any 1 skill

Pastor (Preacher)

Masteries: Religion 4; Leadership 2

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Comp 3, Conf 3, Pers 3, Char 1

Income: 1 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, quarters, religious habit

Prerequisite: Acolyte (PL8) or Temple Guard (PL4)

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When becoming a Pastor, the student finally graduates into the ranks of the church. His overall studies are reduced in intensity as he begins to focus on the theology of his faith. He is also allowed to actually participate in religious ceremonies and rituals, now that he has proven his faith and devotion to the rest of his congregation.

Priests receive 1 endowment at PL4, +1 every 2PL afterwards. At PL5, the Pastor receives his channeling powerbase in the form of a holy symbol—a gold amulet of the Dragonfay. The powerbase starts with 100 points, and at this point the character can begin to use the channeling powers of his religion.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL3, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Comprehension or Confidence
- ☞ +1 Perseverance or Charisma
- ☞ +20 Combat: HTH: Howling Wind
- ☞ +10 Leadership: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +5 Religion: Church: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +10 Religion: Gods: Any 1 skill

Feznoth Professions

Priest

Masteries: Religion: Church 7, Gods 7; Leadership 5

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Comp 4, Conf 5, Pers 5, Char 2, Etiq 1, Avoi 1, Logic 1

Income: 5 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, church, religious habit, personal library

Prerequisite: Pastor (PL6) or Holy Warrior (PL6)

The Priest is a position of great respect in Hourani society, not to mention the House of Feznoth, and also has perhaps the most responsibility of any other House position, as it is his duty to recruit not only new followers but also prospective members for his House. The Priest must also administer to the training of all Initiates and Acolytes in the House, determining whether or not a disciple's character is suitable for the faith. He performs many of the religious ceremonies for his church, as well as some of the various rituals and rites, holding mass for prayer and scripture at least once a week. He is capable of serving as a representative of his faith, and is therefore eligible for missions involving church interests. The word of a Feznoth priest has as much clout in Hourani culture as a judge's decision has in human society.

Priests receive one endowment at PL6, +1 every 1PL after.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL6, +1 every 1PL

- ☞ +1 Charisma
- ☞ +1 Etiquette
- ☞ +20 Leadership: Statecraft: Foreign Affairs
- ☞ +10 Travel: Animalship: Riding
- ☞ +10 Scholastics: History: Heraldry

High Priest

Masteries: Religion: Church 8, Gods 8; Leadership 6

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Comp 5, Conf 6, Pers 6, Char 3, Etiq 2, Avoi 2, Logic 2

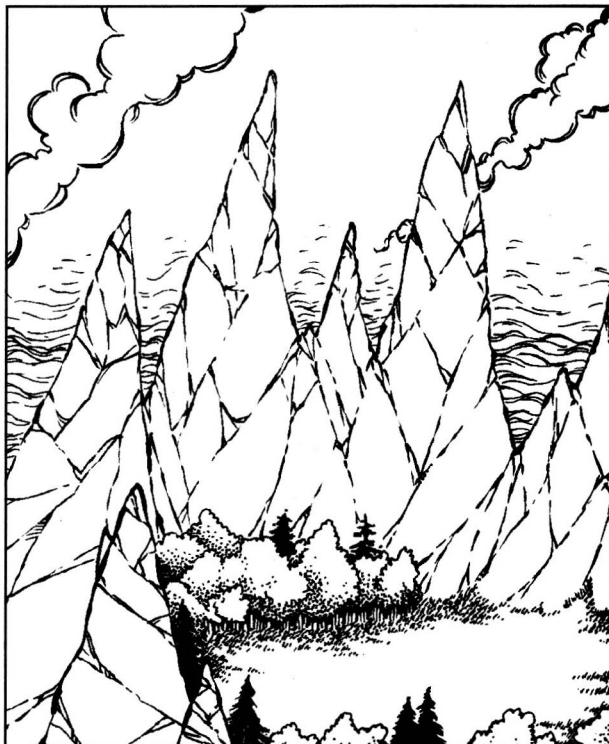
Income: 10 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Churches/temples, small abbey, religious habit, personal library, food

Prerequisite: Priest (PL10)

The High Priest is one of the highest attainable stations in Hourani society and is highly powerful and influential among both his faith and others. The only higher positions are the five ordained positions of the Dragon Faith. In the Morning Light faith, the Hourani High Priest equals in station a Neunionian Bishop of the same.



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In either religion, the High Priest is responsible for overseeing all churches in his province, as well as ensuring that all religious ceremonies are observed. He ordains all new Priests into the order, and performs many of the rituals and rites of his respective faith. Additionally, he is charged with enforcing the interests of his church and can be sent on diplomatic missions requiring the presence of a powerful church representative. Only a handful of High Priests are in office at any given time, and they generally convene once a year to discuss and plan the itinerary of their respective religions.

High Priests gain one endowment at PL7, +1 every 1PL after.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL7, +1 every 1PL

- ☞ +1 Etiquette
- ☞ +1 Style
- ☞ +20 Leadership: Statecraft: Politics
- ☞ +10 Religion: Demonology: Demons

House Lord (Lord High Priest)

Masteries: Religion: Church 10, Gods 10; Leadership 8

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Comp 6, Conf 7, Pers 7, Char 4, Etiq 3, Avoi 3, Logic 3, Style 2

Income: 1000 gold/year

Required gear: None

Career assets: Control of House Feznoth

Prerequisite: High Priest (PL10)

The Lord High Priest is not only Lord of the House of Feznoth but also a High Priest of his religion, with all the rights and privileges of that position. In the Morning Light faith, the Lord High Priest is equal in station to a Neunionian Cardinal of the same. If the House Lord is not of the Dragon Faith, then he must appoint his most competent High Priest of that faith to act in his stead in all matters dealing with that religion—including directing the Holy Army of the Dragon Faith. The Lord of the House of Feznoth is very busy, between his religious pursuits and the politics of the Houses, and he also spends some of his time consulting his counterpart in the House of Rosenthal (although the exact details of such conversations are still a subject of great debate in the House of Wayne).

House of Groam

Credo ut intelligam
("I believe so that I may understand")

House colors: A gold border on a field of black

The brothers of the House of Groam keep solely to themselves and never interfere in the business of other Hourani or mankind, for they are the Hourani who study the great art of wizardry, also referred to as the Golden Brick Road—the famed path said to have led their grandfather, Groam Aorik I, to all of his personal glories. Groam Aorik II researched his grandfather's memoirs and found that, during his tenure with the Per-Saal college of Demonology, he had begun to understand that the Road was not just a physical pathway, as in the one that had lead him to the site of Tezlokian the Syvyn and the Darkelf, but actually a way of understanding of how to escape the normal magical boundaries and create one's own unique powers. At this point in time, the followers of the Golden Brick Road are just beginning to adjust to the infinite power that magic holds, but they have still learned one thing for certain: All magic—good or evil, written or spoken—springs from the very heart of the world.

The House itself is located in Calcese and Harndin, with equal numbers at both institutions, and has drawn from both communities a wide variety of incantations from all forms of wizardry and shared them freely within both locations. The mythical Arcanium—a tome holding all known magical theory and taken from the clutches of Tezlokian by Groam I—has yet to be rediscovered, but they are still steadily writing their own, in a sense. One of the most promising members of the House—a wizard named Frey—with the help of Jersik Groam might have discovered the first principle to True Magic.

By their own laws of magic knowledge, these brothers will never divulge their information to anyone not bearing the traits of Hourani or the symbol of the House of Groam, as their information is what keeps the Hourani strong among men and elves. If a follower of the Golden Brick Road were to ever give, sell, or teach a spell to an unknown and be discovered, he would be slain at the hands of his peers. Accordingly, those not of the House who claim to have been instructed by them are either lying or deceived. The only rumored (and currently unproven) way to learn the Hourani magical secrets without being of the House of Groam is for the supplicant to offer a Mequilmil spell as a gift, whereupon it is said that those in the House would consider him a brother no matter his race and would reveal to him all their knowledge. Note that

Houses & careers

this is only a rumor. Still, anyone teaching the House of Groam an unknown spell can expect to be treated with utmost kindness and protected with an oath as strong the word of a brother from the House of Cortez.

The House of Groam's ranking system is simple:

- ☞ Wizard's Apprentice
- ☞ Alchemist / Demonologist
- ☞ Journeyman Wizard
- ☞ Wizard Adept
- ☞ Master Wizard
- ☞ Wizard Lord/Lord of the House

Groam Jobs

Wizard's Apprentice

Masteries: Scholastics 3

Pathways: Any

Advantages: Comp 1, Logic 1, Pers 1

Income: 40 silver/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, quarters, components, library access, robes

Prerequisite: None

The Wizard Apprentice is the first step of many on the path of magical knowledge and is also one of two entry-level positions into the House of Groam. As the title implies, the Apprentice is under the supervision and expert tutelage of an experienced Master Wizard of the House—a relationship very similar to that of a Knight and his Squire. The Wizard acts as both teacher and master for the duration of the Apprentice's training. Many Hourani spend years of study as Apprentices before being competent enough to fill a higher position in the House, and only the most diligent and dedicated of them advance with any degree of timeliness. During this formative training period, the Apprentice can learn up to five spells in his school of magic, providing that he has the necessary EPs to do so. The science of magic is so diverse and so broad that several lifetimes would be needed to only the majority of its mysteries.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL3, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Comprehension
- ☞ +1 Logic
- ☞ +20 Magic: Wizardry: Theory
- ☞ +10 Scholastics: Archaic Science: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +10 Scholastics: Research: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +15 Religion: Demonology

Alchemist

Masteries: Magic 4; Scholastics: Archaic Science 4; Research 4

Pathways: Any

Advantages: Comp 2, Logic 5 Pers 2

Income: 1 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Laboratory, components, food, quarters, library access, robes

Prerequisite: Wizard's Apprentice (PL4)

The Alchemist is one of two possible next steps in the training of an Apprentice. The Alchemist plays a necessary and important role in the House, being primarily responsible for preparing all components for his master and conducting any minor research that the Wizard requires.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL4, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Comprehension or Logic
- ☞ +1 Confidence or Perseverance
- ☞ +60 in *Magic Potions (20)*: Enables the Alchemist to prepare magical potions. Using a half-pint lead crystal container, a spell can be cast into a specially prepared potion and will remain suspended in the solution until imbibed. Any self-affecting spell can be made into a potion, with the same duration and effect as the Wizard who cast it. However, lead crystal is very expensive, and the process is very dangerous. Each spell has its own precise potion recipe, and using the wrong formula could be catastrophic. The Magic Potion roll determines whether or not the potion was properly created, but such a mistake will not be noticed until the potion is quaffed, at which time the Magic Instability chart should be used to determine its true effects. Note that Magic Potions is not the same as the Potions skill.
- ☞ +10 Magic: Wizardry: Theory
- ☞ +10 Scholastics: Archaic Science: Chemistry
- ☞ +10 Domestic: Home: Herb Lore
- ☞ +20 Professional Crafts: Brewing: Potions

Ronin Wizard

Masteries: Magic 3; Travel 3

Pathways: Any

Advantages: Comp 1, Logic 5, Awar 1, Pers 1

Income: 10 silver/month

Required gear: Food, lodging, components, basic equipment

Career assets: Robes

Prerequisite: None

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The Ronin Wizard is the second entry-level position into the House of Groam. He is the masterless student, choosing to learn on his own terms rather than subscribe to the demands of a Master Wizard. Yet, freedom is not without its price, as the lack of a teacher forces the Ronin Wizard to learn his craft in a somewhat inventive manner. What he can't discover on his own, he'll pay for, and what he can't pay for, he'll steal or swindle. His resourcefulness often is very rewarding: unlike his counterpart, the Wizard's Apprentice, the Ronin Wizard has the benefit of practical application with magic rather than just theory, as well as a more worldly knowledge of life in NeverWorld. And if the Ronin Wizard finds life too difficult, he may still apply for a position as a Wizard's Apprentice.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL3, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Comprehension or Logic
- ☞ +1 Confidence or Perseverance
- ☞ +20 in *Mimic Spell* (20): Enables the Ronin Wizard to possibly learn a spell by seeing it cast. Difficulty is determined by GM, multiplied by a complexity depending on how many times the spell has been witnessed: x 5 if seen once, x 4 for two or three times, x 3 for four to ten times, x 2 for eleven to twenty times, and x 1 for more than twenty times. If the Hourani rolls a D success or higher, he can then research the spell as if he had a teacher. Normal time requirements for learning a new skill still apply. If the Ronin Wizard opts to forego the research, he can immediately cast the spell but cannot learn it for future use. In either case, he must either begin research or cast the spell within a number of days equal to his Comp level, or he will forget the spell and thus forfeit his chance of learning it. Ronin Wizards start with a 60 in this skill.
- ☞ +10 Magic: Any 1 spell (already possessed)
- ☞ +20 Travel: Any 1 skill

Demonologist

Masteries: Magic 4; Religion: Demonology 4; Scholastics: Archaic Science 4

Pathways: Any

Advantages: Comp 2, Logic 5, Pers 2, Conf 1

Income: 1 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, quarters, components, library access, basic equipment, robes

Prerequisite: Wizard's Apprentice (PL4)

Demonologist is the other next step in an Apprentice's training and is (needless to say) a very dangerous one,

as it can bring the young mage into close contact with some very dangerous elements of the UnderWorld. The type of Demonologist employed by the House of Groam is slightly different than its Mulgrayne counterpart, being more concerned with magics used to destroy or banish demonic elements rather than summon and control them. These Hourani are also the demon/devil lore experts, so as to exploit their enemy's weaknesses.

As it is written in the annals of the House of Wayne, "All manner of hell-wrought beasts did make use of the Great Cataclysm to escape their tormentors and the nether realm that bound them. Without an accounting, it is impossible to know how many survived into the Age of Discovery, but we may be certain that those who have remained will continue to plague mankind with their bestial evils until they are returned to the fires that created them." With that in mind, the Hourani chose the House of Groam to bear the responsibility of such a task.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL4, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Comprehension or Logic
- ☞ +1 Confidence or Perseverance
- ☞ +60 in *Reveal Evil* (20): Allows the Demonologist to detect the presence of a devil or demon, as well as which it is (devil or demon) and its type (lesser, greater, etc.) The detection radius is 10 yards for lesser demons, 100 yards for greater demons, and 10,000 yards for greater demon or devil lords. After a successful roll within the detection radius (which the GM will roll secretly), the Demonologist will first sense an acrid smell in the air. Upon pinpointing the location, the Demonologist will see a distortion in the air, outlining the demon or devil in question, and will feel heat if within the distortion. The more powerful the demon or devil, the stronger and more noticeable these effects will be. (As an example, a case was documented where a greater Demon was encountered in 600 AD by a Demonologist sent to investigate some strange and violent murders in a nearby village. According to the report, when entering the small village, the Demonologist immediately became nauseated. The air around an unobtrusive young boy was distorted in a ten-meter radius, and the Demonologist subsequently broke into a heavy sweat from the emanating heat.) Note that, although Demonologists can detect and recognize a demon or devil for what it is, he cannot force it to reveal its true form without using other means.
- ☞ +30 Religion: Demonology: All skills
- ☞ +20 Travel: Any 1 skill

Groom Professions

Journeyman Wizard

Masteries: Magic 5; Scholastics: Archaic Science 5; Leadership 3; Travel 3

Pathways: Any

Advantages: Comp 3, Logic 5, Pers 3, Etic 1, Conf 1

Income: 2 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Private quarters, food, robes, basic equipment

Prerequisite: Alchemist (PL5) or Demonologist (PL5) or Ronin Wizard (PL6)

The Journeyman Wizard is the first House position where the mage is considered competent enough to be trusted on his own—evident by the responsibilities given to him. The Journeyman Wizard performs the bulk of the field work for the House and is sent on numerous missions, some more subtle than others. Between missions, he is free to continue his magical education at his own pace. Although he may still seek his mentor's guidance (a Master Wizard), he no longer must subscribe to his teachings. Ronin Wizards who become Journeyman Wizards do not have Master Wizard mentors as the others and may seek guidance from any Master Wizard willing to help. All Journeyman Wizards are permitted to learn up to five additional spells from the Library, providing they have the necessary EPs.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL4, +1 every 1PL

- ☞ +1 Comprehension or Logic
- ☞ +1 Confidence or Perseverance
- ☞ +20 in *Leech* (20): Having learned that all living things contain ambient life energy, and that the greatest concentration of this energy is within living beings, the Journeyman Wizard can use someone's or something's life energies to supplement his own when spellcasting. In game terms, he can drain WPs from a person, animal, or thing and temporarily add them to his own, to defer a spell's mental and physical cost. The Journeyman Wizard must physically touch the target to initiate the transfer, then make a successful *Leech* roll. Success means he can drain up to his PT in WPs, if the target is willing to cooperate. An unwilling target necessitates a contested Willpower roll between mage and target; a mage victory means he can drain WPs as said previously, while a target victory allows the target to drain up to its PT in WPs from the mage. Any person or animal completely drained of WPs is

rendered unconscious, while other things (such as plants) are withered and killed if they lose all their life energies. Note that inanimate objects (such as rocks) cannot be drained, as their life energy is too infinitesimal to be used, and that innately magical creatures (such as Dragons) cannot be drained either.

- ☞ +10 Leadership: Any one skill
- ☞ +5 Magic: Any 1 spell (already possessed)
- ☞ +20 Scholastics: Archaic Science: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +10 Travel: Any 1 skill

Wizard Adept

Masteries: Magic 6; Scholastics: Archaic Science 6; Leadership 4; Travel 4

Pathways: Any

Advantages: Comp 4, Logic 5, Pers 4, Etic 1, Style 1, Avoi 1, Conf 1

Income: 3 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Private quarters, private library, food, basic equipment, robes

Prerequisite: Journeyman Wizard (PL6)

A force to be reckoned with, the Wizard Adept is a capable magic expert sent in when the House needs something accomplished quickly and efficiently. Due to their unique abilities, Adepts are often used as advisers to Sheriffs in crimes involving magic. As with Journeyman Wizards, Wizard Adepts can continue their magical studies between House missions and is free to learn up to ten additional spells from the Library, providing he has the required EPs. In preparing to become a self-sufficient Master Wizard, the Wizard Adept cannot seek guidance from a Master unless it involves a matter of the utmost importance.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL5, +1 every 1PL

- ☞ +1 Comprehension or Logic
- ☞ +1 Confidence or Perseverance
- ☞ +60 in *Scry Spell* (20): Allows the Wizard Adept to recognize a specific spell used in an area or on a person. Success means that he can actually see the magical impressions left by the previously cast spell. Difficulty depends on how long ago the spell in question was cast (GM's decision), and obviously the older the spell, the more difficult it will be to identify. However, the more powerful the spell, the slower the magical impressions will take to fade, so both the spell's strength and age must be taken into account. An Adept who sees a

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spell's magical impressions can then roll on his Theory skill to learn more about the spell.

- ☞ +10 Leadership: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +5 Magic: Wizardry: Theory
- ☞ +20 Scholastics: Archaic Science: Any 1 skill

Master Wizard

Masteries: Magic 7; Scholastics: Archaic Science 7; Leadership 5; Travel 5

Pathways: Any

Advantages: Comp 5, Logic 6, Pers 5, Etic 2, Style 1, Avoi 2, Conf 2

Income: 5 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Private suite, private library, food, basic equipment, robes

Prerequisite: Wizard Adept (PL7)

The Master Wizard has reached the apex of career progression in the House of Groam and has in every sense mastered his school of magic. Before actually being considered a Master Wizard, the mage must be sent to the testing wing at the Academy of Magic in Calcese. Here, the candidate will be subject to the Chambers of Trial, where he will face a series of challenges to test his overall magical knowledge, wisdom, and resourcefulness. The trial is difficult enough that some candidates have even died during it. After passing the test, the mage is granted the status of Master Wizard.

Master Wizards are kept busy playing numerous roles for the House of Groam. One, they are House emissaries, representing its political interests with the other Houses. They are also instructors for all House students, young and old, and remain such until their students have graduated to Journeyman. They are enforcers of House ethics (its code of conduct), as well as administrators of discipline. Finally, they advise the Lord of the House on internal matters. Rumors suggest that Master Wizards are agents used to carry out any House secret agendas. Master Wizards have free access to the House library and can learn as many spells as they have ambition, time, and experience for.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL6, +1 every 1PL

- ☞ +1 Style
- ☞ +1 Perseverance
- ☞ +15 power tolerance
- ☞ +10 Magic: Any 1 spell already possessed
- ☞ +20 Scholastics: Archaic Science: Any 1 skill

House Lord (Wizard Lord)

Masteries: Magic 10; Scholastics: Archaic Science 10; Leadership 8; Travel 6

Pathways: Any

Advantages: Comp 6, Logic 8, Pers 6, Conf 4

Income: 1000 gold/year

Required gear: None

Career assets: Control of House Groam

Prerequisite: Master Wizard (PL10)

The Lord of the House of Groam is the culmination of knowledge, wisdom, and power—the perfect epitome of the Wizard, embodying the secret knowledge of his trade with the ability to use it. He can wield magical powers of tremendous proportion and is greatly involved with the political matters of the House, although he will delegate responsibility in order to give him time to quench the thirst for knowledge that brought him to the position. The current Lord's presence commands respect in all Hourani of lower station, as he is a descendant of Grandfather Groam, progenitor of the race.

House of Illiomis

Nil desperandum ("Never despair")

House colors: A yellow border on a field of black

The Illiomis are the only truly nomadic Hourani House, for they are the entertainers, caring not for political powers and domination, nor to be the champions of justice, nor to learn the secrets of mystic power. The House of Illiomis cares only to discover the passions of life itself. Many of the incidental records at the Wayne Monastery about the Hourani lineage come from the plays, songs, and poems written by Illiomis Aorik and all of his family tree. The House is very fond of artists and craftsmen and often trade their best personal works for the beauty captured in the paintings, statues, and jewelry of all civilizations. Although those of Illiomis are hard to locate due to their wanderings, at least one can always be found at the Illiomis World Gallery in Calcese (although probably not the same one twice in a year, as those of Illiomis are eager hearts driven to form and capture their personal self-expressions). This artistic obsession takes many of them across the world, to discover what drives them, and then back again to teach it to those who do not yet know. After teaching the students, the journey often begins anew, and House members drift back out into the fresh world.



The Illiomis are excellent teachers of language, dance, singing, writing, music, and lore. The House runs a school of travelling professors that runs an annual trip starting in September from Calcese, to Harndin by the first of January (for the New Year's celebration), and then back again starting in February. The group then arrives at the end of May in Calcese to enjoy their summer festivities before starting off again. Cortez is always a stopping point, in October and April, and during their excursion, those who travel with the troupe for a month (or stays with them in Calcese, Harndin, or Cortez while the troupe resides there) can learn the Illiomis' best skills or improve skills already possessed for 5 gold per month of classes. (Note that this cost does not include the cost of living or travel.) For that one month, the student will attend twelve-hour-a-day sessions for thirty-one days, under the expert tutelage of an Illiomis master, on a one-to-one basis. Any student learning a new skill can only learn that one skill during the month and receives a 75 rating after the sessions are complete.

The House of Illiomis resembles Balentin in that they have no rank structure aside from the Lord of Arts (Lord of the House). This House works closely with both the House of Wayne and the House of Porter, as their information network rivals even that of the House of Balentin. The House of Porter often deals in "favors", money, or goods for information from the House of Illiomis. Members of this House are also used as spies from time to time.

Illiomis Jobs

Itinerant

Masteries: Travel 3

Pathways: Any

Advantages: Dext 1, Char 1, Appe 1, Style 1

Income: 1 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Horse, cart, tools, world map, basic equipment, livery

Prerequisite: None

The Itinerant is the starting position for all House of Illiomis members, requesting that everyone gain NeverWorld knowledge by travelling through it. The young member is given a list of places and cities he must visit as part of his training and education and then set loose. He has no set time in which to return, but he will be tested on his knowledge of the required places upon his return. Once the Itinerant is consid-

ered competent by his senior brothers, he is allowed to choose the path in which his career will follow.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL3 + 1 every 2PL

☞ +1 Charisma

☞ +1 Style

☞ +20 Entertainment: Any 1 skill

☞ +10 Myth & Lore: Any 1 skill

☞ +15 Travel: Any 1 skill

Musician

Masteries: Entertainment 3

Pathways: Any

Advantages: Dext 2, Char 1, Appe 1, Style 2

Income: 2 gold/month

Required gear: Instrument, horse, food, lodging

Career assets: Basic equipment, livery

Prerequisite: Itinerant (PL6)

One of the many paths open to an Itinerant, the Musician is the basic ingredient of any festivity and an integral component of any music ensemble. Musicians do not have any obvious responsibilities, except to perform in ceremonies, parades, festivals, and so on, typically travelling the world, bringing music to myriad taverns and inns, and learning new melodies from other cultures in the process.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL3, +1 every 2PL

☞ +1 Dexterity or Style

☞ +1 Appearance

☞ +60 in *Eidetic Hearing* (17): Allows the Musician to recall with absolute clarity anything previously heard (even if it was only heard once)—including songs, lyrics, or a stranger's voice. This skill can also help recall certain sounds as well. The difficulty multiplier is 5 for something only been heard once, 4 for something heard a few times, 3 for something heard many times, 2 for something heard frequently, and 1 for something constantly heard. This skill does not allow the character to memorize scenes or written words—only things which can be heard.

☞ +20 Entertainment: Music: Any 2 skills

☞ +10 Myth & Lore: Fabled Lands: Neuron

☞ +15 Travel: Terrain Knowledge: Any 1 skill





Actor

Masteries: Entertainment 3

Pathways: Any

Advantages: Agil 1, Char 2, Appe 1, Style 2

Income: 2 gold/month

Required gear: Costumes, props, horse, cart, food, lodging

Career assets: Basic equipment, livery

Prerequisite: Itinerant (PL6)

Yet another profession that the Itinerant can choose is that of Actor. Actors bring to life that which is written—history, plays, and books of all subjects. They can perform equally well in real life, as well as on stage or in theater, and they prefer to travel as well, teaching through performance as well as learning from the new culture.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL3, +1 every 2PL

☞ +1 Charisma or Style

☞ +1 Appearance

☞ +60 in *Impersonate (10)*: By studying a person for at least 3 months, the Actor can begin to impersonate him. This skill allows mimicry of habitual body language, speech, accent, and intonation. The skill's base complexity is 10, but when making a skill check it is 10 + the target's SL. A roll must be made each successive day to keep up the facade, but if successful the Actor can fool anyone except for those intimately close to that person. For every additional month that the Actor studies the subject, he can go one additional day before being required to make a skill check. The target must be the same approximate size and build of the Actor (within 6 inches of height and 1 size level in general).

☞ +20 Entertainment: Drama: Any 2 skills

☞ +10 Myth & Lore: Heroes/Heroines: Hourani

☞ +10 Travel: Any 1 skill

Painter/Sculptor

Masteries: Entertainment 3

Pathways: Any

Advantages: Dext 2, Awar 2, Style 2

Income: 3 gold/month

Required gear: Paints, canvas / chisel, hammer, food, lodging

Career assets: Basic equipment, livery

Prerequisite: Itinerant (PL6)

The Painter is another avenue available to the Itinerant, capturing the world's essence on canvas or other surfaces for all to see and enjoy. He greatly appreciates

the beauty of his surroundings, although the actual concept of beauty can vary greatly from painter to painter (one might be moved by a gnarled dead tree on a moonlit night, while another could admire a rainbow-hued horizon with the sun setting on the sea). The old cliché—"Beauty is in the eye of the beholder"—definitely holds true here. The Painter travels in order to expand his artistic vision.

Similar to the Painter, the Sculptor can recreate the beauty of things he has seen, while also freeing the inner beauty of the stone or wood in which he carves. As an unknown artisan once said, "In every rock and tree rests an inner beauty thrusting at its earthly bonds, pleading for escape with those capable of truly seeing it." The Sculptor does not always feel that travel is necessary, but sometimes he must journey in order to find the right rock or tree in which to sculpt.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL3, +1 every 2PL

☞ +1 Dexterity or Style

☞ +1 Awareness

☞ +60 in *Eidetic Sight (17)*: The artist can perfectly recall anything seen, even if he saw it only once—and he can also draw, paint, or sculpt a reproduction of the seen object. To use, simply roll the skill; if successful, the GM will give the appropriate details. The difficulty multiplier is 5 for something seen only once, 4 for something seen a few times, 3 for something seen many times, 2 for something seen frequently, and 1 for something constantly seen. Note that the artist cannot memorize sounds or written words—just objects that can be seen.

☞ +20 Professional Crafts: Arts: Any 2 skills

☞ +10 Myth & Lore: Heroes/Heroines: Hourani

☞ +10 Travel: Any 1 skill

Poet

Masteries: Entertainment 3

Pathways: Any

Advantages: Dext 1, Char 2, Appe 1, Style 2

Income: 1 gold/month

Required gear: Writing implements, book, horse, food, lodging

Career assets: Basic equipment, livery

Prerequisite: Itinerant (PL6)

The Poet is another option open to the Itinerant. Poets have great artistic potential, as they can express ideas or feelings in a way that an audience can appreciate beyond measure. Many Poets travel the world in order to discover the true meanings of both life and death.

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Special skills: Choose 1 at PL3, +1 every 2PL

- ✧ +1 Charisma or Style
- ✧ +1 Appearance
- ✧ +60 in *Inspire (10)*: Allows the poet to excite a number of people (equal to the Poet's LL²) with the beauty and eloquence of his poetry, with the results of the inspiration depending on the Poet's intentions. The artist might want to inspire dread in each listener, or even sadness, love, or hate. The poem's motif determines its form as well, and the effect can be produced either during a public recitation by the Poet or by the audience actually reading the poem themselves. When influencing a crowd, the group's Comp level is used to determine difficulty, and those in the crowd with higher LLs than the Poet's can make a successful Mental save to resist the effects. Those who succumb will be easily manipulated to feel the proper emotion and will function as pseudo-pawns/followers for d10 hours. Note that, to work, the poem must be in a language (written or spoken) that the audience can understand. The base complexity of this skill is 10; when making a skill check, the complexity is 10 + target's Comp.
- ✧ +40 Entertainment: Drama: Captivation and Emoting
- ✧ +10 Professional Crafts: Arts: Any 1 skill
- ✧ +10 Scholastics: Archaic Science: Philosophy

Juggler

Masteries: Entertainment 3

Pathways: Any

Advantages: Dext 2, Refl 2, Char 1, Style 1

Income: 2 gold/month

Required gear: Props, horse, food, lodging

Career assets: Basic equipment, livery

Prerequisite: Itinerant (PL6)

The last possible direction for the Itinerant is Juggler. This profession expresses a more physical form of art and involves balance, coordination, and speed. Jugglers use all manner of props in their acts, such as fire, knives, rope, streamers, banners, and flags, and can be just as entertaining as the most gifted actor, poet, or musician. They enjoy traveling to new places and showing their acts to new people, being both jesters and artists.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL3, +1 every 2PL

- ✧ +1 Dexterity or Agility
- ✧ +1 Charisma or Style

- ✧ +60 in *Dazzle (10)*: Allows the Juggler to completely captivate the audience with a spectacular displays of physical prowess. Jugglers can Dazzle a number of people (equal to his LL²), although spectators with a higher LL than the Juggler's can resist by rolling a successful Mental save. Those missing the save (or not getting one) will be so caught up observing that they will forget what they were doing and where they were going, as long as the Juggler continues to perform. The base complexity of Dazzle is 10, but when making a skill check, it becomes 10 + the crowd's average Logic level.
- ✧ +20 Entertainment: Athletics Any 1 skill
- ✧ +10 Combat: Thrown: Knives
- ✧ +10 Travel: Any 1 skill

Illiomis Professions

Bard

Masteries: Entertainment 6; Myth & Lore 3; Travel 6

Pathways: Any

Advantages: Dext 4, Char 2, Appe 2, Style 4, Pers 1

Income: 5 gold/month

Required gear: Instrument, horse, food, lodging

Career assets: Basic equipment, livery

Prerequisite: Musician (PL8)

The Bard is a master musician, able to play many different instruments well. His talents are typically sought after by the nobility of the land, and he is often found in a duke's royal court or a baron's banquet hall. No matter where you find him, though, he is sure to be the source of much entertainment and making a great deal of gold in the process. Many Bards diversify their skills by also learning to sing, and (although not required) most perform in groups such as bands or orchestras. Bards might also be accompanied by Actors or Troubadours.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL5, +1 every 1PL

- ✧ +1 Dexterity or Charisma
- ✧ +1 Appearance or Style
- ✧ +60 in *Incite (10)*: Allows the Bard to use music to cause certain emotions in his targets, provoking them into hostility or soothing them into being docile. The number of targets equals the Bard's LL²; those with a higher LL than the Bard can roll a Mental save to avoid the effects. When affecting a crowd, the Bard should use the average Conf to determine the difficulty. Those "moved" by the

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music will be vulnerable towards any suggested (in)action appropriate to their current emotion. Note that instruments from the percussion family can only cause hostility. Musicians can also use Incite to improve their first impression when meeting a new culture. This skill's base complexity is 10; when making a skill check, the difficulty is 10 + the target's Confidence.

- ☞ +10 Culture: Language: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +10 Entertainment: Music: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +20 Myth & Lore: Fabled Lands: Neuron
- ☞ +10 Travel: Terrain Knowledge: Any 1 skill

Troubadour

Masteries: Entertainment 6; Myth & Lore 3; Travel 6
Pathways: Any
Advantages: Agil 2, Char 4, Appe 2, Style 4, Pers 1
Income: 5 gold/month
Required gear: Costumes, props, horse, wagon, food, lodging
Career assets: Basic equipment, livery
Prerequisite: Actor (PL6)

The Troubadour is the professional actor of the realm, capable of performing plays from cultures and in many languages, and found at any major amphitheater, city park stage, and any other place with both large audiences and worthwhile payment. Troubadours generally travel in troupes with other actors and are accompanied by Musicians or Bards.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL5, +1 every 1PL

- ☞ +1 Charisma or Style
- ☞ +1 Appearance
- ☞ +60 in *Illusionary Curtain (15)*: With this ability and the necessary props, the Troubadour can create illusions of sight, sound, and smell, suggesting scenes, people, creatures, explosions, fog, and many other things. This skill is usually employed on a stage or in a theater for a play, but the Troubadour can use it elsewhere, provided he has proper time and props to arrange the desired effect. Troubadours need one week of preparation for each different desired effect; for example, if he wanted to create a fabricated store or house, he would need one week and the necessary materials. To add people to the store or house, he'd need an additional week and the necessary materials to create them. Each new effect/week demands a skill check, and those suspicious of the effect's authenticity compare an Awareness check against

the Troubadour's skill roll. (If the Troubadour had to make multiple rolls, use the average.)

- ☞ +20 Culture: Language: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +10 Entertainment: Drama: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +10 Myth & Lore: Heroes/Heroines: Hourani
- ☞ +15 Travel: Any 1 skill

Artist

Masteries: Entertainment 6; Myth & Lore 3; Travel 6
Pathways: Any
Advantages: Dext 4, Awar 4, Style 4, Pers 1
Income: 5 gold/month
Required gear: Paints, canvas / chisel, hammer, food, lodging
Career assets: Basic equipment, livery
Prerequisite: Painter/Sculptor (PL6)

The Artist is the finest painter or sculptor in the land, and his renowned skills are sought after by any and everyone. His unique talents are especially needed when new buildings or city additions are being constructed. Artists are responsible for the aesthetics of the architecture in many great cities and will continue to be so for as long as gold remains in the city coffers. Artists are known to work on commission from time to time, but only the rich need ask, as such a task can be a very expensive venture.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL5, +1 every 1PL

- ☞ +1 Dexterity or Style
- ☞ +1 Awareness
- ☞ +20 Professional Crafts: Arts: Any 1 skill.
- ☞ +10 Myth & Lore: Heroes/Heroines: Hourani
- ☞ +10 Travel: Any 1 skill
- ☞ *Awe*: Allows that Artist to create such breathtaking works that the viewers are filled with some sort of awe, dependent on the art's purpose. A scene of the UnderWorld could cause fear in its audience, while a statue of an angel could instill reverence and admiration. Those with higher LLs than the Artist can avoid the effects by making a successful Mental save. Those awed by the work change the Artist's SPs, depending on the dominant feeling caused by the work. Negative emotions (such as fear or desperation) decrease SPs, while positive emotions (such as confidence or tranquillity) increase them. The amount of SPs gained/lost from a given work of art depends on the success level achieved when creating the work; check the ROC, and multiply the number of EPs gained by that level of success by each person in Awe of the art.

Chapter Two



Minstrel

Masteries: Entertainment 6; Myth & Lore 3; Travel 6

Pathways: Any

Advantages: Dext 2, Char 4, Appe 2, Style 4, Pers 1

Income: 4 gold/month

Required gear: Writing implements, book, horse, food, lodging

Career assets: Basic equipment, livery

Prerequisite: Poet (PL6)

The Minstrel is a master poet who has learned to read, write, and speak many different languages. Most of them supplement their poetry with music, either learning how to play themselves or having others accompany them. Minstrels can be found in all manner of settings, from weddings to city festivals, and some say that they are capable of charming the battle axe off a dwarf.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL5, +1 every 1PL

☞ +1 Charisma or Style

☞ +1 Appearance

☞ +60 in *Charm (10)*: Allows the Minstrel to charm audiences with his eloquent verse. Those with LLs greater than the Minstrel's can avoid the effects by making a successful Mental save, but all other targets will be completely overwhelmed by the Minstrel, revering and admiring him at all times. Note, however, that the Minstrel can only Charm one subject at a time and must stay within proximity of the subject as well (either shouting distance or visual range). Targets with LLs higher than the Minstrel who failed their initial Mental saves are allowed another save after sleeping. After the Charm ends, targets will realize that their behavior was strange, even if they don't realize they were charmed. Charm's base complexity is 10; but when making a skill check, the difficulty is 10 + the target's Logic.

☞ +40 Entertainment: Drama: Captivation and Emoting

☞ +20 Professional Crafts: Arts: Any 1 skill

☞ +15 Scholastics: Archaic Science: Philosophy

Acrobat

Masteries: Entertainment 6; Myth & Lore 3; Travel 6

Pathways: Any

Advantages: Dext 4, Refl 4, Char 2, Style 2, Pers 1

Income: 5 gold/month

Required gear: Props, horse, food, lodging

Career assets: Basic equipment, livery

Prerequisite: Juggler (PL6)

The Acrobat is the professional juggler of the land, well versed in all forms of physical entertainment such as juggling, somersaults, flips, tumbling, tightrope walking, trapeze performance, etc. Acrobats can function just as well alone or in a group of other Acrobats and will perform wherever he can find an audience (and a man of his spectacular talents deserves an audience).

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL5, +1 every 1PL

☞ +1 Dext or Refl

☞ +1 Char or Style

☞ +60 in *Distraction (10)*: Allows the Acrobat to effectively cause chaos in a crowd. Similar to Dazzle, the Acrobat can distract a number of people equal to his LL² (with a minimum of 4). Those in the crowd with a LL higher than the Acrobat's can make a Mental save to resist the effects, but all others are oblivious to everything around them except the Acrobat's action, which completely occupies their attentions for d10 x 6 minutes. Unlike Dazzle, the Acrobat does not need to maintain the distraction to enjoy its effects (as the audience will murmur to each other), but at least two people must be watching. Base complexity is 10, but when making a skill check, the difficulty is 10 + the average Awareness of the target crowd.

☞ +20 Dark Arts: Prestidigitation: Any 1 skill

☞ +10 Entertainment: Athletics: Any 5 skills

☞ +10 Travel: Any 1 skill

House Lord (Lord of Arts)

Masteries: Entertainment 10; Myth & Lore 6; Travel 8

Pathways: Any

Advantages: Dext 5, Char 4, Appe 6, Style 6, Pers 2

Income: 1000 gold/year

Required gear: None

Career assets: Control of House Illiomis

Prerequisite: Bard, Troubadour, Artist, Minstrel, or Acrobat (PL6 in any)

The Lord of the House of Illiomis is theoretically the greatest entertainer of the House and an amalgamation of all other House professions—in general, as capable a poet as a musician or actor. However, as with all House Lords, he finds little time for his preferred pursuits due to the many political matters he must attend to. Not even a baron or duke is wealthy enough to hire the Lord of Arts as a personal entertainer for the night, although the Lord has been known to make surprise appearances at important regal festivals.



House of Porter

Palida Mors ("Pale Death")

House colors: A red border on a field of black

The House of Porter consists of Hourani assassins and thieves and all soldiers turned away from the House of Cortez, and is actually the largest family, representing more than 40% of the Hourani race. Members of the House of Porter can be found everywhere in the Neuon city states, and no word or deed goes unnoticed by them. They also know the underside to every transaction and will become involved if it interferes with their business. If someone is marked for death by the House of Porter, be assured that the target will be dead by the next full moon if they do not immediately flee Neuon. In all NeverWorld, this House is the single largest guild of thieves and assassins combined under one man: Porter Aorik. He alone has final word over House policy, and those who disobey him are quickly killed. His principles are twisted and laws far beyond barbaric, but the obedience and loyalty to the house is equal to the passion of the House of Cortez.

The rules for Porter are simple and swift. Any of the House who steal from the House are killed. Anyone disobeying a command is killed. Anyone failing to complete his mission is killed. As Porter Aorik I once said, "There is no failure, there is no second chance; there is only success, or death." Those not ready to accept these conditions are never allowed into this House or any other, as this House was already their last hope, and thus they are forced to wander alone throughout the world. (In fact, these rogue wanderers are responsible for the Hourani's negative bloodthirsty stereotype, as they have nothing to live for and thus do not care about the consequences of their actions.)

Porters have been known to help their brother Houses from time to time, if the price is right, and they are also the best source of black market goods for any Hourani, as they keep constant and fair prices no matter how the market fluctuates. (But woe to those who are not Hourani, for they will always overpay—usually 50%-75% over normal price, and humans can never pay enough.)

Assassination contracts are simple business, really, but still very expensive, depending on the actual target. When buying a contract, the client goes through a Foreman and never meets a real Assassin (in order to keep the client from later changing his mind and trying to prevent the Assassin from carrying out his task). House Policy on assassinations is very clear: "Once a contract has been made, start digging the grave." This policy is designed to keep the House's

name and competence untarnished, prevent uncertain clients from wasting the House's valuable time and money, and negate the possibility that a target could buy his way out of a contract.

As far as fees go, the House gets 60% and the individual Assassin receives 40%. This might sound like a good haul, but the Assassin must spend much of his earnings on job-related expenses not covered by the House (ranging from travel expenses to follow the target, to bribing the kitchen help to get access to the right room at the right time). Also, other specific services can be offered as part of the assassination contract (for an additional fee, of course). If the client exercises good social etiquette, he might want the House to give the target advance notice of his pending death, so that the target can straighten out his personal affairs before death. This stipulation is actually common but costs an additional 50% of the original fee. If the client is particularly determined to ensure the target's death, he can request that the House make the death permanent. Upon successful target termination, the Assassin would dismember and completely destroy every part of the corpse, preventing resurrection of any sort. This service doubles the original fee. Also, for just an extra 10%, the client can have the Assassin inform the target of who hired him, right before he kills him. Other stipulations can be negotiated with the Foreman, as he is the local representative for his city's guild and the overall House.

As far as black market fees go, the standard cut of any business conducted by the House is 75%, with the remaining 25% is given to the member as wages (from which he must pay all expenses not provided by the House—such as extra equipment, food and lodging outside the guildhouse, and specialty items). It's true that anything can be obtained, no matter how illegal, but the item's availability determines its price.

Porter Aorik himself has practiced the perfect art of assassination and taught it to all his best pupils. And in HTH combat, Porter has the ultimate weapon: a blade so wicked that it can only conceivably be used by one with no conscience. The Blade of Krienou, originally belonging to the psychic Krienou and taking from him by Groam after his death, "found" its way into Porter's hands after Groam passed on and is capable of instantly killing its target with explosive energy. The blade need only make a scratch, and it can cut through magical armor as easily as normal armor.

The House of Porter provides the primary defense for the House of Rosenthal, with the standard squad assigned to any one temple consisting of ten Employees, five Shadow Guards, and one Death Knight. The squad is trained for any terrain, able to inflict the deadliest surprise attack and then "fade" back into their

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surroundings, attacking from the shadows, carrying the carry the worst poisons, and taking no bribes. The commander of the squad will never get involved with the fight unless his group is assigned to humans and he is caught by the bloodlust. Even then, he will remain unseen, backstab his opponent, and drag him away to feed on. It is true that, for a short time, the Porter and Rosenthal Houses were feuding, but all wounds have since been mended by the Exalted Dark Priest Dalian Mastok and Porter Aorik.

For extremely complicated tasks, Porter has been known to call on the "brother" of Ivan Wolfslayer. Ivan was originally the bodyguard assassin to Groam Aorik I during his battle versus the Darkelf, but at some point—for reasons unknown—the relationship ended and Ivan disappeared for a period of ten years. Now a spiritual warrior resembling Ivan and fitting the same descriptions is working for Porter House, called on especially to deal with spirits and astral travelers.

The House of Porter's rank structure is similar to that of Balentin and Illiomis, with a few small differences (one being that Porter is run more like a business rather than a feudal House):

- ☞ Employee
- ☞ Bodyguard
- ☞ Foreman
- ☞ Spy
- ☞ Thief
- ☞ Death Knight
- ☞ Assassin
- ☞ Guildmaster
- ☞ Grandfather/Lord of the House

Promotion within the House is both difficult and dangerous, for only the most skilled and cunning can hold a position of authority and remain live. Newly recruited or "acquired" members are put into ten-man suicide squads, in order to weed out the weak from the strong, and a new member need only survive one mission in order to become an actual Employee of the House. Until that time, the recruit is called Servus (Servant) and has no rights or privileges.

Although Mercenaries, Renegade Knights, and Renegade Paladins hold rank within the Porter system, they are not part of the House Lord's domain. They are still subject to House rules and answerable to Porter, but until they can prove themselves worthy of a ranked position, they are simply accepted within the system and used for their talents. (This might seem to be a raw deal, but those warriors rejected by the House of Cortez have limited options.)

Porter Jobs

Employee (Courier)

Masteries: Combat 2; Dark Arts 2

Pathways: Taker

Advantages: Refl 1, Awar 1

Income: 1 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Basic equipment, guild barracks, livery, food

Prerequisite: None

For those born into this House or first starting their adult lives here, the Employee is the only entry-level position they can take. Employees are the lowliest of the low and considered to be expendable until he proves himself worthy enough to earn a better position. At least advancement comes rather quickly, as the test of worthiness is simple survival, and the longer one remains an Employee, the less likely one is to survive. Those who successfully complete any one mission are eligible for advancement, while those who are unsuccessful or do not return are *ad patres*—"gathered to their fathers." On the rare occasion when an Employee is not on some mission, he performs messenger errands for the House.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL2, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Reflex or Awareness
- ☞ +20 Combat: HTH: Howling Wind
- ☞ +15 Combat: Fired Weapons: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +10 Dark Arts: Prestidigitation: Any 2 skills
- ☞ +10 Dark Arts: Subterfuge: Any 2 skills
- ☞ +10 Travel: Terrain Knowledge: Cities

Bodyguard (Shadow Guard)

Masteries: Combat 3; Dark Arts 3

Pathways: Taker

Advantages: Stre 1, Stam 1, Refl 2, Awar 2

Income: 5 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Basic equipment, guild quarters, weapons, armor, livery, food

Prerequisite: Employee (PL4)

The Bodyguard is the next big step up into the criminal world for the House of Porter member. He finally begins to receive respect from others, as he is no longer at the bottom of the organization. At this point, he is responsible for not only the safety of the Foreman he must protect but also the security of any goods the Foreman is selling or buying. The Bodyguard also ensures that

business is conducted properly, but his presence alone is usually enough to discourage any ideas of cheating the Foreman. Should some fool attempt to rob the Foreman, the Bodyguard is expected to intervene even at the cost of his own life (which is still infinitely better than being tortured and killed by the House for failing in his task). Bodyguards have earned the nickname of Shadow Guards because they are always following in the shadows of their charges, as fleeting as shadows. Two Bodyguards are normally assigned to each Foreman.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL3, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Awareness
- ☞ +30 to Ambush
- ☞ +40 to OCF with one weapon when defending the Foreman or his goods. The weapon affected must be chosen with this special skill.
- ☞ +10 Dark Arts: Subterfuge: Ambush
- ☞ +20 Travel: Terrain Knowledge: Cities

Mercenary

Masteries: Combat 4; Travel 4

Pathways: Taker

Advantages: Stre 1, Stam 1, Refl 2, Awar 2

Income: PL in gold/month

Required gear: Weapons, armor, food, lodging

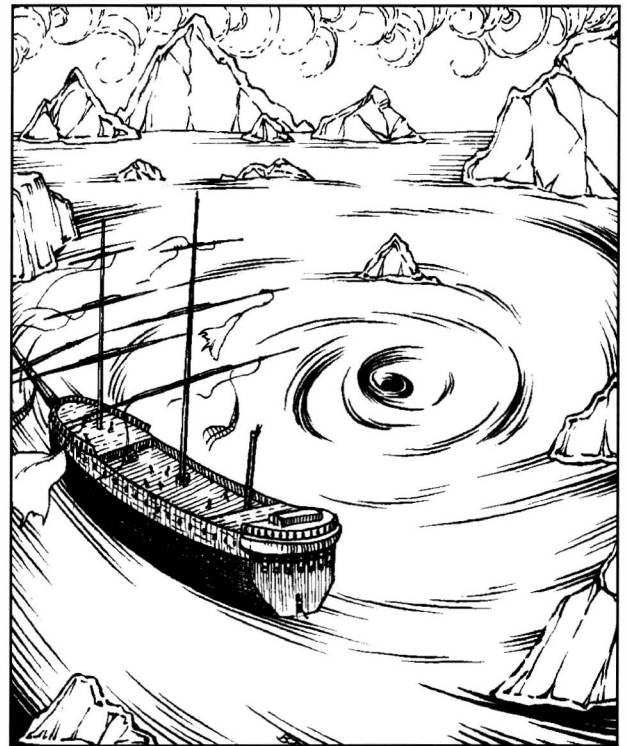
Career assets: Basic equipment, livery

Prerequisite: None (see below)

The Mercenary is the type of man who make wars possible. (After all, if there were no wars, he would be unemployed.) Mercenaries are skilled fighters and well paid for what they do. Unless they were Knight or Paladin, those Hourani previously with the House of Cortez end up in this position. (Hourani from other Houses usually end up as Employees, although a few exceptions have been noted.) This is one of the jobs that is part of House Porter but doesn't involve direct House members and thus is not under the House Lord's domain.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL4, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 in any one Physical advantage
- ☞ +1 Conf
- ☞ +20 in *Foreign Weapons (20)*: Allows the Mercenary to pick up and use any weapon in which he has not previously received training, no matter how foreign it might be (such as a boomerang or even a ballista). Note that normal combat rules still apply to this skill.
- ☞ +10 Combat: Any 1 skill



- ☞ +15 Leadership: Military: Strategy
- ☞ +20 Travel: Terrain Knowledge: Any 2 skills

Foreman (Smuggler, Slaver, Fence)

Masteries: Combat 4; Dark Arts 4; Leadership: Statecraft 2

Pathways: Taker

Advantages: Conf 1, Avoi 1, Refl 2, Awar 2

Income: 5-10% of goods in gold/month

Required gear: Weapons, armor

Career assets: Basic equipment, guild quarters, personal guards, food, livery

Prerequisite: Bodyguard (PL6) or Mercenary (PL8)

The Foreman is the first position of leadership and responsibility in the House and are responsible for keeping Employees in line, as well as fencing goods, smuggling illegal commodities and contraband, and selling slaves. Foremen deal in anything considered to be a black market good and are always accompanied by at least two Shadow Guards when conducting business. Loss of any goods for which they are responsible is punishable by death, so they are understandably cautious, yet they still must necessarily work in heavily frequented areas (such as city bazarres, marketplaces, or popular inns) in order to be accessible to their customers.

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Special skills: Choose 1 at PL3, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Confidence or Avoidance
- ☞ +60 in *Appraise* (12): Allows the Foreman to calculate the value of almost anything bought or sold on any market, from jewels to slaves. If the Foreman has a Sage Science skill equal to or higher than his Appraise skill, then he also will know prominent facts/histories about the item. An item's value is appraised according to its Hourani or Neunionian market worth, not as per its home culture.
- ☞ +10 Dark Arts: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +20 Leadership: Statecraft: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +10 Scholastics: Research: Sage Science
- ☞ +10 Travel: Terrain Knowledge: Cities

Spy

Masteries: Combat 4; Dark Arts 5; Travel 4

Pathways: Taker

Advantages: Etiq 1, Avoi 2, Refl 2, Awar 2

Income: PL in gold/month

Required gear: Weapons, armor

Career assets: Basic equipment, spyglass, disguise implements, livery

Prerequisite: Foreman (PL6) or Mercenary (PL10)

The Spy gathers information for the House and is one who is never seen or heard but who sees and hears everything around him. Skilled at the subtle art of deception, Spies are used to infiltrate every level of government, from the city guard to the city council, and rumors suggest that even Lord Porter employs these men to spy on his own House, to keep everyone "honest." Spies are everywhere, are very disciplined and loyal, and will die before allowing themselves to be captured and tortured for information. They report to only the Guildmaster or Lord Porter himself.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL4, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Etiquette or Avoidance
- ☞ +1 Awareness
- ☞ *Espionage*: Allows the spy to pick up information most characters would miss. First, he can read the lips of those whom he observes talking (even those beyond his normal 10-yard range, if he is using a spyglass). The Spy need not hear the conversation, but he must be able to understand the language being used. Second, the Spy can hear conversations through doors and walls, even if the conversation is whispered, by simply pressing his ear to the obstruction. Note that, even in this case, the Spy must still be able to understand the

language used, and he must roll the appropriate language skill to determine his success or failure.

- ☞ +10 Culture: Any 1 Language skill
- ☞ +10 Dark Arts: Subterfuge: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +20 Entertainment: Drama: Props & Costumes
- ☞ +10 Travel: Terrain Knowledge: Cities

Porter Professions

Thief

Masteries: Combat 5; Dark Arts 6; Travel 5

Pathways: Taker

Advantages: Refl 3, Awar 3, Agil 1, Dext 1, Style 1, Pers 1

Income: 25% of goods in gold/month

Required gear: Weapons

Career assets: Basic equipment, thieving tools, small apartment, livery

Prerequisite: Spy (PL6)

The Thief is perhaps the liveliest position within the House of Porter, willing to steal even the fillings from his own grandmother's teeth and then sell them back to her for profit. Nothing that isn't nailed to the floor is safe from his pilfering hands. The House Lord employs these sly men to "acquire" valuable items for the House, from sensitive documents to the rarest of jewels. If something is important to Porter, it is something to be acquired.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL5, +1 every 1PL

- ☞ +2 Dexterity
- ☞ +1 Avoidance
- ☞ +60 in *Duplicate* (15): Allows the Thief to create an exact and authentic-looking copy of something he wishes to steal, allowing him to replace the stolen item with a replica recognizable as such only by expert eyes. (After all, the most successful theft is one that no one even realizes has occurred.) Those who examine the duplicate for fraud must have the appropriate skill to do so and must also use the Thief's skill roll as a difficulty. Only after making a successful roll will the experts realize the item is a cheap imitation of the original.
- ☞ +20 Dark Arts: Subterfuge: Prowling
- ☞ +10 Entertainment: Athletics: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +15 Dark Arts: Prestidigitation: Any 1 skill



Renegade Paladin

Masteries: Combat 7; Dark Arts 6; Travel 6

Pathways: Taker

Advantages: Stre 3, Stam 3, Refl 3, Awar 3, Conf 2, Pers 2, Style 2, Avoi 2

Income: PL in gold/month

Required gear: Weapons, armor, mount, food

Career assets: Basic equipment, large House, livery

Prerequisite: None (see description)

For those Paladins who have left the House of Cortez, the option of being a Renegade Paladin in the House of Porter remains one of their few choices left. Despite the stigma, however, these men are some of the most dangerous fighters to be encountered, aside from Death Knights or Assassins, as they are masters of combat untempered by scruples. Similar to Mercenaries, only gold really matters to them, and for the purposes of House politics, they should be treated as Mercenaries.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL6, +1 every 1PL

☞ +1 Confidence or Perseverance

☞ +1 Style or Avoidance

☞ *Berserk:* Allows the Renegade Paladin to ignore the effects of any wound (past or future) while in combat. Though he still registers HP loss whenever receiving damage, he is immune to all other damage effects while Berserk, including bloodloss, breaks, ruptures, dismemberment, and even death. (Note, however, that if reduced to 0 HPs or less, he will still die when his berserk rage ends). While berserk, if he dispatches the immediate target, the Renegade Paladin will attack the the next closest and accessible person, whether friend or foe. Berserk can be used only once per day and lasts a number of rounds equal to Conf + Pers.

☞ +10 Combat: Any 1 melee skill

☞ +15 Dark Arts: Subterfuge: Ambush

☞ +10 Leadership: Military: Any 1 skill

☞ +20 Travel: Terrain Knowledge: Any 1 skill other than Cities

Renegade Knight

Masteries: Combat 6; Leadership 4; Travel 5

Pathways: Taker

Advantages: Stre 2, Stam 2, Refl 3, Awar 3, Conf 2, Pers 2, Style 1, Etiq 1, Avoi 1, Logic 1

Income: PL in gold/month

Required gear: Weapons, armor, mount, food

Career assets: Basic equipment, small House, livery

Prerequisite: None (See description)

Knights of Cortez who have been banished from both their Order and House may become Renegade Knights in the House of Porter. These warriors are generally cold-hearted men who place no value on any life except their own, cheating and lying whenever necessary and using every dirty trick in the book to win a fight. They usually follow a twisted version of the Hourani Knight's Code of Chivalry, conveniently changed or interpreted to fit their new lifestyle. This position resembles that of the Renegade Paladin, except that the Renegade Knight is given more respect and authority. Renegade Knights can choose to become Renegade Paladins or advance to being Death Knights whenever they meet the requirements.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL5, +1 every 1PL

☞ +1 Strength or Stamina

☞ +1 Confidence

☞ *Fear:* Allows the Renegade Knight to cause fear in opponents simply by making eye contact; those of a lower LL than the Knight's PL will flee in terror until the Knight is no longer in sight. They will also attempt to avoid any future confrontation with the Knight, if possible, and those who cannot flee the Knight will pass out in terror. Opponents with a LL equal to or higher than the Knight's PL are allowed a Social save to avoid the effects. The Fear lasts d10 hours, and the Renegade Knight can affect an unlimited number of opponents.

☞ +10 Combat: Any 1 melee skill

☞ +10 Dark Arts: Subterfuge: Pursuit & Evasion.

☞ +20 Leadership: Military: Any 1 skill

☞ +10 Travel: Terrain Knowledge: Any 1 skill other than Cities

Death Knight

Masteries: Combat 8; Dark Arts 7; Leadership 4; Travel 6

Pathways: Complete Taker

Advantages: Stre 3, Stam 3, Refl 3, Awar 3, Conf 3, Pers 3, Etiq 2, Style 2, Avoi 3, Logic 1

Income: PLx2 in gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Weapons, armor, mount, basic equipment, small mansion, food, livery, servants, personal guard

Prerequisite: Thief (PL6), Renegade Paladin, (PL8), or Renegade Knight (PL6)

Death Knights are the strong arm of the House of Porter. If something or someone needs to be taken care of and discretion is unnecessary, then the Death Knight

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is the man for the job. Every House member respects him out of fear, and even Assassins think twice before coming to blows with him. Lord Porter himself is said to use a special detachment of Death Knights as his personal guard. Death Knights are responsible for enforcing the orders of the Guildmaster and have been given more than enough authority to do so.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL6, +1 every 1PL

- ☞ +1 Reflex or Awareness
- ☞ +1 Agility or Dexterity
- ☞ *Deathblow:* Allows the Death Knight to killing an opponent with a single blow, by scoring a G+ success on his offensive roll (above and beyond any defensive roll made by the opponent). The Death Knight can only kill mortal creatures like this, unless he is also using a magical or runed weapon.
- ☞ +20 to the first two Lunar Dragonfay sect endowments
- ☞ +10 Leadership: Military: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +5 Leadership: Statecraft: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +5 Travel: Terrain Knowledge: Any 1 skill besides Cities

Assassin

Masteries: Combat 8; Dark Arts 8; Entertainment: Athletics 4; Travel 7

Pathways: Taker

Advantages: Refl 4, Awar 4, Agil 2, Dext 2, Etiq 3, Style 3, Avoi 3, Pers 2

Income: 50% of contract in gold/month, plus expenses

Required gear: Extra weapons, travel expenses

Career assets: Weapons, poisons, livery, basic, equipment, room and board

Prerequisite: Death Knight (PL8)

Assassins: the stock and trade of the House of Porter. From these deadly artisans, the House earns its reputation for immaculate results. Assassins are the House elite and no other profession (except Guildmaster or House Lord) commands more respect or fear than they. True, only the wealthiest clients can even afford their fees, but their money is definitely well spent, for no other similar guild in the land has as successful a reputation as House Porter. Familiar with every implement of murder, they can kill silently and swiftly and with a variety of techniques, some as subtle as poison and some as blatant as a stiletto through the eye. The Lord of Porter personally selects and tests each Assassin, making sure they are worthy of the position and its immense responsibility. Any Assassin who aban-

dons or fails to fulfill a contract will himself wish for death by that time the House finishes with him.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL6, +1 every 1PL

- ☞ +1 to any 1 Physical advantage
- ☞ +1 to Avoidance
- ☞ *Backstab:* Allows the Assassin to inflict massive amounts of damage on opponent from behind, knowing exactly where to strike his target to cause a +3 damage shift with any weapon. Note that, if the attack is not a surprise attack, the Assassin deals damage as normal for the weapon type.
- ☞ +20 Dark Arts: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +15 Entertainment: Athletics: Tumbling
- ☞ +10 Professional Crafts: Brewing: Poisons
- ☞ +10 Travel: Terrain Knowledge: Cities

Guildmaster

Masteries: Combat 8; Dark Arts 8; Leadership 6; Travel 8

Pathways: Taker

Advantages: Refl 5, Awar 5, Conf 4, Pers 4, Etiq 4, Style 4, Avoi 3, Logic 2

Income: PLx3 in gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Guild, food, livery, equipment, weapons, armor, poisons, slaves, drugs, etc.

Prerequisite: Assassin (PL8)

The Guildmaster is probably one of the most trusted House members, as he is responsible for business (from the black market to assassinations) in the entire city where his guild is located. He also answers to the Lord of the House, as well as to every member in his guild—a fact that encourages him to be more shrewd and productive in House business dealings. In the interests of maintaining discipline, the Guildmaster has the authority to administer punishment when a member fails or does poorly in his task. He generally remains well informed of the political climate of his city, the Neuron City-States, and the other Houses. Guildmasters are powerful and not one to be trifled with.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL7, +1 every 1PL

- ☞ +1 Logic
- ☞ +1 Confidence or Perseverance
- ☞ *Command:* Allows the Guildmaster to issue commands to those of higher social status than himself. Due to the volume of information he has obtained on every political figure in his city, he can blackmail, extort, or bribe any of them into doing nearly anything he desires. An intended



target with a LL higher than the Guildmaster's PL can deny the request by making a successful Social save. If the target's LL equals the Guildmaster's PL, a contested Social save is rolled versus the Guildmaster's SL. Those with lower LLs (and those who fail their saves) have no option and must obey the command issued by the Guildmaster, which could consist of their resigning from office, lowering taxes, or even passing a new law to legalize gambling (among other things). Only one command can be issued per person at one time, and the command itself cannot affect situations outside the city. After the command has been followed, the Guildmaster can attempt to order the target again, but those who previously received a Social save are allowed another roll, and if this one succeeds, the Guildmaster can never command that target again. People who have been influenced by Command more than three times are subject to the rules of domination (see Taker, in the rule book) and become pawns of the Guildmaster.

- ☞ +20 Dark Arts: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +20 Leadership: Statecraft: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +10 Travel: Terrain Knowledge: Cities

House Lord (Grandfather)

Masteries: Combat 10; Dark Arts 10; Leadership 8; Travel 10

Pathways: Taker

Advantages: Refl 6, Awar 6, Agil 3, Dext 3, Conf 5, Pers 5, Etic 4, Style 5, Avoi 3, Logic 3

Income: 1000 gold/year

Required gear: None

Career assets: Control of House Porter

Prerequisite: Guildmaster (PL10)

The Lord of the House of Porter is very impressive, born of an unbroken line since the very first Porter. He remains the most skilled assassin and warrior in the House, and his combat prowess easily matches anyone from House Cortez. Of all the House Lords, he is perhaps the most active, as he spends little time dealing with the political matters of other Houses, preferring instead to tend to his own House and keep constant vigilance over the performance of his members. His iron-fisted management might appear cruel to an outsider, but it has created one of the most effective Hourani Houses in existence. The current Lord is still known to perform assassinations himself from time to time, if the price is right.

House Raidir

Charitas pro omnia ("Love for all")

House colors: Earth sect of the Dragon Faith: a green border on a field of brown

Any Specialist colors: Same colors as that of their career's house. Those females who have gone public about their Hourani heritage will include a second blue border inside the first.

The House of Raidir is a new addition to the Hourani culture, with only four generations of existence and few males knowing of them. House Raidir represents all female Hourani—no matter the career chosen—simply for the sake of survival.

Until the birth of Ariel Raidir, the unbroken lineage of males extended back to the middle of the Age of Myth. Hourani would marry human women and produce male Hourani offspring. Although the wife would eventually die from old age before the Hourani seemed to age at all, Hourani would only marry once, and the woman was treated as a "respectable inferior" and an integral part of the Hourani family. This arrangement was considered acceptable by both spouses and is still the practice of most Hourani males today.

When word spread of Ariel's existence, however, the prophets sang of doom to the Hourani culture. The mere presence of a female Hourani threatened to upend years of tradition and the social balance. Hourani assassin parties long sought to end Ariel's life, to preserve the social structure, and she survived only by being hidden by those who had chosen to announce her birth.

In actuality, Ariel was not the first female Hourani born, but she was the first publicly announced female, used to symbolize a new era fast approaching in Hourani culture. Her hidden sisters guarded her life until she reached maturity and could fend for herself. At this point, House Raidir was formally created, and Ariel came into contact with the long-forgotten being named Varrak.

By 600 AD, House Raidir politically manipulated itself into uneasy alliance with the male Houses and was formally established. The actual location of the House is known only to female members, who will die before revealing it to others. The most trusted male Houses are those of Wayne and Illiomis, as they are the information specialists and travelers, and it is with their help that Raidir keeps their secrets safe and can learn more of their own long heritage.

Similar to the males, Raidir women have the ability to birth a pure Hourani child—regardless of whether the mate is Hourani or human. Two-thirds of every

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Hourani offspring will be female as well. Not surprisingly, the need for more female Hourani has encouraged many of the women to procreate rapidly, and this has led to some offspring being parented by female Specialists aligned with House Porter rather than the birthing mother. Porter agreed to this arrangement around the time of House Raidir's creation, realizing how beneficial female assassins would be. Children raised by Porter Specialists are quite objective about their lives and wait until the age of 14 before deciding whether to return to Raidir for final studies or stay with Porter and train in the dark arts of assassination. In return for the new inflow of female accomplices, House Porter protects House Raidir and its secrets.

Other Hourani Houses understand little about the females, and the training bestowed on female Specialists is done in House Raidir itself, to preserve the illusion of the totally male society. House Balentin is the only other group that has made significant contact with the women, and they have remained quite neutral about the situation.

Usually, any one-on-one meetings between male and female Hourani end with the male being shocked and the female being disappointed in the male. This naivety of the males and disillusionment of the females is largely inhibiting but should be overcome with time.

Maiden

Masteries: Domestics: 2

Pathways: Neutral Taker or any Giver

Advantages: Conf 1, Char 1

Income: Free room and board; access to any normal equipment within House training grounds.

Required gear: None

Career assets: Sect theology book, upon completion of the training period.

Prerequisite: Must be a female Hourani of 16 years or older

Maidens are the first step into House Raidir and are where female Hourani learn the discipline and fortitude necessary to emerge into the culture. Maidens are the lowest-ranking House members but by far are every bit as important as the others. Their primary duties include taking care of the temple and the grounds around it, as well as building the foundation of their future religious beliefs. After completing her training cycle (usually 10-15 years), a Maiden can choose from one of the following careers: Specialist, Messenger, Curator, or a Disciple.

Maidens who reach PL 3 automatically receive the endowment Earth Speak, with a 20 skill rating.

Special skills: 1 at PL 2, +1 every 2 PL

✎ +1 to Etiquette

✎ +20 to any one Religion.

✎ +15 to any one Domestic skill

✎ +10 to Myth and Lore : Heroes and Heroines: Hourani

✎ *Animal Friendship (17):* Allows a Maiden to befriend animals to the extent of calming them or earning their trust.

Specialist

Specialists are unique to House Raidir and allows Maidens to choose a job or career from any other Hourani House but Feznoth and Rosenthal. The Specialist must meet the requirements of the specific career to qualify but are allowed to choose any special skills from that career. Specialists are treated as House Raidir members who happen to have another House's skills, and these skills are used to benefit Raidir (not the other Houses). This career is important to House Raidir because it gives them equivalent power (and thus respect) in a society that has been based on dominant males for many centuries.

Curator

Masteries: Combat: Howling Wind 5, Fired 5

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Refl 2, Awar 2, Agil 2, Conf 2

Income: 4 gold/month

Required gear: One fired weapon type; miscellaneous travel gear

Career assets: Free room and board at any of the House lands; chain and leather suit of armor; unlimited arrows or bolts

Prerequisite: Maiden (PL4)

The Curator is the defender and protector of the House. Curators guard the temple and its lands, and also escort Messengers or Priestesses whenever the need arises. They are deadly in combat, able to wound foes with arrows, bolts, claws, or any desired weapon. Curators will sacrifice their own lives to protect a Priestess, if one is around.

At PL 5, Curators receive the endowment Earth Speak with a 20 skill rating after taking part in the appropriate ritual.

At PL 10, Curators receive a special Howling Wind attack allowing them to attack opponents at a distance of 1' per Howling Wind skill point. The attack is unseen by the target, as it originates from the Curator's mind, and the defender can dodge only if she knows when

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the attack is coming. Note that only powers or special skills (not normal senses) can discern the impending attack.

Special skills: 2 at PL 5, +1 every 1 PL

- ✧ +40 to OCF when defending House people or property, or when the Curator's HPs are 50% or less than HP max.
- ✧ *Quickness:* Allows the Curator to speed up the Howling Wind attack, reducing Init costs by 50%.
- ✧ +25 Scholastics: Archaic Science: Bandaging & Bones
- ✧ +1 Agil or Dext
- ✧ *Critical Damage:* Curators with a Howling wind G+ attack success have hit a critical area and earn a ROC damage shift +1.
- ✧ +20 to Scholastics: History: Heraldry

Disciple

Masteries: Religion 2; Domestics 3; Leadership 1

Pathways: Neutral Taker or any Giver

Advantages: Conf 2, Char 2, Pers 2, Logic 1

Income: 1 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Receive a 200 point powerbase / holy symbol after PL 4, allowing use of channeling powers

Prerequisite: Maiden (PL4)

The Disciple is the first rung up the proverbial sect ladder, learning the responsibilities and skills necessary for the religion to survive. The Disciple works within the temple, to keep it running, and actually performs chores such as gardening, cleaning, repair, or even smithing when not studying or at a service. This wide variety of training helps the Disciple deal better with the responsibilities of being a Priestess.

Special skills: 1 at PL 2, +1 every 2 PL

- ✧ +1 to Confidence or Perseverance
- ✧ +20 to any one Religion Skill
- ✧ +20 to Scholastics: Archaic Science: Bandage & Bones
- ✧ +20 to Travel: Terrain Knowledge: any one skill

Priestess

Masteries: Religion 5 (all); Domestic 5 (all); Leadership 2 (Civilian)

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Conf 4, Pers 4, Char 3, Logic 2

Income: 8 gold/month

Required gear: Holy symbol with at least 400 power-base points; miscellaneous traveling gear.

Career assets: City/Surround area map; bodyguard of two Curators; one riding horse of medium quality with riding gear.

Prerequisite: Disciple (PL4) or any other House job/career (PL8)

Members of House Raidir who have chosen the religious pathway usually spend many years of hard work and discipline to reach this station. Priestesses are finally able to come and go at their own free will (except for those asked to become teachers for the disciples), reporting to one of the existing Overseers from time to time and usually starting a small following of their own (although this is not mandatory).

Still, despite the sudden freedom, the title of Priestess carries much weight—in the form of much responsibility. It is the Priestess' duty to keep the circle of life in balance, something that leads many of them to travel through the city states and even beyond. Most Priestesses do not retire and remain in this career all their lives, and only the most dedicated stand a chance to getting promoted to Overseer—happening only when a current Overseer either becomes the Prophet or dies.

The Priestess receives one endowment at PL 4, +1 every PL thereafter. At PL 5, she receives a Blessed Event at 20 skill, plus one other endowment of her choice.

Special skills: 1 at PL 4, +1 every 2 PL

- ✧ +10 to Leadership: Grapevine
- ✧ +20 Combat: Any one skill
- ✧ +20 in Determine Natural Event (15): The ability to study the land and atmosphere and determine what will happen in the future, at a range of 1 minute per skill point.
- ✧ *Safe House:* A haven for the Priestess while she is out in the culture doing her deeds. This house is located in one specific city, which must be named when the skill is chosen. The house is upkept by one Maiden and is secured by one Curator. The house always has enough food for one month, as well as a 100-gold stipend for emergency use only (note that any money taken must be repaid). Other safehouses can be developed at the Priestess' own expense.

Overseer (High Priestess)

Masteries: Religion 7 (All); Leadership 5 (All); Myth & Lore: Fortune Telling 3

Pathways: Confident Giver

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Advantages: Conf 5, Pers 5, Char 4

Income: Access to sect treasury.

Required gear: Holy symbol with at least 10,000 powerbase points; theology book written by the Overseer; one book on Hourani Myth & Lore

Career assets: Two combat Specialists as bodyguards; one Specialist Mage for an adviser; access to any sect item; one weapon of choice, with 5+ Style

Prerequisite: Being the current highest ranking Priestess

House Raidir members achieving this status are highly honored, as the House has only two Overseers, each with a specific duty—one running the temple and managing the disciples' training, and the other working with the outside world to maintain the circle of life. In either position, the Overseer is assisted by scores of priestess and disciples. The Overseers also "control" the Specialists and assign them missions to best serve Raidir's interests. The Overseers answer only to the Matron Mother—the Prophet—and at times one Overseer will actually represent the Prophet.

Note that Overseers live hectic and busy lives, sometimes making hundreds of decisions a day. They rarely get time to themselves and are always accompanied by personal guards. Although the prestige of the position is high, the Overseers pay dearly for it.

Overseers receive one Endowment at PL 5, plus 1 every 2 PL thereafter.

Special skills: 1 at PL5, + 1 every 2PL after

- ☞ At PL10, receive any endowments not already possessed, all beginning at 25 skill points.
- ☞ +20 in *Point of Contact* (12): The Overseer has one contact within her culture, to be decided by the GM to fit into the campaign. A D+ success means that the Priestess has talked to her contact and received his help. Contacts are not omniscient, and the GM controls the amount of information given by them. This skill can be taken as many times as the priestess wants, adding a new contact each time.
- ☞ *Circle Message* (12): The Overseer can send a message (one word per PL) to every member of Raidir—every living lifeforce within the circle of life, up to a distance of 20 miles per PL. Only those Raidirs with the endowment Earth Speak will understand the message, and the message travels at 25 miles per minute, remaining only until it reaches maximum range. The skill starts with 35 skill points.

Maternal Mother

(Prophet / Lady of the House)

Masteries: Religion 9 (All); Leadership 7 (All); Myth & Lore (Fortune Telling) 7

Pathways: True Giver

Advantages: Pers 6, Conf 6, Logic 4

Income: Access to the House treasury

Required Equipment: Three safety houses; holy symbol with at least 15,000 powerbase points; personal mythology library

Career assets: Holy Sceptor (a powerful item, with specifics determined by the GM); access to any House item; the two bodyguards from her days as an Overseer

Prerequisite: Being the highest-ranking Overseer.

Since only two Overseers exist, and since the House currently has had only one Prophet, the criteria is still rather vague.

The Lady of the House of Raidir is one of the most important and intelligent members of Hourani culture, revealing prophecies for her people and having many of the House Lords seek her counsel. The position has three major responsibilities:

- ☞ That of House "Lord", meaning the Lady manages the political, social, economic, and religious affairs of her house.
- ☞ That of Maternal Mother—the mortal embodiment of Varrak in his purest form. The Lady sees that the circle of life is maintained between the Houses and other cultures, watching for imbalance.
- ☞ That of Hourani Prophet, seeing and interpreting the signs from the entire Pantheon of Fidei Draconus, and carrying out such prophecies through select members of each Hourani house including her own. The complexity of these prophecies can be extreme, so the Lady often confers with others who are wiser than she (namely, Dragons).

The Lady of House Raidir thinks nothing of forcing others to her schedule, and even the House Lords wait for several weeks before being given audience with her. This attitude has been somewhat absorbed from her interaction with Dragons, who enjoy being in control of world history and events. The Lady's friendship with Dragons, coupled with her own divine visions, has made her the essential support beam for her young house and enabled it to survive in a male-driven society. The position demands much discipline, strength, and hard work to keep the House stable, as all eyes in the Hourani culture are watching and sizing House Raidir up.



Special skills: Received at the specified PL

- ✧ PL7: *Champion*: The Lady can secretly put out the word that a champion (from any Hourani house) is needed for her cause, which usually consists of a long-term vow. The desired champion must be obedient and loyal, knowing that he is destined by the dragon-lords to ensure the survival of the Hourani culture. The champion can be called upon for favors at any time by the Lady and must be willing to risk himself without hesitation. If the champion should die, another will come forward, although the relationship between Lady and champion must be forged anew.
- ✧ PL8: *Dragonfriend*: The Prophet can call upon the advice of the world's wiser beings—Dragons. The responding beast will be of at least young adult status, and will demand a favor or gift in return for its services. Such a gift/favor depends on the Dragon's pathway but cannot be deadly nor detrimental to the Lady or the House of Raidir. The Prophet typically uses this power to help quickly interpret Pantheon visions, so in this case, the Dragon will often settle for knowing what the Pantheon foresees as its "gift". Note that evil Dragons might still ask for some extra token favor.
- ✧ PL9: +60 in Magic: Wizardry: Parabola, Balk, and Intervening Shield
- ✧ PL10: *Veto*: The Lady can veto any new law or action called by a House Lord that goes against the Pantheon prophecies. However, she must supply a better solution to the problem, and if she cannot, she must step down from her post. In addition, any proposed solution that fails forces the Lady to seek the apologies of the House Lords and temporarily lose the support of her Dragon friends.

Endowments

Tangleroot (13): Causes trees and shrub roots to protrude from the ground and wrap themselves around

any moving target in the area of effect, although a successful Physical save negates entanglement for that round only. (Checks must be made every round to keep avoiding the entanglement.) Each root has 1 HP for every 2 skill points the caster has in Tangleroot, the range equals 1' per skill point, and duration equals 1 minute per skill point.

Living Tongue (13): The caster can speak with any "natural" creature of NeverWorld and understand a percentage of what is being said, based on a ratio of 1% chance per skill point. Range equals the caster's speaking distance, and duration is one hour per PL.

Soothing Savior (12): By speaking soothing or comforting words, the caster can change the mood of all those failing a Mental save to one of peace and calm, as well as convince them the caster has just saved them from making some grave mistake. Range equals the caster's "calm voice" range, while duration equals 1 hour per LL.

Accelerate Growth (15): Makes plant life of all types grow at ten times the normal growth rate, as well as to twice standard size. Range is touch, area of effect equals 1 sq. ft. per skill point, and duration lasts until the plant finishes growing.

Beastish Nature (12): Allows the caster to automatically change to either "natural" form (humanoid wolf, or pure wolf). This power also adds 2 to Reflex, doubles current WPs for the duration, adds +3 to movement rate when in pure wolf form, and adds +25 and a +1 damage shift to Howling Wind skill while in humanoid wolf form. Duration is 1 minute per skill point.

Essence Armor (12): Allows the caster to channel life essence from all living creatures and organisms, creating a suit of armor around her. The armor is completely weightless and absorbs 1 point of damage for every 10 skill points, with maximum points equal to the caster's skill rating. In addition, for every additional 10 WPs spent, absorption can be increased by 1 and maximum absorption by 10. The armor lasts for 1 hour per PL.

Table 5. Essence Ball effects.

Pathway	WPs lost	Save difficulty	Exact effects
Complete Taker	10d10	40	Paralyzed
Manipulative Taker	7d10	30	Stunned d10 rounds
Neutral Taker	5d10	20	Stunned d5 rounds
Assertive Taker	3d10	10	-50 to all actions

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Call of the Wild (10): Allows the caster to summon one of NeverWorld's "natural" animal species to do her bidding. The animal will help in whatever way possible, although it will not commit suicidal undertakings. Range equals 1 mile per PL, while duration equals 1 hour per PL.

Essence Ball (11): Allows the caster to summon life essence from all living things surrounding her into a ball of pure energy, to be thrown at a target (with a 10' radius of area effect). See Table 5 on the previous page. Those making successful LL saves with the listed difficulties suffer no effects, while those who fail their checks take the listed damage.

Cellular Adjustment (15): Allows the caster to heal non-Taker living things by using the cells of all living things in the area to repair/replace those damaged in the target. Range is touch, bare skin to wound. The caster can heal 3 x LL per use but must use 10 WPs of the target per every 1 HP recovered. So if Rothgar has 120 WP and needs healing, he can be healed a maximum of 12 HPs before running out of WPs.

Thorny Barrier (10): Creates a wall of thorns and prickles to spring up from the ground, 8 cubic feet (a 2' x 2' x 2' block) per skill point and at a range of PL x skill points. Each 8-cubic-foot block has 20 structure points, and anyone passing through or over the barrier takes 1 WP of damage per endowment skill point per round. The barrier lasts until destroyed. Note that this endowment does not work in desert, underwater, or underground.

Adrenaline Boost (12): Completely restores a target's WPs once per day, with a range of touch. If the caster rolls an H success to cast the endowment, all WP costs for the target will be 1/2 normal for 1 day per the caster's PL. A B- success, however, causes the target to lose all WP instantly, and WP will be regained at half the normal rate for 1 day per caster's PL.

Weapon Enchantment (14): Allows a melee weapon to be charmed so that it can hit targets at a distance equal to the caster's endowment skill points in feet. A weapon can hold the enchantment, used one time per caster's PL, and the wielder gains half of the caster's endowment skill points to OCF. The weapon still only does normal damage.

Earth Speak (13): Only devout followers of the Earth sect can use this endowment. To receive it, the follower must perform the annual Ritual of Renewal (described under channelling powers). Once gained, the follower will lose the endowment should he ever neglect to perform the ritual. Earth Speak allows the follower to talk to the plants and trees of the earth, who will be

friendly, intelligent, and respond to the best of their abilities. Still, each plant and tree has a different personality and will thus answer the same question differently.

Possible information to gain from this endowment is endless. The caster can ask plants if anyone recently passed by, and if so, what race and how many. He can also find a place or track someone through the plant network; they will know of anyone or any place on actual earth (while they will only know the last "earthy" location of those currently in stone or on water). Note that such communication takes time, however, and the distance of the sought place/person will determine how long it takes to get an answer; every ten miles of distance takes one round for the plants to search, so it takes 1 hour for the caster to find something/someone within 600 miles of his current location. Note that the caster must be able to describe the person/place to be located. This power can also be used to uncover lore about a certain area, as witnessed by the plants, and the caster can also use Earth Speak to have the surround vegetation warn him of approaching danger.

Blessed Event (10): This endowment is the heart and soul of the Terran sect. Every time an event in the circle of life (such as the creation of a new life essence) takes place within sight of the Priestess, she must use this endowment to bless the event. If she does not, the life essence will not be considered pure. And when life essence is destroyed or negated, the Priestess must bless it so that it can once again become one with NeverWorld, or else it will not be able to be used as part of a new life essence. With a skill of 35 or higher in this endowment, the casting becomes automatic and does not drain any WPs. Events to be Blessed include the following:

- ☞ Birth of a baby or animal.
- ☞ Death of any person or animal.
- ☞ The new growth of plants.
- ☞ The death of plant life, natural or forced.
- ☞ Any natural event, such as storms or droughts (because they balance the life cycle)

Note that the ritual only takes a second or two to complete, so although it must be performed quite often, it can be accomplished without pause.



House of Rosenthal

Nox perpetua ("Perpetual night")

House colors: A silver border on a field of black

These Hourani are dedicated to bringing the cults of the Fidei Draconus back to their original strengths. Unlike the House of Feznoth, the Dragon religion is the only one that these priests worship, becoming very narrow in vision and only wishing to see Rabahd rise out of his celestial slump. For this reason, they have joined with House Porter to form one of the largest united spy networks in the city states of Neuon, always on the lookout for unprotected Church members.

In terms of location, the House of Rosenthal is spread more thinly than that of Cortez, for it must occupy every temple possible under the name of Rabahd, but this should not make one see them as weak. In the last census (taken twenty years ago), they had twice the numbers of Feznoth and when combined with Porter actually comprise half the Hourani population. Combat for them is extremely lethal, dictated by their specific combat forms, poison formulas taught them by Porter, and various curses (such as Age, Leprosy, Mute, Cramp, and Re-Alignment) bequeathed on them by Rabahd. Only two classes of priests exist in Rosenthal: those trained to kill, and those who lead them.

Temples of Fedei Draconus defend nexus points where greater Dragons have been known to die. Because some of these locations are in remote and dangerous areas, every temple built after the 17th century AM has been designed to withstand a one-year siege and has a second story that overhangs the first, in order to kill anyone attempting to enter (although this design aspect is unnecessary in light of the ritual spell now used to create a single path of entry by way of a tri-planar teleportation grid). Since the first battles between Church and Cult, dating back to the late Age of Myth, rudimentary procedure also had included having three greater Dragons staffed in the temple, but this can no longer be practiced due to current Dragon nature (no temple could pay enough for such a service). Some temples include a mystical doorway that opens directly to Rabahd's Dark Dimension when activated.

The rank names of Rosenthal reflect the House's vindictive and protective nature but are in every way identical to those of House Feznoth when it comes to authority level:

- ☞ Black Pawn
- ☞ Flesh Master
- ☞ Temple Guard
- ☞ Unholy Warrior

- ☞ Sacrificer
- ☞ Inquisitor
- ☞ Dark Magus
- ☞ Chaos Magus/Lord of the House

Rosenthal Jobs

Black Pawn (Dark Initiate)

Masteries: Religion 3

Pathways: Taker

Advantages: Comp 1, Conf 1, Pers 1

Income: 40 silver/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, quarters, religious habit, holy book, library access

Prerequisite: None

The Black Pawn is the first of many steps on the path of darkened enlightenment in Rosenthal. Aside from regular religious training, the Pawn is purposefully exposed to a great deal of danger and is expected to participate in the numerous rituals performed by the cult. Many rituals involve live sacrifices and the spilling of blood, and although animals suffice for some of them, a few of the more powerful rituals demand a human/Hourani victim. Some Dark Initiates, entranced by the power involved, have unwittingly volunteered (or been volunteered) for such duty and died, but the House still insists that they learn from actual experience rather than a book.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL3, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Comprehension or Confidence
- ☞ +1 Perseverance
- ☞ +20 Religion: Church: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +15 Religion: Gods: Any 1 skill

Flesh Master

Masteries: Religion 4

Pathways: Taker

Advantages: Comp 2, Conf 2, Pers 2

Income: 1 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, quarters, religious habit, library access, torture implements

Prerequisite: Black Pawn (PL6)

Flesh Masters are where the fun really begins for a member of House Rosenthal. They are still relatively low on the leadership ladder but are no longer as

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worthless as Black Pawns. More importantly, they are encouraged to demonstrate their ambition through work, giving them a great deal of leeway in their duties. Flesh Masters are responsible for collecting sacrifices for the cult's various rituals, and are also assigned torture duty whenever "stubborn" sources refuse to impart information. Those with the sickest sense of humors tend to move on to higher ranks more quickly than the squeamish.

Flesh Master get one endowment at PL6, with a starting skill of 20.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL4, +1 every 2PL

☞ +10 Entertainment: Drama: Swordplay

☞ +20 Dark Arts: Any 1 skill

☞ *Torture (13):* Allows the Flesh Master to extract information from unwilling subjects, by draining their WPs through a variety of pain-inducing means (including but not limited to heated metal rods, stretch racks, beatings, sharp objects, pins, vices, insects... well, you get the point) Roll the skill with a difficulty of the victim's (Stam + Pers) x 5. If the torturer fails, the victim loses all WPs, passes out, and is unconscious long enough to gain all his WPs back (approximately 2 days). If successful, Table 6 shows how long it takes to get the desired answer and by how much to reduce the victim's WPs. Victims can refuse to answer a "successful" torture by giving up 1 Stamina advantage, up to -9 Stamina. This sacrifice allows them to not answer the question, restores them to full WPs, and forces the torturer to start over.

Table 6. Torture ROC results.

Success	Victim will answer question in:	Victim loses this many WPs:
miss!	(The victim is unconscious for 2 days)	
A	3 days	Lose 95%*
B	1 day	Lose 90%*
C	12 hours	Lose 85%*
D	8 hours	Lose 75%
E	6 hours	Lose 65%
F	2 hours	Lose 50%
G	1 hour	Lose 40%
H	15 minutes	Lose 25%
* Victim must make a shock roll or lose 1 Stam		

Temple Guard (Black Guard)

Masteries: Combat 5; Dark Arts 3; Religion 4

Pathways: Taker

Advantages: Refl 1, Awar 1, Conf 2, Pers 2

Income: 2 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, quarters, religious habit, leather armor, short swords, basic equipment, poisons

Prerequisite: Flesh Master (PL6)

Temple Guards are basic defenders and have earned the title of Black Guard through their resourceful combat techniques (using the darkness of the dimly lit temple to surprise and confuse intruders). A Temple Guard is charged with protecting his temple at all costs, even if it means sacrificing his life (which actually isn't unpreferred, as Guards who fail to protect their temples are considered to be "volunteers" for the next sacrificial ritual). With the stakes so high, Temple Guards are unwaveringly serious and fervent in demeanor.

Temple Guards receive an endowment at PL4 and PL8.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL4, +1 every 2PL

☞ +1 Reflex or Awareness

☞ +20 Combat: Any 1 skill

☞ +10 Leadership: Any 1 skill

☞ +10 Religion: Gods: Opposing Deities.

Unholy Warrior

Masteries: Combat 7; Religion 4; Leadership 3

Pathways: Taker

Advantages: Stre 1, Stam 1, Refl 2, Awar 2, Conf 3, Pers 3

Income: 3 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, quarters, religious habit, chain mail armor, weapons, basic equipment, poisons

Prerequisite: Temple Guard (PL6)

The Unholy Warrior is a position of great respect in the House of Rosenthal, but mostly due to fear, for such warriors are the secret police of the House, enforcing the cult's higher agendas. Unholy Warriors are responsible for protecting Priests and High Priests, as well as the temple coffers. With his combat training nearly complete, he is almost ready for the final step in his religious training: the position of Sacrificer.

Unholy Warriors receive an endowment at PL4 and PL8.

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Special skills: Choose 1 at PL4, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Strength
- ☞ +1 Confidence
- ☞ +10 Combat: Any 1 melee weapon
- ☞ +10 Leadership: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +20 Religion: Church: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +10 Religion: Gods: Any 1 skill

Sacrificer (Soul Thief)

Masteries: Religion 5; Leadership 4

Pathways: Taker

Advantages: Comp 3, Conf 4, Pers 4, Logic 1

Income: 4 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, private quarters, religious habit, library access, ritual components

Prerequisite: Unholy Warrior (PL6)

Sacrificer is the final step in the potential Rosenthal Priest's religious training. Up to this point, he has proved his loyalty to the House and his devotion to Rabahd; now he is responsible for performing many lesser rituals and sacrifices of the religion. The greatest test of the Sacrificer in proving himself worthy of Priest status is the Solstice Sacrifice, which occurs twice a year; these two sacrifices are also two of the most dangerous, as many Sacrificers have followed their sacrifices into the belly of an overexcited Moon Dragon. No Sacrificer can become a Priest without perform one Solstice Sacrifice, and those too afraid to make the attempt will be Sacrificers the rest of the lives.

Sacrificers receive 1 endowment at PL6, +1 for every 2PL after. At PL6, the Sacrificer receives his channeling powerbase (100 points) in the form of his unholy symbol—a silver amulet of the Dragonfay. Only at this point can the character begin to use the channeling powers of his religion.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL5, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Comprehension or Confidence
- ☞ +20 Leadership: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +10 Religion: Church: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +10 Religion: Gods: Any 1 skill

Rosenthal Professions

Inquisitor (Dark Priest)

Masteries: Religion: Church 7; Gods 7; Leadership 5

Pathways: Taker

Advantages: Comp 4, Conf 5, Logic 1, Pers 5, Char 2, Etiq 1, Avoi 1

Income: 5 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, temple, religious habit, personal library, personal guard

Prerequisite: Sacrificer (PL6)

The Dark Priest is the culmination of all combat and religious training the House has to offer, and fills both the roles of teacher and enforcer. He is responsible for recruiting new members, as well as weeding out those who lack the necessary faith in the religion and devotion to the House. Only the most proven members are permitted to become Inquisitors, and only the most sinister members ever aspire to such heights of treachery and intrigue. As a symbol of his loyalty, he is given a sacrificial dagger like the one carried by all Priests and High Priests of the cult. The Dark Priest also personally performs the more important and dangerous rituals of the cult, as he is considered competent enough to survive them. Those Dark Priests not in charge of their own temples are used as agents on special missions for the Lord of the House or as assistants to a High Priest.

Inquisitors gain an endowments at PL6, +1 every 1PL after.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL6, +1 every 1PL

- ☞ +1 Comprehension or Perseverance
- ☞ +1 Charisma
- ☞ +20 Leadership: Civilian: Grapevine
- ☞ +10 Religion: Church: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +5 Religion: Gods: Any 1 skill

Dark Magus (High Priest)

Masteries: Religion: Church 8; Gods 8; Leadership 6

Pathways: Taker

Advantages: Comp 5, Conf 6, Logic 2, Pers 6, Char 3, Etiq 2, Avoi 2

Income: 10 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, temples, small abbey, religious habit, personal library, personal guard

Prerequisite: Inquisitor (PL10)

Chapter Two

A High Priest of House Rosenthal is perhaps the epitome of evil, not afraid to use any of his myriad power for the cult's interest. He governs the Dark Priests and temples in his charge with an iron fist, presiding over every significant ritual performed in the cult to ensure that the Dragons of their pantheon are appeased. Complete in their religious training, High Priests are feared by fellow House members and respected by House of Feznorth counterparts.

High Priests receive one endowment at PL7, +1 every 1PL after.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL7, +1 every 1PL

☞ +1 Comprehension or Confidence

☞ +1 Perseverance or Charisma

☞ +10 Religion: Church: Any 1 skill

☞ +30 Religion: Demonology: Any 1 skill.

House Lord (Chaos Magus)

Masteries: Religion: Church 10; Gods 10; Leadership 8

Pathways: Taker

Advantages: Comp 6, Conf 7, Logic 3, Pers 7, Char 4, Etq 3, Avoi 3

Income: 1000 gold/month

Required gear: None



Career assets: Control of House Rosenthal

Prerequisite: Dark Magus (PL10)

The Lord of the House of Rosenthal is intimidating man, to say the least, and at the pinnacle of his power in the Moon sect of the Dragon Faith. No one in the cult questions his commands or even thinks twice about fulfilling his commands. He is closely allied with the Lord of House Porter (a necessity from the Age of Myth, to enable both Houses to survive), and is rumored to communicate with the Lord of House Feznorth on religious matters. Some say that Lord Rosenthal was born of a union between a Hourani and a Moon Dragon, but none are so bold as to openly say such.

House of Wayne

Littera scripta manet
("The written letter abides")

House colors: A brown border on a field of black

The House of Wayne is located in the Triax mountains between the place of magic and a Tristleti city called Prestil. It remains home to all Hourani who have taken the vow of celibacy and devoted their lives to studying the surrounding world. Since Wayne Aorik moved out of his father's home, he has gathered together Hourani to record the history of the Hourani race and to learn the ways of nature.

Besides routine research, the monks have been the ever-faithful servants of Nak-Sol Raidir, having comforted her in her grief over the death of her husband Groam I. Nak-Sol and her adopted son Val still live at the monastery, and she has taken up the studies of the Wayne Monks herself. Nak-Sol has been instrumental recording the Hourani history, not only as an invaluable source of information but as a skilled writer.

Aside from the Sanctuary of the Dragon Faith, the Wayne monastery is the only place that hostile family members can meet without fear of violent confrontation. Ordained as such early in the history of the Hourani by Wayne and Balentin Aorik, the Wayne Monastery has served as a place for peaceful gatherings and a sanctuary for Hourani with no other refuge. Other races are allowed to seek shelter there but are not afforded the same level of protection, nor allowed to enter the libraries.

The monastery contains three libraries, the first being the main library to which any Hourani has access. The second is the private library, into which only members of the House of Wayne can go. The third library is the secret library vault, rumored to hold

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certain magical tomes from the Age of Myth, and only Lord Wayne and one other high-ranking member of his House are allowed egress. This vault remains so secret that not even the House of Balentin is privy to its contents.

As mentioned, Hourani in the House of Wayne have dedicated themselves to a peaceful existence and have taken vows of chastity. Overall, they would prefer other Houses live by their example, yet they acknowledge the diversity of life that drives different Hourani down alternate paths. Only in order to defend themselves and the information they gather, these monks have become experts in Hourani HTH combat. They are also famed for their exquisite red wine, which brings in their only income other than whatever charitable donations they receive from other Houses.

Many members of Wayne also worship the Dragon god Varrak, as their peaceful coexistence with the surrounding world fits well with the Terra (Earth) sect of Dragonfay. Brother monks are encouraged but not required to worship Varrak.

It was once said that the Wayne monastery was perhaps the greatest and largest library in all of human and Hourani civilization—perhaps even as extensive as some of the smaller Tristleti libraries. Unfortunately, hundreds of irreplaceable books were destroyed during the Great Cataclysm, and although some of these have since been rewritten by diligent members, the library has still not regained the glory it once held in the Age of Myth.

All members of House Wayne are referred to as monks by outsiders, and they refer to each other as Brother. Only monks with specific positions within the House are referred to differently, and then by their given title. The rank structure is fairly simple and is as follows:

- ☞ Monk
- ☞ Monitor
- ☞ Monastery Guard
- ☞ Librarian
- ☞ Scribe
- ☞ Master Librarian
- ☞ Lord Curator/Lord of the House

Wayne Jobs

Monk (Friar, Brother)

Masteries: Scholastics: Research 3

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Comp 1, Logic 3

Income: 1 silver/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, sleeping quarters, frock, main library access, farm tools, writing implements, stationary

Prerequisite: None

Monk is the general job title for all House members not performing special functions that would earn them separate titles. Monks are supervised by a Librarian, who has them perform a variety of daily tasks around the monastery, including cleaning, cooking, reading, gardening, and wine brewing. When not performing their duties, Monks can be found practicing unarmed combat, writing, or feasting. Over half of House Wayne members are Monk status.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL3, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Comprehension or Logic
- ☞ +20 Culture: Read/Write: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +10 Domestic: Farm: Planting & Cultivation
- ☞ +10 Professional Crafts: Brewing: Wine
- ☞ +15 Scholastics: Research: Any 1 skill

Monitor

Masteries: Scholastics: Research 5

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Comp 2, Logic 3

Income: 2 silver/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, quarters, frock, a book, writing implements, main library access

Prerequisite: Monk (PL6)

The Monitor is the first position in the House of Wayne that bears a separate title. During their tenure as Monitors, these Hourani are required to take vows of silence and are allowed to communicate only through writing. This vow is considered satisfied and terminated when the Monitor becomes a Monastery Guard. Ambitious House members who would eventually like a profession must pass through this stage. Monitors are personally taught the scholarly arts of the House by a Master Librarian and are expected to assist the Master Librarian in his work, which includes translating and researching documents, rewriting books, preparing leather for binding, binding books, and sewing/mending frocks.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL5, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Comprehension or Logic
- ☞ +60 in *Shorthand (10)*: Allows the Monitor to write volumes of information in 25% of the normal required amount by using written abbreviations.

Chapter Two



Those with this skill can also reduce in half the time needed to pick up a skill learnable through writing.

- ☞ +20 Professional Crafts: Leatherworking: Outfitting
- ☞ +10 Professional Crafts: Trades: Tailoring & Weaving
- ☞ +10 Scholastics: Research: Any 1 skill

Monastery Guard (Custodian)

Masteries: Combat: HTH 5

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Stre 1, Stam 1, Refl 1, Awar 1

Income: 5 silver/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, quarters, leather armor, main library access, private library access, frock

Prerequisite: Monitor (PL7)

The next position is that of Monastery Guard. Monastery Guards are required to take vows of obedience, where he must always obey commands from those above him. Although obedience is an assumed rule of the House, this vow makes such into an oath of loyalty and service, rather than just a guideline for behavior. The Monastery Guard is responsible for defending the monastery against intruders, as well as limiting access to the various libraries, and is thus trained in the art of unarmed combat by a Master Librarian. In turn, he serves the Master Librarian by performing general repair around the monastery and maintaining farming tools.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL4, +1 every 2PL

- ☞ +1 Strength or Stamina
- ☞ +1 Perseverance
- ☞ *Pacify:* Through his expertise at unarmed combat (Howling Wind), the Monastery Guard has learned the defensive art of pacification. By scoring a D+ success or greater on his offensive roll (above and beyond his opponent's defensive roll), the Guard can render his opponent unconscious for d10 x 6 rounds—during which time he can bind or remove him at his leisure.
- ☞ +20 Combat: HTH: Howling Wind
- ☞ +10 Domestic: Home: Repair
- ☞ +10 Professional Crafts: Smithing: Farm Tools

Wayne Professions

Librarian

Masteries: Leadership 3; Scholastics: Research 6

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Comp 3, Logic 4, Pers 1, Conf 1

Income: 10 silver per month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, private quarters, frock, writing implements, main library access, private library access, books, personal library

Prerequisite: Monastery Guard (PL6)

The Librarian is important in the House of Wayne because he is the caretaker of a library. Each Librarian is assigned one library to care for, and each library only ever has one Librarian. The Librarian upkeeps the books in his library and is expected to know where to find any desired information, and he must also illustrates any books in his library requiring pictures. Librarians also see to the daily duties of the Monks. Besides meeting the normal qualifications, those petitioning for Librarian must also take an exam based on knowing the texts in his prospective library, and no Custodian who fails will be allowed to be a Librarian. Librarians are granted a private library (usually adjoined to their private quarters) in which to collect and store personal works.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL4, +1 every 1PL

- ☞ +1 Comprehension
- ☞ +60 in *Speedreading* (10): The Librarian can read volumes of information in 25% of the normal time and can also reduce in half the time required to learn any skill learnable through reading.
- ☞ +10 Culture: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +10 Leadership: Military: Discipline
- ☞ +10 Professional Crafts: Arts: Painting
- ☞ +15 Scholastics: History: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +20 Scholastics: Research: Any 1 skill

Scribe

Masteries: Scholastics: Research 7; Travel 3

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Comp 4, Logic 5, Pers 2, Awar 2

Income: 40 silver/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, private quarters, frock, writing implements, main library access, private library access, books

Prerequisite: Librarian (PL7)



The Scribe is the official representative of the House sent to important events of historical significance, to just Hourani or even the world at large. He might be found writing about the exploits of some great hero or political figure, or documenting some momentous occasion. Every Scribe is given a specific mission to research and report on, with some missions being more dangerous than others. Still, Scribes are meticulous and thorough, never leaving one stone unturned, and are also persistent and honest, never supplementing truth with falsehood to flesh out a document. At worst, they have been known to pester subjects by incessantly requesting interviews.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL5, +1 every 1PL

- ☞ +1 Comprehension or Etiquette
- ☞ +60 in *Eidetic Memory* (15): Allows the Scribe to recall with absolute clarity anything he has read (even if he only read it once). The difficulty multiplier is 5 for something read only once, 4 for something read a few times, 3 for something read many times, 2 for something read frequently, and 1 for something constantly read. This skill does not allow the memorization of scenes or sounds—just things that were read.
- ☞ +20 Myth & Lore: Heroes/Heroines: Hourani
- ☞ +20 Scholastics: History: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +5 Travel: Animalship: Any 1 skill
- ☞ +5 Travel: Terrain Knowledge: Any 1 skill

Master Librarian

Masteries: Combat: HTH 6; Leadership 5; Scholastics: Research 8

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Comp 5, Logic 6, Pers 3, Awar 2, Conf 2

Income: 1 gold/month

Required gear: None

Career assets: Food, private quarters, frock, writing implements, main library access, private library access, secret library access, books, personal library

Prerequisite: Scribe (PL8)

The title of Master Librarian marks the pinnacle of career progression in the House of Wayne. Master Librarians personally instructs Monitors in scholarly studies and Monastery Guards in unarmed combat. They are each responsible for a specific group of libraries and their Librarians, having to ensure their upkeep and good condition. (However, only one highly trusted Master Librarian is allowed to enter the secret library of the Wayne Monastery.) They also serve as official House envoys, dealing with the politics of other

Houses. Master Librarians hold the highest House positions under Lord and are given due respect. There are usually never more than ten Master Librarians at any given time.

Special skills: Choose 1 at PL6, +1 every 1PL

- ☞ +1 Reflex or Logic
- ☞ +1 Awareness
- ☞ *Wind Strike:* Allows the Master Librarian to make HTH strikes at a distance. Any target within 10 yards can still be hit with a HTH attack, but an additional level of complexity is always figured in for this type of attack.
- ☞ +20 to OCF when defending another Hourani or retrieving secret knowledge from enemy hands
- ☞ +40 to DCF when defending against House of Porter
- ☞ +20 Scholastics: Any 1 skill

House Lord (Lord Curator)

Masteries: Combat: HTH 7; Leadership 7; Scholastics: Research 10

Pathways: Giver

Advantages: Comp 7, Logic 8, Pers 3, Awar 3, Conf 3

Income: 1000 gold/year

Required gear: None

Career assets: Control of House Wayne

Prerequisite: Master Librarian (PL10)

The Lord of House Wayne is very mysterious man indeed—rarely being seen, and always wearing the hood of his frock when allowing himself to be noticed. He prefers to let the Master Librarians handle as much of his political dealings as possible and spends nearly all his free time either reading or writing. Only he and one designated Master Librarian have access to the secret library of the Monastery, which is rumored to contain many magical tomes.

Chapter Three

Fidei Draconus religion



Fidei Draconus (the Dragon Faith) is divided into three separate and distinct sects: Solaris (sun), Lunaris (moon), and Terra (earth). Each sect has its own period of undeniable power, lasting approximately one century, and then, like in all cycles, power fades from its grasp and moves to the next branch. Power proceeds in the order of sun to moon to earth, then back around to sun once more.

During this time, each sect strives to accomplish different goals. The Solaris sect brings rewards to the Hourani by healing the ill and teaching advanced skills to the common folk, empowering them. The Lunaris sect seeks to destroy enemies and fortify defenses with ancient secrets. The Terra sect replenishes the powers of nature, healing her lands and strengthening her children. Remarkably, it is only during the Terra Cycle that the Hourani are truly in harmony with both sides of their being.

The papal headquarters for the Dragon Faith is the Sanctus Fidei Draconus, or the Sanctuary of the Dragon Faith, located in the city of Harndin. It is here that all three sects meet to discuss religious matters. The Dragonfay Council is comprised of one high priest from each sect of the Dragon Faith and a senior ranking officer from the Holy Army of Dragonfay--its purpose to screen prospective applicants for various champion positions within the Dragon Faith.

Description

Religious organization

Only two of the Dragonfay sects are properly represented in the Hourani culture, as the Earth sect has no real religious organization to speak of. Over two-thirds of the Hourani population follow Dragonfay, while the rest are agnostic, atheist, or worshipers of the Church of Morning Light.

Those Hourani who have strayed from the traditional Dragonfay religion worship the Neuonian gods in the Church of Morning Light instead. One quarter of the members in the House of Feznoth worship Iedras

and her pantheon. Although the religion has a much stronger presence in the City States of Neuon, many Hourani consider following the Morning Light religion to be a tragic misjudgment. They believe that Dragons are the true creators and inheritors of NeverWorld (although not all believes of such proclaim it at the top of Mount Kabi). Still, the Hourani are noble and do not persecute brethren for making such a mistake--no matter how foolish it might seem. The Church of Morning Light is described in greater detail in the Neuonian culture book.

Zariah is the patron Dragon god of Solaris, embodying life, knowledge, and truth. Her religious philosophy purports the understanding and respect of all life, so that there may be a harmony of all living things. She has appeared as both an elf or human of unsurpassed beauty, but her natural form is that of a radiant white Dragon with translucent rainbow wings and golden eyes.

Rabahd is the patron Dragon god of Lunaris, embodying death, dreams, and deceit. His religious philosophy asserts the swift death of all enemies, so that they may never rise again to strike one's back. He has appeared as a handsome ebony elf or human, but his natural form is that of a lurid black Dragon with shadowy wings and silver eyes.

Varrak is the patron god of Terra, embodying nature, wisdom, and justice. His religious philosophy purports the survival of the fittest--as all things eventually end where they began in the great circle of life, but only the strongest will complete the journey. He has appeared as a humble elf or human monk, but his natural form is that of a stone gray Dragon with no wings and ebony eyes.

Dragonfay is unique in that its pantheon contains no opposing deities. However, during the Age of Myth, Dragonfay was beleaguered by fierce holy wars between its opposing sects, and Solaris and Lunaris continually battled for supremacy. Books in the Wayne library refer to the most devastating of these wars as the Light and Darkness War--so destructive that an entire city was turned into a lake of fire. Yet, just before the Great Cataclysm, the opposing factions made peace with one another and joined under one religion, while still maintaining their separate patron gods. This unity

Fidei Draconus religion



was further enforced by the Dragon gods themselves, who forbade the use of any invested powers against another member of the faith. Hourani as a whole (in Dragonfay or not) learned a valuable lesson from the ordeal, and thus was born the Jus Divinum, which forbids any brother from harming another of his race. The only current threats to Dragonfay are death cults and demon/devil worshippers, which are common enemies of all cultures.

Population

The Church of Dragonfay (Sun sect) has a congregation of around 900 people in each city state, while the Cult of Dragonfay (Moon sect) has a following of about 1700 people per city state, and the Earth sect is only approximately 400 strong per city state. There are actually some Neuonians now involved as well, and the religion is steadily growing. Followers of the Dragon Faith comprise about 15% of the entire population of the City States of Neuon.

Dragonfay is polytheistic, and followers are considered part of the same faith, but each one only actually worships one of the three Dragon gods, depending on which one best suits their lifestyle and alignment.

Popularity

The Dragonfay is the secondary religion of the City States of Neuon.

Symbols

The universal symbol for the Dragonfay is a Latin cross crowned by a diamond with a crescent moon surrounding each side of the cross. The symbol itself is made of gold for the Sun sect, silver for the Moon sect, and iron for the Earth sect.

- ☞ The Solaris (Sun) sect regards the Sundrop flower as sacred. Their colors are a gold border on a field of white, and their signet is a golden sun.
- ☞ The Lunaris (Moon) sect regards the Moon flower as sacred. Their colors are a silver border on a field of black, and their signet is a silver moon.
- ☞ The Terra (Earth) sect of the Dragon Faith regards all trees as sacred. They have no colors, nor do they have a signet.

Direction

Dragonfay is growing slowly but surely. It has the potential to grow quickly once Hourani establish ties with other cultures. What hinders them most is that they prefer to recruit followers from their own race, but as of late this attitude has been changing--if not due to them, then due to the will of the Dragon gods.

Restrictions

At present, Dragonfay accepts only Hourani and human followers. For now, they will accept anyone within the City States, and will most like accept dwarves and elves as followers as well. However, Beastish and grobber are considered to be lesser creatures and therefore unworthy.

Followers requirements

Followers of Dragonfay are expected to adhere to the doctrines of their particular sect, as well as remaining loyal and making occasional donations (with the form of these donations varying from sect to sect).

In Solaris, followers are required to spend at least one hour a week in prayer to Zariah. On the first of every month, they must attend mass at a Church of Zariah, at which they will sing prayers in unison to Zariah. Finally, they are expected to observe the two holy days of the faith--the vernal and autumnal equinox. On these days, they must not only attend mass, but they must also make an offering of either gold or silver, in whatever denomination they can afford to give.

In Lunar, followers are required to pray for at least one hour a week to Rabahd. On the occasion of every new moon, they must make an animal sacrifice to Rabahd. They are also expected to observe the two holy days of the faith--the summer and winter solstice. On these days, they must either make an offering of flesh and blood, or an offering of gold and silver.

In Terra, followers are not required to pray, nor are they expected to make offerings or donations of any kind. They are only asked to be faithful to Varrak and to respect nature. They must only use dead trees as wood for building homes or fires, as the wanton destruction of a healthy tree is forbidden. Varrak is known for his wrath on those who gain disfavor with him. For these reasons, men-at-arms find the Earth sect to be ideal for their lifestyles.

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Champions requirements

Unlike other religions, champions of Dragonfay do not include those who have been knighted to their order. Rather, the Dragonfay maintains certain appointed positions that only the most loyal and dedicated followers can hope to aspire to.

- ☞ *Champion (Fidei Campion)*: The Champion of the Dragonfay can be a follower of any sect and is often referred to as a Sword of Light/Darkness (depending on the sect). The Champion must be strong in body and clear in purpose, as he is the wrath of the Dragonfay on earth.
- ☞ *Defender (Fidei Defensor)*: The Defender of the Dragonfay is always a follower of Rabahd and must be cunning in thought and swift in deed, for he is the hand of Rabahd on earth.
- ☞ *Quester (Fidei Quaestor)*: The Quester of the Dragonfay is always a follower of Zariah and must be pure in spirit and bold of heart, for he is the eyes of Zariah on earth.
- ☞ *Prophet (Fidei Propheta)*: The Prophet of the Dragonfay is always a follower of Varrak and must be peaceful in nature and tranquil in spirit, so that her mind can be one with Varrak, for she is the word of Varrak on earth.

Leaders requirements

See the appropriate House for a description of requirements.

Channeling Powerbase

The powerbase for Priests or Dark Priests of the Dragonfay is their holy symbol, made of gold, silver, or iron depending on the sect and carved in the image of the universal symbol of the faith.

- ☞ Solaris powerbases can only be recharged when the needy are helped, the sick are healed, the innocent are protected, a new follower is gained, or a dark minion of hell is defeated.
- ☞ Lunaris powerbases can only be recharged when a sacrifice is made, an enemy is slain, a new follower is recruited, or a dark minion of hell is defeated.
- ☞ Terra powerbases have the special benefit of being rechargeable through any actions able to recharge either Solaris or Lunaris powerbase. However, the priests and priestesses doing the recharging must be standing on earth—not rock, water, air or any other substance—or the ability will not work.

Table 7. Recharging the powerbase.

Success	Ratio (WPs to powerbase)
A	20 : 1
B	10 : 1
C	8 : 1
D	6 : 1
E	4 : 1
F	3 : 1, +10 extra WPs
G	2 : 1, +25 extra WPs
H	1:1, +50 extra WPs

Upon successfully meeting the requirements, they must make a channeling roll, which determines the ratio of invested Willpower to power stored, as well as any bonus, as per Table 3. Defeating undead automatically raises the powerbase by 25, defeating lesser demons/devils raises it by 50, and conquering greater demons/devils raises it by 100.

Critical Failure: Spend the day in prayer (Sun sect) or make a sacrifice (Moon sect), or reduce maximum Willpower to 1/2 for the next month. All WPs spent for this roll is lost.

Critical Success: Points are channeled at a 1 : 2 ratio, + 100 extra points.

Channeling powers

The following is the list of channeling powers for each sect of Dragonfay. Remember that no priest of Dragonfay in any sect is allowed to use channeling against another priest of Dragonfay, even if the priest is in a different sect.

Solaris powers

Consecrate: The priest must draw the Dragonfay symbol on the ground, floor, wall, or door of the place he wishes to consecrate and then sprinkle blessed water in the area while praying to Zariah. The prayer must include the name of the place and the reason why it is being consecrated.

Bless: The priest must chant the name "Zariah" like a mantra, one hundred times, over spring water (if

Fidei Draconus religion



blessing water). In order to bless followers, he must sing the name of Zariah for as long as possible in one breath.

Exorcism: Understanding the nature of an alternate self, the priest must draw out the possessing spirit or demon/devil and confront it. To do so, he must wrap the item or person possessed in the holy cloth used on the altar of a Dragonfay church to Zariah. Blessed water is not required but has been known to help the priest weaken the possessor's hold on the item or person.

Divine Intervention: This power is difficult to use and rare to witness, and a priest should have an extremely important reason to call on Zariah for help, as no god likes to be bothered over something trivial that the follower probably could have handled anyway. Yet, sometimes the odds are stacked too heavily against the follower, and the god must help him if he wishes his purposes to be achieved. To perform the ritual, the priest must drink blessed water, then offer a prayer to Zariah stating the cause and reason he desires her help. If she feels the cause is noble, the reason justifiable, and the Priest worthy, she may grant him her help. If the priest is successful, she will either help indirectly by sending a representative or directly with her own powers.

Communion: This power allows the Priest to seek advice on important matters from his god. He must draw the sign of the Dragonfay with blessed water on his forehead, then offer a prayer to Zariah stating the question he wishes answered. If successful, he will be able to speak with her directly, although the conversion will probably be short.

Create Holy Item: Only High Priests of the church may attempt the use of this difficult and time-consuming power. First, the High Priest must find iron ore or any other comparable component for steel from the rocks of Mt. Kabi. He must then take these metal elements to a master smith for smelting. From the moment the molten metal is poured into the mold, the High Priest must constantly repeat the name "Zariah" for the entire duration of its creation. Also, the item must be kept in sunlight (normal or magical) during its construction. Furthermore, whenever the weapon or item is cooled during its forging, it must be done by completely immersing it in blessed water. At various stages of completion, the High Priest must perform divine intervention for each power he wishes the item or weapon to possess. Should he fail to gain any one divine intervention, all past interventions are discounted and he must completely start over with new metal. For this reason alone, making an item with multiple powers is

extremely difficult. Not long before the smith is finished forging the item, its name must be legibly carved in Hourani in a visible spot. Upon completion of the item, the High Priest must make one final prayer to Zariah that states the item's purpose, summarizes its powers, and proclaims its name. Note that this process must continue from beginning to end without stopping, which means that it's common to have more than one High Priest and smith working on a Holy Item. To create more powerful Holy Items, magical metal such as mithril is used, and the forging/chanting process is performed over a much longer period of time (years or even decades).

Resurrection: This power grants a priest the ability to revive the recently deceased, although at a high price for himself and his deity. The priest must first make a successful Communion with his god, then draw the Dragonfay symbol on the body's forehead with blessed water, while chanting the name of Zariah. If Zariah answers, the priest must explain why the individual should be brought back to life, and if he convinces her, Zariah will exercise her powers through the priest to counteract the death. The power is transferred into the body by placing his hand over its still heart, and then the deceased has a chance of returning to life. Regardless of the spirit's choice, the vast power channeled through the priest will knock him out, and when he awakes, he will owe Zariah a special favor of her choosing, with a certain amount of time to complete it.

Solaris rituals

Equinox: The two important holy days for the Sun sect are the vernal equinox (March 21) and the autumnal equinox (September 22)--both when the sun passes closest to the earth, thus making day and night of equal length and thereby balancing the powers of the sun and the moon. Every member of the House must observe this holy day by spending all day chanting the name of Zariah mantra-style, while making offerings of food and money to her. Dedicated followers who join the priests and their congregations in prayer may be visited by the wisdom of Zariah, answering one of their most important questions. During the day, priests heal and feed all those who visit their church, and as the sun sets, the priests regain all lost WPs. The equinox is always a beautiful day full with good fortune and occasional miracles.

Birth: The Ritual of Birth is performed whenever a new Sun Dragon is born into the world. Each church must

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decorate their altar with a sundrop flower, which must be watered every day with blessed water.

Induction: Whenever a member of Feznoth is to be ordained as a priest of Dragonfay, the ritual of Induction is performed. This festive occasion requires all priests and the entire order of the church to participate. The member to be ordained must sing a prayer of resolution in the presence of a High Priest, while those who are already Priests form a circle around him and hum various bass notes. The prayer of resolution must state the reasons why the member feels he is worthy of priesthood, and his intentions for how to better serve the order once ordained. If the presiding High Priest is pleased, then the member is made a Priest by taking a vow of obedience, and afterwards is given a church or is asked to assist a High Priest until a church is available. Afterwards, there is a minor celebration of food and song.

Coronation: The ritual of Coronation is performed whenever someone is knighted to the Holy Order of Dragonfay. The presiding priest pours blessed water over the weapons, armor, and head of the man being knighted while saying a prayer to Zariah, asking her to guide the knight with her wisdom.

Wind: The ritual of Wind is a defensive measure used by Priests to protect their church from attack. First, four Priests must join hands and form a circle, then run in a clockwise circle while chanting the name of Zariah as a mantra. While the circle remains unbroken, a Wind Barrier (as per the endowment) will surround the entire church.

Lunaris powers

Desecrate: The Dark Priest must make a live sacrifice (animal or human) in the spot he wishes to desecrate. He must then draw the symbol of the Dragonfay with the blood of the sacrifice on the ground, floor, wall, or door of the place being desecrated while praying to Rabahd. The prayer must include the name of the place or area and the reason why it is being desecrated.

Curse: The Dark Priest must speak aloud the nature of the curse, as well as the person to be cursed, and then must spit on that person. The unfortunate recipient must be in the Dark Priest's presence the entire time that the curse is being placed. Should the victim escape before the Dark Priest can finish the curse, the preparation is ruined and must be started again when and if the Priest encounters the victim.

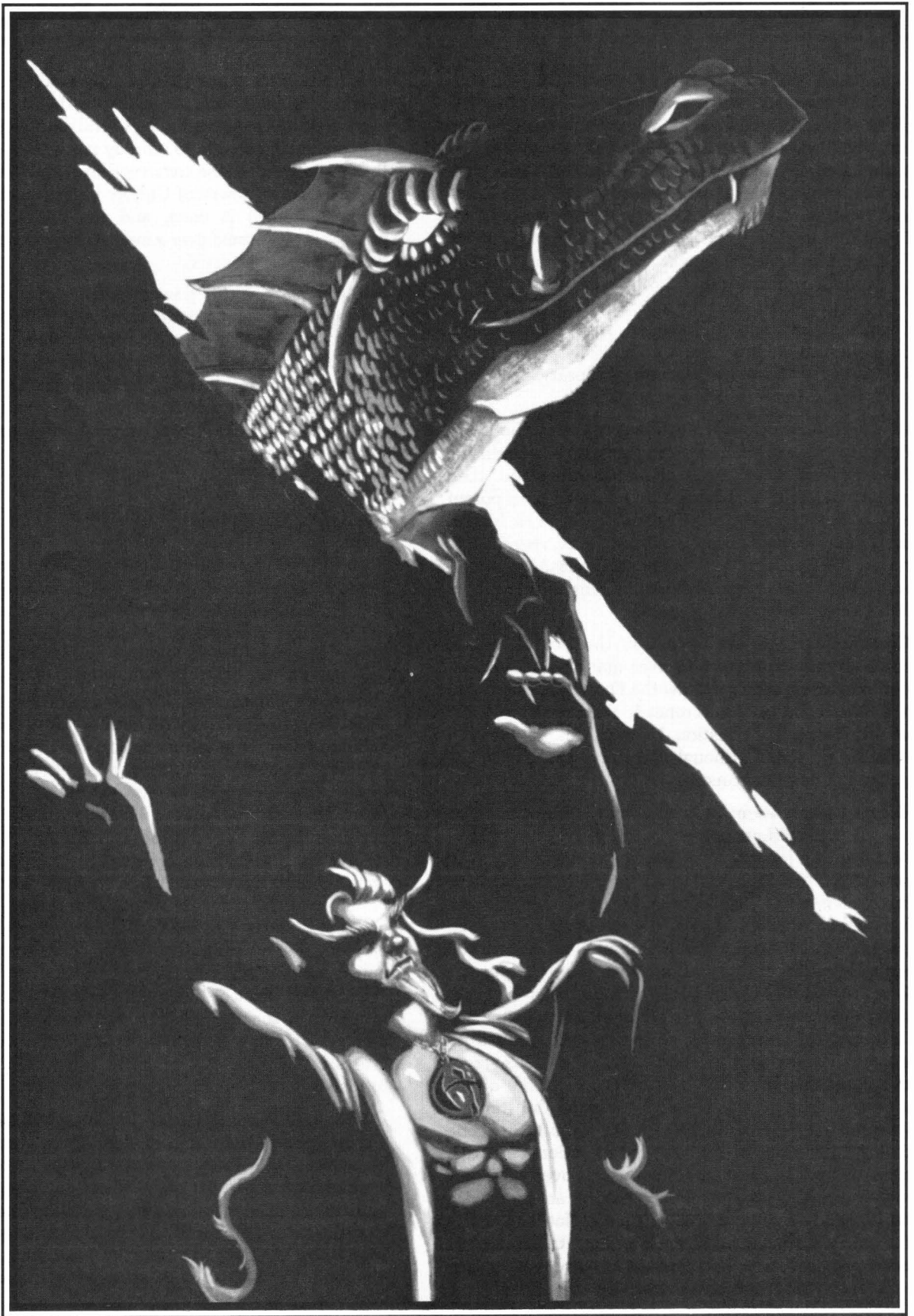
Possession: Perhaps the most widely used power by the Dark Priests of Rabahd, possession is a useful and

powerful tool, either for infiltrating and destroying an organization from within (passive possession), or for temporarily gaining the powers of a Dragon (dominant possession).

For passive possession, the Priest must first Curse the possession's target, in order to slowly deteriorate the victim's Willpower. When his Willpower is low enough, a dark servant of Rabahd (usually a young or baby Shadow Dragon, interested in gaining a physical presence on NeverWorld) is summoned by way of a live human sacrifice. Once it devours the sacrifice, the dark servant will possess the victim if it finds him to its liking. If successful, the possessed individual will do the bidding of the Dragonfay cult, receiving his command from prayers uttered by the summoning Dark Priest. The dark servant can perform many tasks: spying for the cult, causing dissension and confusion in the ranks of the organization the victim belonged to, or killing off the organization's members, thus dissolving it. Targets typically include opposing religions, military organizations, civil organizations, and governments. If the dark servant is exorcised from its host or dispelled by having its mortal form destroyed, the Dark Priest must compensate Rabahd for the inconvenience by sacrificing himself. (GMs: Consider a Shadow Dragon to be more powerful than the young adult Dragon described in the Tome. In any case, the GM controls the Dragon--not the PC priest. The more uncertain the priest is of the Dragon's abilities, the more frightening it will be to summon one.)

With dominant possession, the priest sacrifices a live human to Rabahd, to summon a dark servant. If successful, he will then attempt to seduce the servant into possessing his own body temporarily. First, he must desecrate his own body by drawing the Dragonfay symbol with his own forehead with the sacrifice's blood. Next, the terms of the possession must be agreed on. The longer the Dark Priest is willing to be possessed, the more power that can be gained. Once the terms are accepted, a soul contract comes into existence between Shadow Dragon and priest, allowing the Dragon to possess the priest's body without resistance and assume an unholy union with his soul. Ideally, the Shadow Dragon will have utter control of the Dark Priest, able to play cruel jokes and feast on mortal flesh for the contract's length. However, being malignant and evil and desperate for physical form, the Shadow Dragon will drain 1 WP from the priest for each day of possession, attempting to consume the priest's soul. If the priest reaches 0 WPs, he has been assimilated by the Shadow Dragon and is gone forever.

However, this is not always the case for as evil and malignant as they are, the Shadow Dragon would rather keep its mortal form than return to the Dark



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Dimension of Rabahd. For each day that the dark servant possesses the Dark Priest, he will lose one point of Willpower. If his Willpower is reduced to zero or less in this manner, his soul has been consumed (i.e. assimilated) by the Shadow Dragon. Yet, if the dark servant breaks the contract between the Dark Priest and itself, and this results in the death of the Dark Priest, it will experience the wrath of Rabahd himself. The benefits typically sought by Dark Priests through this unholy union is bonus Willpower to their Powerbase, extra Skill points to their current Skills or Endowments, or a new Endowment. Also, whenever the dark servant actually leaves the body of the Dark Priest, the Willpower loss is only temporary. See Chapter 6 in the Tome for Dragon statistics.

Divine Intervention: This power enables the Dark Priest to call on Rabahd during a crisis. To begin the rite, the Dark Priest must drink his own blood, then pray to Rabahd, explaining why he needs such potent aid. If Rabahd feels there is justifiable need for his assistance, he will either send a dark servant or will render aid himself. Once the crisis passes, the supplicant Dark Priest must make a live human sacrifice to Rabahd by the next full moon.

Communion: This ability allows the Dark Priest to communicate with Rabahd over matters of great importance. He must first draw the Dragonfay symbol in his own blood on his forehead, then offer a prayer stating the desired question. If successful, Rabahd will directly respond, although possibly not giving the desired or expected answer.

Create Unholy Item: Only cult High Priests can try to use this tremendous power. The High Priest must find first iron ore (or any other comparable component of steel) from the rocks of Mt. Kabi and then take these metal elements to a master smith for smelting. From the moment the molten metal is poured into the mold, the High Priest must chant the name "Rabahd" for the entire duration of its creation. Also, the item must be kept in the absence of sunlight (normal or magical) during its construction. Furthermore, any cooling performed to the item or weapon during forging must use a sacrifice's blood rather than water. At various stages of completion, the High Priest must perform a divine intervention for each power he wishes the item or weapon to possess. Should he fail to gain any one divine intervention, all past interventions are discounted and he must completely start over with new metal. For this reason alone, making an item with multiple powers is extremely difficult. Not long before the smith is finished forging the item, its name must be legibly carved on it in Hourani in a not readily seen spot. Upon the item's completion, the High Priest must

make one final prayer to Rabahd, stating the item's purpose, powers, and name. Note that this process must continue from beginning to end without stopping; it is common practice to employ more than one High Priest and smith in the construction of an Unholy Item. To create more powerful Unholy Items, magical metal such as mithril is used, and the forging/chanting process is performed over a much longer period of time (years or even decades).

Animation: With this power, Dark Priests are able to animate the dead in order to command them to do their bidding. The corpse must be a former human sacrifice made to Rabahd by the Dark Priest attempting the animation. Once animated, the undead will obey every command of the Dark Priest raising them (and only that priest). Dark Priests typically use undead as temple sentries.

Lunaris sacrifices

Solstice: The two most important holy days for the Moon sect of Dragonfay are the summer solstice (June 21) and winter solstice (December 22). At these times, the sun is furthest from the earth and the moon's powers are greatest. All temples are required to make live human sacrifices to Rabahd on that day, with mandatory participation by the entire House. Sacrifices are made at night, with dark servants customarily summoned as entertainment for the occasion. Dark Priests will usually feed the servants prisoners, slaves, or sacrifices in return for various favors--nearly anything that can be accomplished within that same evening. Some Dark Priests prefer to satisfy their desires for power through carnal favors, while others are more materialistic and ask for valuable gifts of gems or coins. In any case, the requests are never for things of great and lasting power, as the Dark Priest must employ other means to secure such boons as those. The entire event is generally festive, at least for the Dark Priests, and most of them will be drunk or under the influence of some other drug. At the end of the night, all Dark Priests will regain any lost Willpower Points. This sacrificial rite is commonly regarded as the time to dispense with enemy prisoners.

Death: The Death Rite is performed any time a Moon Dragon dies in the world. A High Priest accompanied by several Dark Priests and a compliment of Unholy Warriors travels to the sight where the Dragon died, and there must make a human sacrifice under a full moon, allowing the sacrifice's blood to spill on the very spot where the Dragon's body lay. Next, he must plant a moonflower in that same spot, while the soil is still

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moist with the sacrifice's blood, and then offer prayers to Rabahd. One month later, under the next full moon, the High Priest must return to gather the white flowers that will be in bloom, bringing them back to his temple. These flowers are preserved in a special magical box, to be placed in the hair of human sacrifices offered by the cult. Based on this purpose, the moonflower is often referred to as the "death blossom," as it is constantly associated with death in the Moon sect. As the Death Rite is very important to Lunaris, they would not hesitate to kill anyone interfering with any part of it.

Induction: The Rite of Induction is performed when a Sacrificer becomes an Inquisitor (Dark Priest), usually following one of the Solstice sacrifices (which the supplicant must perform successfully to be promoted). The Sacrificer is baptized in a sacrifice's blood (that of an animal is allowed) by a High Priest, then given his temple or assigned to help a High Priest until a temple is available. Afterwards the induction comes a feast for the Lunaris priests, involving both wine and women.

Shadows: The Rite of Shadows is used as a last resort to defend the temple, if being overwhelmed looks inevitable. The temple's Dark Priest must make a living human sacrifice, then drink its blood. Finally, while praying to Rabahd, the priest will exercise the endowment of Shadow Flight. In this case, the endowment will affect the whole temple, making it sink into the very earth as if the ground were water. Eventually the temple will rise out from the ground, but in an area of Rabahd's (not the priest's) choosing. When this rite is finished, the performing Dark Priest will lose the Shadow Flight endowment. (Although he can regain it at a higher PL, Rabahd will make him work twice as hard for it.)

Terra Rituals/Sacrifices

Renewal: The Ritual of Renewal is performed on the first day of each new year, to celebrate the death of all that is old and the birth of all that is new. This is the Earth sect's only ritual and can be performed by any devout follower. The follower must first cut down a dead tree (any type), chop it into pieces, and then build a bonfire made of the wood. In the firelight, he must sacrifice a female deer on the tree's stump, then exhume the stump (roots and all). After the root is removed, a new tree must be planted in its place (either a seed or a sapling). The entire ritual must be performed by the same worshiper, and it usually takes a few days of preparation. Upon successfully completing

the ritual, the follower receives from Varrak the Earth Speak power for one year.

Endowments

What follows are endowments for each sect, in the order they are earned. Remember that no Dragonfay priest can use an endowment against another Dragonfay priest in any sect. Also note that endowments must be earned in the listed order.

Solaris (Sun)

- ☞ Sunspot (13)
- ☞ Harvest (10)
- ☞ Resist Fear (13)
- ☞ Dragon Sight (11)
- ☞ Dragon Armor (15)
- ☞ Solar Flare (12)
- ☞ Prayer of Courage (14)
- ☞ Prayer of Strength (14)
- ☞ Wind Barrier (13)
- ☞ True Sight (13)
- ☞ Sunburst (14)
- ☞ Sunbeam (14)
- ☞ Dragon Flight (14)
- ☞ Tears of Zariah (15)
- ☞ Guardian (15)
- ☞ Freeze Time (14)
- ☞ Smite (15)

Sunspot (13): Allows the priest to temporarily blind any non-followers within a 10-yard radius, for 1 hour per LL of the priest.

Harvest (10): Enables the priest to create a bountiful meal for as many followers as he has LLs, once per day. This meal not only includes food but drink as well, and it will be culturally suitable for its recipients.

Resist Fear (13): Allows the priest to resist fear caused by innately evil creatures, such as undead, legendary evils, and even demons or devils. For an additional 10 WPs, the priest can confer this resistance on any one follower of Dragonfay, by touching the follower's head and praying to Zariah. (Remember, though, that sometimes fear allows a person to live by fleeing, rather than

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by fighting and dying at the hands of some awful evil.) This resistance lasts 1 hour per LL of the priest.

Dragon Sight (11): Lets the Priest see into the ultra-violet spectrum, seeing at nighttime as if in perfect daylight. This sight lasts for 1 hour per LL of the priest.

Dragon Armor (15): Allows the Priest to summon a magical suit of silver-scaled armor, light as air and resounding like wind chimes. The armor's absorption is 5 x the priest's LL, with a maximum absorption of 50 x the priest's LL. The armor regenerates 10 points per priest's LL per round, which keeps it from being dispelled. This armor is considered magical armor in all respects and remains for 1 hour per LL of the priest. This endowment can only be used once per day.

Solar Flare (12): Allows the priest to send a beacon of light to any one person, no matter how far away she might be, as long as her name is known. This beacon can convey any relatively short desired message (such as "Help! I'm being attacked by Gorenger the Cruel at the Church of Dragonfay in Harndin!") The beacon travels at the speed of light, and so will reach its destination almost instantly.

Prayer of Courage (14): Invigorates the priest and any followers present (up to 1 follower per 10 skill points) by restoring lost WPs, up to 5 WPs per priest's LL per person. In addition, all affected will have a +5 per priest's LL on any Mental saves for the next hour.

Prayer of Strength (14): Heals the priest and any followers present (up to 1 follower per 10 skill points) by restoring lost HPs, up to 2 HPs per priest's LL per person. In addition, all affected will have a +5 per priest's LL on any Physical saves for the next hour.

Wind Barrier (13): Allows the priest to create an intense barrier of wind in a 10' radius around his person. Only followers can pass through the barrier, and physical attacks against it will be ineffective, as the wind circulates around the barrier at several hundred miles per hour. The wind is amazingly concentrated; only a light breeze will be felt within 20', and even 1' away, only a strong gust will be noticed. However, those who attack the barrier with melee weapons will have them torn from their grasp and hurled several hundred feet away, possibly mangling their weapon hands. The only debris caught by the air currents will be those within the barrier when it was created, and will be propelled at deadly speeds within the barrier. The barrier is not mobile and will function for 1 hour per LL of the priest.

True Sight (13): Allows the priest to perceive the aura of any one person he views, within 100', allowing him

to determine pathway, Life Level, race (even if in a different form), and current state of health.

Sunburst (14): Allows the priest to shed light equal in intensity to sunlight in a 10-yard radius around him. An additional 5-yard radius will be illuminated as if by torchlight. The light circle moves with the priest, and any innately evil creature caught in its initial radius will be subject to various effects, depending on the intensity of their evil. Undead instantly burst into flames, suffering 10 structure points of damage, and are forced to flee the sunlit area. Legendary evils are wracked with pain and forced to flee as well. Demons and devils cannot exercise any dark powers while within the sunlight and must flee the sunlit area if they fail a Mental save versus the priest's LL x 5. Note that undead who cannot escape the sunlight will suffer 10 structure points per round until destroyed or the endowment ends. Also, demons or devils who make their saves and can stay within the sunlit radius are only allowed physical attacks and nothing else. The light lasts 5 rounds per priest's LL.

Sunbeam (14): Being the only truly offensive power available to Solaris priests, this power allows the priest to cast a 6"-diameter beam of intense heat and light cutting through any opponent. The beam does (priest's LL - first target's LL) x 10 in damage to anything in its path. (Negative damage means the target is immune.) If the total amount of damage exceeds the target's capacity, the beam will continue on to another target in a direct line. The beam's damage cannot be soaked, and the absorption of normal armor (not magical) is reduced to half normal. The beam can travel 1 yard per skill point in the endowment.

Dragon Flight (14): Allows the priest to fly, at a movement rate of 25 (85 mph), with the power of the wind, and making him as maneuverable as a Dragon without any wing encumbrance. The flight lasts 1 hour per LL of the priest.

Tears of Zariah (15): Allows the priest to make a light warm rain fall on every follower within a 100-yard radius. This purifying rain combines the effects of the Resist Fear, Prayer of Courage, Prayer of Strength, and Bless endowments. In addition, the holy rain restores and heals all it falls on, including dead trees, withered crops, scorched fields, and even maimed limbs (though it cannot regenerate lost limbs). Followers blessed by the rain will feel rejuvenated and confident to face whatever task lies ahead.

Guardian (15): Allows the priest to summon help from Zariah in the form of a young Dragon, which will serve the Priest as a guardian of an appointed place or person. The only stipulations are that any place

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guarded must not belong to another religion, and any person guarded must be a follower. The young Dragon will remain as guardian for 1 hour per LL of the priest. Should the Dragon die during its duty, the priest is expected to make amends to Zariah. (See Chapter 6 in the Tome for Dragons statistics).

Freeze Time (14): Allows the priest to stop time itself, in a 10-yard radius, for everyone and everything not a follower of Zariah. Those stopped in time will be covered with a light frost and will have no indication upon awakening of the lost time except for an intense feeling of cold that quickly diminishes. In addition to victims within range when the endowment is used, those non-followers entering the radius will freeze in place as well. The timeless circle lasts for 1 round per LL of the priest.

Smite (15): A last resort power only usable by a High Priest, Smite allows the priest to defeat an unstoppable adversary by releasing all the power invested in him by Zariah in one large blast. The priest adds every point in every endowment together, and this tally equals the amount of magical damage done to everything and everyone within a 10' radius. This damage cannot be soaked, although a successful Physical save reduces damage in half. No matter what happens, the priest using this endowment loses every point in all his endowments and can only regain them by spending EPs to build them back up again.

Lunaris (moon)

- ☞ Shadow Claws (12)
- ☞ Shadow Leech (13)
- ☞ Cause Fear (13)
- ☞ Shadow Mask (14)
- ☞ Dragon Armor (15)
- ☞ Nightshade (10)
- ☞ Prayer of Knowledge (14)
- ☞ Prayer of Power (14)
- ☞ Moon Gate (14)
- ☞ Dragon Breath (14)
- ☞ Blackhole (15)
- ☞ Moonbeam (14)
- ☞ Shadow Flight (15)
- ☞ Blood of Rabahd (15)
- ☞ Slayer (15)
- ☞ Kiss of Death (14)

Shadow Claws (12): Allows the priest to form long, serrated claws of shadow on his hands, which do damage as normal claws except that none of the damage can be soaked, and armor offers no protection from them. The claws exist for 1 hours per priest's PL before disappearing.

Shadow Leech (13): Enables the priest to heal himself by draining the life-force of others. To gain HPs, the Dark Priest must drink the victim's blood; HPs will be transferred at the rate of 1 HP per priest's PL per round. Note that the victim cannot be a follower.

Cause Fear (13): Allows the priest to cause fear in opponents, similar to the undead ability to cause fear. Opponents must make Mental save versus the priest's skill in this endowment or flee in terror for 1 round per priest's PL. Any victims with nowhere to flee will simply cower in fear.

Shadow Mask (14): Allows the priest to cloak himself in shadows, making himself a wraith. His appearance will simply be a smoky obscuration with faintly glowing red eyes. While in this form, the priest has a doubled movement rate and gains a bonus of +50 to all Subterfuge rolls. He can also see in darkness as if it were daylight, and can move through stone crevices and door cracks without hindrance. This endowment lasts 1 hour per priest's PL.

Dragon Armor (15): Allows the Priest to summon a magical suit of black-scaled armor, light as air and resounding like eerier winds. The armor's absorption is 5 x the priest's PL, with a maximum absorption of 50 x the priest's PL. The armor regenerates 10 points per priest's PL per round, which keeps it from being dispelled. This armor is considered magical armor in all respects and remains for 1 hour per PL of the priest. This endowment can only be used once per day.

Nightshade (10): Allows the priest to use his own blood as a poison (Midnight Belladonna) with which to coat weapons. The cost to use this endowment cannot come from the powerbase, only from the caster's WPs, and the blade will be coated with enough poison for one strike only. Upon a successful hit that actually causes damage to an opponent (i.e., above and beyond armor absorption or soak), the poison immediately does 1 HP point of unsoakable damage per round, in addition to normal weapon damage; victims who make a successful Physical save with a 20 difficulty can avoid the poison's effects. This damage is applied cumulatively; the first round causes 1 HP, the second causes 2 more HPs, the third causes 3 more HPs, up to 10 rounds of damage or the death of the victim. The priest is immune to his own poison but not any other.

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Prayer of Knowledge (14): Confers secret knowledge onto the priest, presenting him with one weakness or vulnerability per PL, per opponent and offering him a possible advantage. Whether or not the priest can capitalize on this knowledge is another story, however.

Prayer of Power (14): Infuses the priest with power, restoring Willpower (up to 5 WPs per priest's PL) and health (up to 2 HPs per priest's PL), and giving the priest a +5 per PL on all Mental and Physical saves for 1 hour.

Moon Gate (14): Allows the priest to open a doorway to another dimension during a full moon. The priest can only travel to a dimension he has previously visited or shown to him. The dimensional crosspoint known as both Jahude and Saelex is often frequented by Rabahd's dark priests, as it Rabahd's dark dimension itself.

Dragon Breath (14): Allows the priest to use the breath weapon of a Dragon. The priest's jaw will drop 6" as a terrible expanding cone of flame roars forth, 10' in diameter at its conclusion 10 yards away. The fire does 10 HPs of damage per priest's PL to everything in its path. Damage can be soaked, and successful Physical saves cut damage in half, but armor follows the normal rules versus magical fire damage.

Blackhole (15): Allows the priest to create a one-way dimensional rift to Rabahd's dark dimension. A gaping hole will appear in the ground in any designated spot within 10 yards of the priest, and those non-followers within 100' of the rift will be drawn towards it by invisible forces. Only sentient living beings are affected by the dimensional pull, and those who fail their Physical saves versus the endowment will be sucked into Rabahd's dimension, to be devoured at his leisure. The hole will expand to accommodate those seemingly too large for it, and will remain open 1 round per PL of the priest casting the endowment.

Moonbeam (14): Allows the priest to cast a 6"-diameter bolt of deadly pale, blue light that drains life energy from those it strikes. The beam does the (priest's PL - target's LL) x 10 in damage, and if the first target cannot absorb these points, the beam will continue to the next target in a direct line. (Negative damage means the target is immune.) Damage caused by the beam cannot be soaked, and the absorption rate of any normal armor is halved. The beam can travel up to 1 yard per priest's skill point in the endowment.

Shadow Flight (15): Allows the priest to melt into the earth and become one with the void of darkness. While in this medium, the priest can travel nearly anywhere in the world instantly, up to 1000 miles per PL. The

priest does not have to select a destination before using this endowment, but all destinations must be on or in contact with earth. Only general locations of a region can be chosen, and the priest must have heard of the place before. When reaching the destination, the priest merely emerges from the ground. This power also allows the priest a place to hide for a short time; he can remain in the ground for 1 hour per PL before being absorbed by the darkness and killed.

Blood of Rabahd (15): Allows the priest to call down the very wrath of Rabahd on his enemies. When evoked, a crimson rain (so dark as to appear almost black) will fall in a 100-yard radius around the priest, dooming all within its grasp to a slow, painful death. Within one day, affected vegetation will die; on the second day, affected animals will bloat with disease and die on the ground; and on the third day, affected people will die, twisted and contorted from excruciating pain. Those hit by the rain who make a successful Physical save, with a difficulty of the priest's endowment skill, will only lose 1 Stam and survive. Only followers who have Divine Intervention performed for them can survive this rain without penalty, and those who are not intervened for will die as a normal victim. To use this power, the priest must have at least a 50 in the skill, as each use of the power subtract 50 skill points that can only be regained through normal EP expenditure.



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Slayer (15): Allows the priest to summon Rabahd's help through a young Dragon. The Dragon will perform one task for the priest, whether it be retrieving a lost or stolen unholy relic or killing a powerful enemy. The only stipulation is that the relic must not belong to another religion. Once the task is complete, the young Dragon will immediately leave. Should the Dragon die during its task, the priest will be expected to make amends to Rabahd. (See Chapter 6 in the tome for Dragon statistics.)

Kiss of Death (14): Allows the priest to mark a Dragonfay enemy for death. The mark is placed on the victim's forehead by the priest's kiss and acts as a beacon to all Dragons who come within 10 miles of the victim. Any Dragons coming within 10 miles will instantly know of the victim and will seek to kill him and return his head to the casting priest. At this point, the priest must make the required payment to the Dragon or be devoured by him. Unfortunately, a priest never knows which Dragon will come to collect, and some are much more greedy than others. The mark--a blood-red Dragonfay symbol that cannot be removed without Divine Intervention--remains invisible unless a Dragon is within 10 miles, whereupon it becomes visible to everyone.

Terra endowments

The practitioners of Terra endowments are mainly those who belong to the female Hourani House of Raidir. Because House Raidir is formally only recognized by the House Lords but not among the general public, endowments are listed with that House's description in Chapter 2. Average members of the Terra sect can generally only use Earth Speak, while the other endowments are reserved for the few high-ranking priestesses of House Raidir.

Chapter Four

Magic Theory: Wizardry



Wizardry's unique claim is that it can involve all aspects of magic: manipulating material objects, twisting the tunnels of time, harnessing the powers of nature, empowering the physical body, protecting mages from weapons, controlling the wills of others, animating dead, summoning animals, even bending light to make one unseen. Wizardry combines all forms of magic in an attempt to reach back and achieve the True Magic from which all magic springs.

Unfortunately, these attempts are hindered by only one thing: power. Because they were developed to be integrated for endless possibilities, Wizardry spells use vast amounts of power, which wears down the body and drains more WPs than other spell theories. Specifically, a Wizardry spell costs 7 x complexity in WPs to use, whereas other forms of magic cost only 5 x complexity. Still, a wizard can try to cast any spell he wishes (even if he hasn't actually learned the spell yet), with the following chance of success:

$$d100 + \text{theory skill} - (2 \times \text{complexity})$$

A D+ success is needed for average results.

Note that wizards do not have higher multiples attached to difficulty just because they are trying a new spell, and they can cast spells without having to research them first for 5-10 weeks, like the other schools. The catch is that only spells increased with experience become powerful, while all others have simple range, duration, effect, etc., until used frequently. Still, it's handy to be able to pull a spell out of your hat in any situation.

All wizards have a magical "color signature" reflected in the spells they cast. For example, one mage might cast a Firewhorl in red, another mage might choose blue, and perhaps a third will cast it with green & blue iridescence. Whatever the color or sheen chosen, it remains with the wizard all his life and manifests in every one of his spells. Black or white signatures are quite common, used by evil or good mages who wish to remain relatively anonymous.

A wizard inherits his powerbase from his master, usually in the form of a wooden staff or a crystal pendant (although some mages have used hats, rings, gloves, or even hidden armbands, so as to hide the fact

that the items were indeed powerbases). The original powerbase contains 100 points and can be recharged at any time using the mage's Theory score. The ratio of turning current WPs into powerbase points is determined by a normal Theory roll:

Success	Willpower to powerbase ratio
A	10 : 1
B	7 : 1
C	6 : 1
D	5 : 1
E	4 : 1
F	3 : 1
G	2 : 1
H	1 : 1

Critical failure: All WPs are drained! No points enter the powerbase, and you must sleep at least 12 hours.

Critical success: You tap into a universal magic superconductor, reaching a transfer ratio of 1 WP to 2 powerbase points.

Any save made against a Wizardry damage spell cuts damage in half unless specifically stated otherwise. Critically failing a save means that double damage is taken, while a critical success means that no damage is incurred at all. Successful saves against other Wizardry spells negate the spell's effects completely, unless otherwise stated. Remember that spell damage cannot be soaked, nor can armor absorb any of the damage.

Wizardry spells

What follows are some fundamental spells of varying complexity to get the budding wizard started:

Offensive

☞ Abolish Magic Defense (16)

☞ Annihilate Magic Item (17)

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- ~ Awful Truth (13)
- ~ Behave (16)
- ~ Chained Energy (15)
- ~ Control Mental State (20)
- ~ Dehydrate (15)
- ~ Disks of Ledorian(15)
- ~ Enchant Arrowhead (12)
- ~ Ground Swallow (18)
- ~ Immobilization (19)
- ~ Invisibility (20)
- ~ Invisible Horde (20)
- ~ Naptime (11)
- ~ Palms of Fire (16)
- ~ Paralyzing Touch (16)
- ~ Super Adhesion (17)
- ~ Tholin's Whirling Hammers (15)
- ~ Wicked Staff of Groam (11)

Defensive

- ~ Air of Darkness (10)
- ~ Evil Bane (13)
- ~ Expose Invisibility (15)
- ~ Extreme Shield (12)
- ~ Frey's Plates of Spellbinding (15)
- ~ Frey's Spellbinder (10)
- ~ Good Bane (12)
- ~ Invocation of Disbelief (20)
- ~ Intervening Shield (20)
- ~ Invisible Prowl (13)
- ~ Overrule Spell (15)
- ~ Parabola (19)
- ~ Prot. from Elements/Elememtals (20)
- ~ Prot. from Mystical Creatures: (20)
- ~ Prot. from Rune weapons (20)
- ~ Shadow Dancer (11)
- ~ Wall of Black (18)
- ~ Walls of Nature (15)
- ~ Wizard's Seal (19)

Miscellaneous

- ~ Anti-Matter Sphere (20)
- ~ Clean (10)
- ~ Continuum Shiftwalk (18)
- ~ Detect Toxin (15)
- ~ Gate Weave (19)
- ~ Glamour (15)

- ~ Green Soup (15)
- ~ Groam's Owl (18)
- ~ Instant Shelter (16)
- ~ Literacy (10)
- ~ Magic Laboratory (13)
- ~ Marble Message (15)
- ~ Metamorph (19)
- ~ Mirror Image (16)
- ~ Mystical Mount (15)
- ~ Quickflight (17)
- ~ Remove Petrification (19)
- ~ Scrollbind (19)
- ~ Skill Boost (12)
- ~ Sleeping Teleport (17)
- ~ Tempo (17)
- ~ Translation (10)
- ~ Water Walk (15)

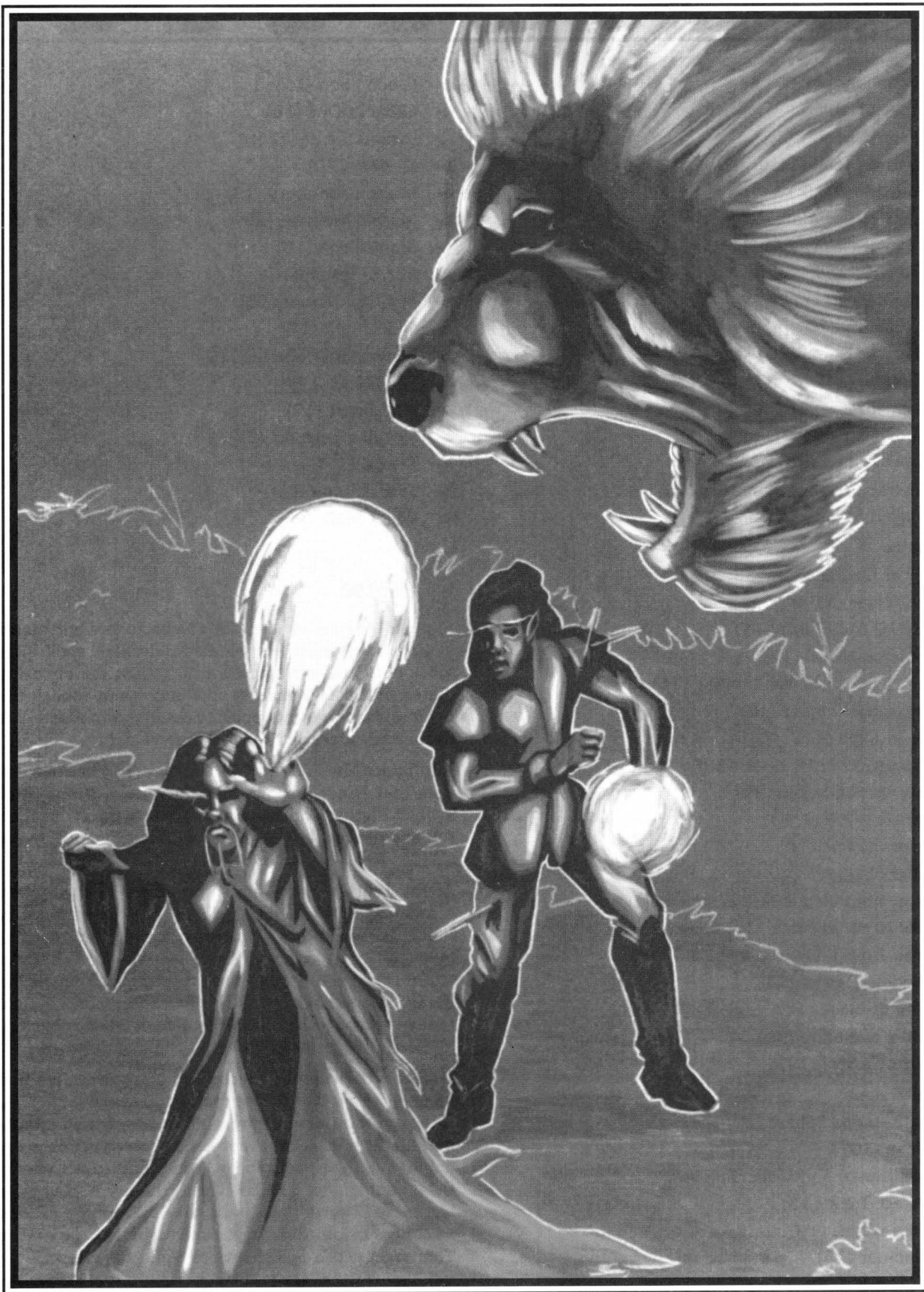
Offensive

Abolish Magic Defense (16): Negates any one magic wall, armor, shield, or similar defensive spell. The mage must roll a Willpower roll against the opposing caster and receive at least an E success to abolish the defense. Non-present opposing casters cannot add WPs to their counter roll. Range is line of sight.

Annihilate Magic Item (17): Destroys any one magical item that is not archaic, legendary, holy, runic, or of artifact status. The caster must touch the item, then roll an H success, with a difficulty determined by the GM.

Awful Truth (13): Causes the target to regurgitate something truly awful (such as blood, giant black bullfrogs, spiders, dead roses with nasty thorns, etc.) every time she either lies or purposefully skirts the truth. Damage caused by each regurgitation equals the caster's Magic mastery, although a successful Physical reduces damage by the target's own Magic mastery level. The target must be within talking distance.

Behave (16): Causes the target to act in a dignified manner, respectful to the caster and those with him. Although this does not prevent the target from attacking, it still instills values of honor, morality, integrity, nobility, and respect, and it forces him to act within these boundaries. Thus, if fighting the caster, the spell's victim will never backstab, take advantage of any weakness or disadvantage, or actually kill the caster. The target gets a Social save to avoid the effects.



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Chained Energy (15): Strips away the fabric of space in a direct path to a target, splitting molecules and chaining energy together to direct a rippling blast at any target within range (500 yards). Maximum damage build-up equals skill rating x emphasis level / 4, rounded down. Damage affects anything in the path of the chain, with each interposing object soaking as many points of damage as possible before being destroyed. For example, if Chained Energy with a maximum of 42 points had to pass through a tree limb (10 structure points), the target's armor (20 absorption), and the target itself (30 HPs), the tree limb would take 10 and be destroyed, the armor would absorb 20, and the target would take the remainder (12 points) in HP damage.

Control Mental State (20): Adjusts a person's mind to a single desired state, described as an emotion, attitude, desire or instinct (i.e., the target could feel hate, joy, lust, anxiety, confusion, logical, determined, etc.), although Mental or Social advantages are not increased by this spell. The target gets a Mental save to avoid the effect, with +5 bonus for every LL that she is above the caster. To cast the spell, the mage must make eye contact with the target.

Dehydrate (15): Causes the target (an item or living being) to be sucked dry of moisture, causing 1 HP of damage per skill point. Living creatures making successful Physical saves can reduce damage by half. Range equals 1' per skill point. A damaged creature or person heals as normal, although inundating the victim with liquids (water being the best) doubles the normal healing speed.

Disks of Ledorian (15): Summons one disk per emphasis level, each about the size of a paper-thin dinner plate, to be automatically sent streaking towards the target. The disks automatically hit, doing 5 x the caster's emphasis level in damage that can be absorbed by armor but not soaked. All damage remaining after armor absorption is then added together, to determine how much damage the target takes and the corresponding rupture level, with a successful Physical save cutting this damage in half. Note that the spell cauterizes open flesh, so no bloodloss occurs. The disks can be sent 1' per skill point, and must be used within 1 minute per emphasis level or they will dissipate.

Enchant Arrowhead (12): Charms arrowheads, up to a quantity of skill/10, to cause both +1 damage and +5 OCF for every Wizardry emphasis level the mage has. Any arrows not fired within 1 hour of being charmed turn to dust from the magic's potency.

Ground Swallow (18): Causes the ground to open and swallow anything weighing up to 1000 lbs (even

including flying creatures under 25 lbs that come within 5' of the ground), to be sealed away 20' under the surface. Targets get a Reflex and Agility check to avoid being swallowed. When immersed in ground, suffocation starts after 2 minutes, +1 additional minute per Stamina. The target can be up to 10 yards per skill point away from the caster.

Immobilization (19): Creates a 50'-long, 20'-wide, and 10'-high field that immobilizes anything entering it (such as arrows, spells, people, natural disasters, etc.) While immersed in the field, targets are not aware they are frozen in place. A successful Physical save frees the target for one round, but next round another save must be made if the target has not left the field. The field remains colorless (and thus virtually invisible) unless specified otherwise by the mage, and can be cast up to 100' away.

Invisibility (20): Renders the recipient completely invisible to all viewers, while still allowing her to act normally. Invisibility adds +100 to Prowl rolls, +100 to a surprise first strike in non-missile combat, +70 to any DCF rolls, -200 to any missile attacks on them, and lasts for skill/20 in rounds. The recipient is still affected by normal physical limitations and can be smelled, felt, and heard.

Invisible Horde (20): Allows the caster to turn herself and companions invisible, as per normal Invisibility. Although no concentration is required to maintain the power, all recipients must remain within eyesight of the caster or become visible. Spell recipients will be able to see other recipients as normal, only outlined by the caster's signature color. The caster can turn skill/10 targets invisible, for a duration of skill/25 minutes.

Naptime (11): Puts a single target to sleep for 1 hour with a D success. Targets are not allowed a save, but the caster can only affect those of lesser LL. Range is 3' per skill point.

Palms of Fire (16): Causes the caster's palms to become red-hot and burn with flames that will set any touched combustibles on fire. Damage against living creatures is skill x emphasis level, divided by 4. Armor can absorb as normal, and Physical saves reduce damage to half normal. Personal items on the caster's body are not harmed. The burning palms last for 1 minute per emphasis level, and the mage can only cast this spell on himself.

Paralyzing Touch (16): Causes the flesh of the recipient to transmit autonomic energy signals that locks up the muscles of those she touches. These signals emanate for 3 rounds, +1 round for every mastery level.

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Those who fail their Physical saves suffer the effects of a giant body cramp for skill/5 rounds, costing them 5 WPs per round of cramps.

Super Adhesion (17): Causes a flat area measuring skill x 10 square feet to suddenly be at maximum friction, entrapping anything landing on it for the caster's emphasis level in rounds. The spell can be cast up to 50' away, on any single planar surface able to fulfill the area of effect.

Tholin's Whirling Hammers (15): The spell has two versions. The first version allows the caster to touch skill/10 hammers (rounded down), sending them whirling under their own power, having an Init of 20 and an OCF bonus of 5 x caster's emphasis level. The spell's effects last for a number of rounds equal to the caster's mastery level. The second version creates one magic warhammer that will whirl out to the target, doing 5 x emphasis level in damage and hitting automatically. Range for either version is 30 yards.

Wicked Staff of Groam (11): Summons a staff as tall as the caster, with soft middle leather grips and squared-off ends (like a 4 x 4), with a column of three metal spikes appearing on all four sides on each end. The staff is indestructible, has WC5, +25 to OCF, and causes damage as A4 B8 C12 D16 E22 F34 G45 H60. The staff lasts for the length of combat; if cast outside of combat, it lasts for the caster's skill rating in minutes.

Defensive

Anti-Matter Sphere (20): A sphere of inverted gray is created around the caster or chosen item within 50 feet. The Anti-Matter Sphere will obliterate anything that touches it and does not save. Inanimate objects automatically disintegrate unless magical. The Anti-matter sphere can take infinite amount of damage for 1/20Skill in rounds. The caster is immune to the touch of the sphere, but cannot pass through. Staying inside the sphere longer than 5 rounds requires something to supply oxygen for breathing. The sphere does not move once cast.

Evil Bane (13): Brings an invincible symbol of truth and hope into being over the mage's head, causing a difficulty modifier of skill/4 to be applied to all rolls against the mage by evil or Taker creatures. Taker creatures or persons with a LL of 0-1 will run away in fear and not return until the symbol disappears. The symbol lasts for the caster's emphasis level in minutes.

Expose Invisibility (15): Nullifies any invisibilities within a 20' radius. Creatures with natural invisibility

must be contested in Willpower before being exposed. Any targets with their invisibility nullified will not realize they are visible and will act as normal. Things or creatures with no normal visible form will glow in a neon-like fashion. Note that this spell does not negate the invisibility but only nullifies it within the radius of the spell, which lasts for skill/10 rounds. The center of effect can be cast up to 2' away per skill point.

Extreme Shield (12): Overrides damage from heat and cold with a thin protective shield covering the entire body. Once the shield attunes to one extreme temperature, it needs 1 round to return to normal, and it can normally absorb 10 x skill in damage from fire/heat or cold before being destroyed. If the shield is hit with the opposite extreme before it returns to normal, any damage done to it is removed from the wearer's WPs (minus PT). The shield is only visible when actually being struck by the damaging elements.

Frey's Plates of Spellbinding (15): Calls armor into existence that can absorb both spell and weapon damage, with an absorption of skill/2 and a maximum absorption of 3 x skill. The armor is weightless, noiseless, and resembles a shimmering suit of armor, colored as per the mage's signature hue. The armor lasts until destroyed, and the spell has a range of self or touch.

Frey's Spellbinder (10): Creates a shield that sits in front of the mage and absorbs magic attacks, up to a total of 10 damage points per emphasis, before being destroyed. The shield has no complexity to use. Once it absorbs its maximum, the shield falls to the ground, shattering into inconsequential (non-useful) but stylish items like dandelions, tiny green frogs, dirt, confetti, chicken bones, snow, etc. The mage can only cast this spell on herself.

Good Bane (12): Brings an invincible symbol of black despair into being over the mage's head, causing a difficulty modifier of skill/3 to be applied to all rolls against the mage by good or Giver opponents. Giver creatures or persons with a LL of 0-2 will run away in fear and not return until the symbol disappears. The symbol lasts for the caster's emphasis level in minutes.

Invocation of Disbelief (20): Calls forth from the spirit world a true disbeliever to harry a psychic and disturb his mental powers. See Chapter 4 in the Tome to see how powers are affected by true disbelief. The caster can summon one spirit per casting, and the summoned spirit can only affect the persons or creatures it was summoned to harass. Spirits remain for a number of hours equal to the caster's emphasis level x skill points, unless actually dispelled (by exorcism, other powerful

Table 8. Protection from Elementals/Elements ROC results.

Success	Fear & save roll bonus	Other effects/immunities
A	+20	---
B	+30	---
C	+40	Immune to Sandbomb, Smoke Bomb, Darkness, Freeze, any natural torch-sized fire, winds of 10-15 mph, and rain.
D	+50	Immune to the abilities of Pebble, Finger Flame, Puddle, and Zephyr elementals; resistant to any temperature change; can walk through mud as if it were dry land.
E	+60	Immune to the abilities of Rock, Campfire, Stream, and Wind elementals; can breathe underwater.
F	+70	Immune to the abilities of Boulder and Bonfire elementals and to all Earth and Fire elemental spells.
G	+80	Immune to the abilities of Housefire and River elementals and to Air and Water elemental spells.
H	+100	Immune to the abilities of Ground, City Fire, Great Lake, and Cyclone elementals and to natural forest fires, natural lightning strikes, tidal waves, and rock slides.

wizards, or a sympathetic caster.) Only the caster of this spell and the affected psychic can see the spirit.

Intervening Shield (20): Allows the mage to mix order with entropy, keeping two things from coming together and harming each other. With this spell, a wizard could keep two liquids separate, two people from meeting each other, keep someone from hitting the ground, keep a spirit from possessing a body, keep rain off a fire, etc. The mage must be aware of the situation happening, however, and be quick enough to react. This spell can only be used to prevent harm, and if being used to prevent HP damage, the mage must subtract those points off her own WPs. Range is either line of sight, or intimate knowledge of the situation's details. The two items are kept from coming together, once per application of the spell. (Thus, if the circumstance abates and then begins anew--for example, two people leave each other's proximity and then return, or a spirit tries to possess the same body again, or it stops raining and then restarts--the spell must be cast again.)

Invisible Prowl (13): Allows the caster to make one target invisible whenever he prowls. The recipient can move at normal prowling rate, adding +100 to prowling rolls. As soon as he takes another action, he becomes visible. Absence of action does not count as an action, so the recipient can still sit or sleep and remain invisible. Duration of this spell is the caster's skill in minutes, and it can be cast on anyone within line of

sight. Note that the body is still limited to the normal physical rules and can be sensed by other senses than sight.

Overrule Spell (15): Overruling a spell can automatically be done if the caster's LL and Overrule skill is higher than opposing mage's LL and spell skill. Otherwise, Willpower rolls are made, adding in the appropriate spell skill. If trying to negate a spell that would lead to his death, the caster can add +50 to his WP roll. An overruled spell fizzles away into something inconsequential, of the overruler's choice, while the opponent's WPs are still spent. Note that this spell cannot be used as a magical "parry" against other attack spells (Parabola must be used for that). Effect/duration is instantaneous.

Parabola (19): Creates a shimmering dish that reflects spells back to their caster. The spell reflected be one directed at a target, not at a general area (such as Immobilize or Super Adhesion). To reflect the spell, the Parabola caster must make a successful Mental save and spend 1 WP per reflected spell's complexity, minus PT. Once the spell is reflected, the new target (i.e., original caster) can make a Refl + Awar roll, with a difficulty of 60, to cancel the spell before it hits him. Failing the save means the spell causes all effects to him. Typically, as a matter of survival, Parabola is one of the first spells learned, even by non-mages. If both casters have cast Parabola and then one fires an attack spell, a "ping-pong" effect occurs, with the spell bounc-

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ing back and forth until one mage runs out of WPs or powerbase points and gets hit. To sum everything up, unlike Overrule, Parabola does act like a magical "parry" against attack spells.

Protection from Elements/Elementals (20): Protects the caster from forces from the elemental planes, surrounding him in a magical shield of his signature color. The shield allows the caster to move, talk, see, hear, and cast spells while being protected, but will disappear if any of the cast spells are aimed at an elemental. The spell has a range of self and a duration equal to one minute per emphasis level. Table 8 shows which elemental forces and elementals the caster is protected from.

Protection from Mystical Creatures (20): Creates a shield of magical energy, colored as per the mage's signature hue, that protects the caster from harm by mystical creatures (see Table 9). The casting's success determines which creatures are defended against. The caster cannot cast magic, perform any attack, or move through the shield without dispelling it, although she can see, hear, smell, and talk through it, as well as cast spells or do things inside of it. The spell lasts 1 minute per emphasis level, with a range of self.

Protection from Rune Weapons (20): Makes the caster undetectable to rune weapons. Most rune weapons can locate the persons or items which relevant to their primary goals, but rune weapons looking for the protected caster will not be able to locate her (although it will realize that it is being magical blocked). The protection lasts 1 hour per caster skill point, with a range of self.

Shadow Dancer (11): Forces the caster's shadow to act in the desired manner, whether it be to scare opponents or just be entertaining or disturbing. While conversing with those able to see her shadow, the caster cannot be dominated, nor can the other people remain calm or serious--Givers will chuckle, while Takers will become angry. Also, Social rolls are increased by +25 involving people who can see the shadow. The caster can have multiple shadows if multiple strong light sources exist. All combat opponents suffer +20 to DCF, -30 to OCF, and must automatically subtract 50 Init (advanced combat only) to attack the caster, although enemies who cannot see the shadow are immune to these effects. Duration lasts until the current light source is extinguished.

Wall of Black (18): Creates a dark oily wall, menacingly unstable and smelling like burnt rubber. The wall covers a total of 100 x skill in square feet and remains only an inch thick (although it could be doubled up). The wall does not prevent intruders over 25 lbs from entering but is impenetrable by light or flying objects of less than 25 lbs (no matter how fast they are flying). Things that do pass through are covered with a black rubbery oil that will remain until rubbed off with the equivalent of good soap, and this substance causes -60 to all Init, OCF, and DCF rolls to all covered in it. The wall lasts for a number of minutes equal to the caster's skill points squared.

Walls of Nature (15): Forms a wall of thorns, grass, weeds, flowers, trees, birds, insects, rodents, and grassy earth, with the dimensions of 100 x skill square feet. The wall is immune to any spells except fire and true Elemental spells, and those who attempt to pass

Table 9. Protection from Mystical Creatures ROC results.

Success	Fear & save roll bonus	Other effects/immunities
A	+15	---
B	+25	Cannot be physically harmed by skeletons or Imps.
C	+35	Cannot be harmed in any manner by skeletons, Imps, or hungry demons.
D	+45	Cannot be harmed in any manner by zombies or famished demons
E	+55	Cannot be harmed in any manner by ghouls, starving demons, infant Dragons, and manticores
F	+65	Cannot be harmed in any manner by werewolves, ravenous demons, and unicorns
G	+75	Cannot be harmed in any manner by mummies, child Dragons and spirits from Spiritworld
H	+100	Cannot be harmed in any manner by ankous, voracious demons, or young adult Dragons

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through or over the wall take d10 damage per round from thorns and attacking bees, squirrels, and birds. To pass through the wall with a hacking implement takes the caster's emphasis level in rounds, although if the hacker can do 50 x the caster's emphasis level in damage to the wall in one round, it will be destroyed. The wall lasts for the caster's skill in minutes and must be cast in a living area of nature, such as plains, forests, city park, warm mountainside, etc.

Wizard's Seal (19): Seals anything with a hole, door, lid, cork, window, or similar opening—including books. The seal repels any damage attempted on it, and will not open unless an Abolish Magic Defense is cast.

Miscellaneous

Air of Darkness (10): Darkens an area with a radius of 10 x caster's emphasis, in one round. No light penetrates the dark, although x-ray vision will still work. The darkness lasts for skill/10 rounds.

Clean (10): Sanitizes any one object, making it perfectly clean by the mage's standards. This also destroys toxins and purifies non-magical liquids into water.

Continuum Shiftwalk (18): Enables the mage to traverse long distances with only subtle foot movements, with scenery constantly shifting and blending around him as he travels. The shiftwalk cannot be used to travel through an object or pass a blockade of some sort, and the caster must always know where he is travelling. Shiftwalk enables the caster to travel 1 mile per step (not adjustable), and lasts for skill/20 minutes. While shiftwalking, the caster is immune to all outside interference—even when standing still—except for the spells Expose Invisibility and Abolish Magic Defense.

Detect Toxin (15): Tests anything viewed by the mage for toxins, which for the purposes of the spell consist of acids, poisons, drugs, and other things immediately harmful to the body. Any toxins will glow with a dim fluorescent purple light visible only to the caster. The spell lasts for skill/10 minutes.

Gate Weave (19): Allows the caster to pull two parts of the universe together and weave a gateway between them. This is the only teleporting spell that allows others to come to the caster. The Gate Weave must include areas visited by the caster for at least one full day a year for five years, or every day for one week, or otherwise the threads will rip through the fabric of the continuum and cause a dimensional rift (usually killing everyone present). For the gate to open, an E success must be rolled, and maximum distance is

unlimited (except that the caster must have good knowledge of both locations as mentioned before). The gate remains for $(\text{skill} - 50)^2$ minutes, with a minimum of 1 minute, and can be woven large enough to admit anyone equal to or under the caster's size level.

Glamour (15): Creates an air of glamour, making the caster appealing and irresistible to anyone of her race and at least equal in appearance to those of different cultures. All Social rolls gain a bonus of skill/4, rounded up, and the appeal lasts for the caster's emphasis in hours.

Green Soup (15): Creates a mixture of antibiotics, plasma, vitamins, minerals, and magical DNA that will rid people of disease and heal any internal rupture damage. Green Soup appears in a bottle, which will disappear after the mixture is swallowed. The soup will remove one disease *or* heal skill/5 HP. Only one Green Soup can be imbibed per day; if another is attempted, the drinker will vomit up both drinks, negating the effects of the first and ruining the second.

Groam's Owl (18): Calls a magic owl to guard the mage's property. Actually a small shapechanged demon, the owl will do its best to prevent damage or theft to the designated items. It will remain for 2 x the caster's emphasis in hours. For statistics, use those of a starving demon from Groam's Lexicon in the Tome, with its shapeshifting ability locked into that of an owl.

Instant Shelter (16): Summons an instant shelter made of magic. The shelter will appear to be made of materials found in the environment and will be large enough to support both the caster and one other person per the caster's emphasis level (6 cubic feet per emphasis level). The shelter maintains a 68° temperature at all times. If there is not enough room for the shelter to appear, the spell will fail, and the caster can summon a shelter smaller than the maximum if desired. The shelter lasts for emphasis level squared in hours. The shelter has the casters HP max. x emphasis level in structure points.

Literacy (10): Allows the caster to be able to read and write any form of text. Although only one language can be read and written at once, the caster may switch to any other language when desired. The spell lasts for the caster's skill in minutes and bequeaths a 90 proficiency in the chosen language.

Magic Laboratory (13): Allows the mage to deduce an item's name and legend and one of its powers, in the space of an hour.

Marble Message (15): Allows the mage to place a message up to 100 words long inside an ordinary glass marble and then command it to roll over land and sea

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until it finds the target, whereupon when it touches the target's skin it repeats the message so only he can hear. The marble moves at a rate of 200 yards per minute (around 6-7 mph) and can be intercepted, although it'll make an incredible fuss and is quite slippery until dropped. The message length can be increased at the rate of 1 WP per extra word, and the marble can take a return reply for half the cost again.

Metamorph (19): Allows the caster to become any other living mortal creature. Weight and size makes no difference, and the new form will have all normal genetic abilities and limits, as per the real creature (including special resistances, breath weapons, special abilities, and physical capabilities). However, the power doesn't bestow any additional knowledge of spells, metaphysics, or endowments (etc.). An additional WP/powerbase cost must be paid if the caster changes to a creature in Groam's Lexicon of Fear & Darkness.

Creature type	WPs/powerbase cost, in addition to normal cost
Dragon, unicorn	Creature's WP value
Giant, giant animal (ainu, silver serpent)	100 per sl difference
Imp, infernine	500
Pegasus	700
Manticore, griffon, hydra	1000
Orc, Goblin, other culture	0

The caster cannot change into a changeling, demon, devil, elementals, parasycophants, or undead. Also, if the new form's normal mental statistics are less than Average, the mage must spend an additional 4 WPs per minute in the form or will forget himself and actually become the new creature. The power lasts for 1 hour per emphasis level.

Mirror Image (16): Allows the mage to exactly duplicate another person (even in voice, but not knowledge or physical ability) as long as that person is within sight. The mage can also perform mirror image movement (including combat maneuvers) if he faces the target. Every round, each swing ends either in a parry (01-50), a miss (51-80), or damage to both people (81-100). If damage is done, roll d100 (n100's allowed). The duration equals skill/6 in rounds.

Mystical Mount (15): Allows the caster to summon a mount made of mystical energies, of the caster's signature color. Physical description and qualities of the mount are listed on Table 10. The type and size of the

mount is based on the success level of the casting, and the mount will remain for 1 hour per caster's emphasis level. The caster can summon only one mount per casting of this spell, and can only have one mount per emphasis level in existence at the same time.

All mounts listed in Table 10 are mystical representations of the actual creatures, simply possessing their shapes and movement rates. The mount's structure points equal twice the caster's skill rating. If desired, the caster can choose a mount from a lower success rating to appear instead.

Quickflight (17): Allows the mage to choose a general direction or recall a known location and fly there at a movement rate of 30 (a little over 100 mph) in as straight a path as possible (without running into other objects or things). While in flight, the mage must remain in a prone position with hands at his sides. The spell lasts for the skill level in minutes, and if the mage has still not reached his destination when the power is depleted, he can spend half the normal amount to continue or bring himself to a safe landing.

Remove Petrification (19): Returns any "stoned" object back to its original form. Living creatures must make a successful Physical save or die when the petrification is removed. This spell only works on petrified items; it will not change normal stone into something else.

Scrollbind (19): Allows the mage to put any known spell onto a scroll, usable by anyone with at least a 75

Table 10. Mystical Mount ROC results.

Success	Mount	Movement rate	Encumbrance maximum*
A	Donkey	4	2
B	Mule	6	3
C	Camel	9	4
D	Riding horse	12	5
E	Draft horse	9	6
F	War horse	10	7
G	Pegasus	20/10**	10
H	Child dragon	44/12/4***	20
* Multiply given number by caster's skill			
**land/air			
***land/air/water			



in the same literacy. The scroll must be made of silver linen--a silk woven with silver strands--and the ink must be of the highest quality, containing a crushed diamond worth at least 1 gold and a drop of the caster's blood. Scrollbind is cast prior to the target spell's casting and will capture all its energy on paper, in whatever form the caster chooses (poem, verse, song, etc.), as long as the words describe the inscribed spell and call it directly by name. In general, it's a good idea to note the inscribed spells on the outside of the roll, in the same language, to avoid accidents.

Skill Boost (12): Allows the caster to add half his skill points in this spell to any one non-combat skill, named before the spell is cast. The boost lasts for one roll made with the skill, and the spell only has a range of self.

Sleeping Teleport (17): Allows the mage to pick a target location before sleeping and then teleport there when she reaches dream state. Objects on the mage's person automatically come with her, but all other items to be brought must be marked with her powerbase. Sleeping Teleport only works on the mage, and teleporting to a previously unvisited location adds a 50 difficulty to the roll. Failure means that the mage simply awakes where she fell asleep, while a critical failure teleports her to a random location 100 miles away.

Tempo (17): Increases or decreases the target's movement rate by 1 per caster's emphasis level. If decreasing the rate below 1, subtract .1 for every decrease, down to a minimum of .1. In addition, the action rate (initiative base) is simultaneously increased or decreased by 10 per caster's emphasis level, to a minimum of -20. The effects last for one round per emphasis level.

Translation (10): Makes a light silver band appear on the target's head, that will translate any language spoken but only when the speech is said in general or directly to the cater. Those things spoken specifically to another individual cannot be translated. The power lasts for skill/5 minutes.

Water Walk (15): Allows the caster to walk on any water surface, carrying up to her weight plus her encumbrance maximum, up to a speed of half the normal movement rate. The spell lasts for 2 minutes per emphasis level, and the caster can continue the spell for 2 more minutes by spending an additional 25 WPs or powerbase points.

Chapter Five

The City-States of Neuron



he cities of Neuron are divided into seven different main city states, with each state's capital city sharing the name of that state. Each capital is the focal point for each state--where the ruling council meets and the political, religious, and military leaders gather to decide the future of state citizens. Each city-state is independent of each other, and even the existing trade is still very limited and seasonal in nature. Capital cities are surrounded by hundreds of smaller towns and villages, sometime filling up the area within a hundred miles radius of the capital.

Information given on each city-state covers population quantities, location, climate and weather, topography, physical divisions, government and current leaders, laws, institutions, resources, tax quantities, special hazards (environmental or otherwise), magic restrictions imposed by the city-state, military force, political undercurrents, and travel access. Also offered are notable points from each city-state's history during the three Ages (if applicable), as well as items/locations of interest.

Calcasse "City on the Cliff"

Calcasse (*cal-CASS-seh*) is a city that has separated itself from the rest of society over the last thousand years. The huge stone walls and fortifications that protect the city also shield it from the outside world. The city's inhabitants are very protective and tend to be very withdrawn from surrounding events, as well as slightly paranoid, due to the city-state's turbulent history. Still, from the cramped dirty streets of the lower city to the spacious tree-lined city proper, the Hourani who live here await the day when the glory of Calcasse can once again be reborn.

Facts

Population: Hourani (300,000), Neuonian (1,000,000)

Location: Calcasse is located at the mouth of the Great River at the northwestern end of the Worlds Crown mountain range. By land, it is approximately 500-600 miles northwest of the city-state of Cortez. By river, Cortez is about 700-800 miles away.

Climate/Weather: Four distinct seasons, with long harsh winters, short springs and falls, and short unbearable summers. Annual precipitation is 96" yearly (48" snow, 48" rain).

Topography: Calcasse is nestled in among the low, rolling, western hills of the Worlds Crown. The land itself is boulder-strewn and covered in heavy foliage. Hardwood forests line the not-so-distant mountains. Small streams and ponds dot the lands outside of the city proper.

Divisions: The city is divided by a huge rift cut into the immense cliff, and from this rift flows one of the largest waterfalls in all the city-states, spilling down into a modest-sized lake. The area around the lake is known as the "Lower City" and is where the common people live and work. The area above the cliff is called the "City Proper", filled with city government buildings and the private dwellings of the well-to-do. The City Proper is ringed by towering stone fortifications and strategically located castles, for defensive purposes.

Government: Calcasse is run by Duke James Phillips XXXI. The hard life style of the city demands a hard ruler, and although Duke Phillips is a fair man, he is also very strict and ardent. He expresses his deep concern for his people in pragmatic and disciplinarian ways, and is willing to take whatever steps are necessary to help them. He currently has good diplomatic relations with Cortez, LeGonne, and LeGlasse, and these cities usually support one another in whatever manner is necessary. The Duke has two sons--James and Louis--but James' current whereabouts are unknown, leaving Louis the heir apparent to the throne. Despite the Duke being a hard man, the majority of the citizens respect him and approve of his policies.



Laws: Hourani and Neunionians follow the same laws, some of which are listed here. Others can be determined as per GM's Creation.

- ☛ **Infractions:** Blocking streets with wagons, entering the City Proper without a permit, spitting from the ore elevators, stealing food, performing cantrips and stage magic without a permit
- ☛ **Misdemeanors:** Prostitution, assaulting a commoner, breaking and entering a common building, fencing, slander, racketeering, magical malpractice where no person or property is damaged, stealing common goods if goods are recovered
- ☛ **Felonies:** Murder, rape, extortion, stealing from nobility, assaulting nobility, stealing common goods if goods are not recovered, embezzling, slavery, torturing, magical malpractice where property, persons, or state security is jeopardized, espionage, tax evasion, and kidnapping

Institutions: Groam School of Wizardry, House Groam, House Illiomis, Illiomis Northern Academy of Fine Arts, Hourani Embassy, Calcasse College of Advanced Learning

Resources: Calcasse sits very near to one of the largest iron ore veins in the city-states and produces nearly 60% of the their metal goods. Most metal is shipped in huge blocks of ore, to be smelted upon delivery. A vast quantity of coal can also be mined from the surrounding hills, comprising nearly 80% of the Neunion city-state supply. Nearly 40% of the Calcasse population works in the mining industry. Lumber is also plentiful and logged in vast amounts. Calcasse supplies about 35% of the lumber for the city-states.

Unfortunately, soil in this area is poor for agriculture. Area farmers still manage to scrounge up small harvests each fall, but Calcasse must import about 50% of its agricultural goods. In 800 AD, a silver vein was discovered, so Calcasse is currently minting silver coins.

Taxes: Standard income tax is 13% of annual income, although the Duke can raise taxes in case of a state emergency.

Hazards: The harsh winters cause many misfortunes for the Hourani living in Calcasse. For one, heavy snow fall can make living conditions intolerable. Food becomes scarce in the Lower City by mid-January, and starvation rates skyrocket for the Neunionian serfs in the Lower City. Accordingly, the crime rate (generally theft and theft-related killing) escalates at this time of year due to the large number of starving serfs, and city law enforcement is often insufficient to keep up with the high number of crimes.

When spring finally arrives, melting the large quantities of snow, the rivers and small streams overflow, causing mass floods that sweep away anything not tied down. When the flooding ends, life becomes relatively normal again until the next winter. Grobber are an all-year-round threat, moreso because of the diseases they carry and infect the population with. They are also susceptible to the same starvation affecting citizens of Calcasse: during the bleak winters, ogres often attempt raids on the city, in order to gain food and resources.

Magic: Magic use is controlled by permits given out at the Groam School of Wizardry. Permits must be acquired to both use and experiment with magic, and each permit lists the spells known by the wizard. Using a spell not listed on the permit constitutes a crime, as listed under Law earlier. Only law-enforcement personnel and those deputized by a sheriff are typically allowed to use offensive magic. However, in the event of war, the ban is lifted and all spellcasters can cast offensive spells in defense of the city.

Military/Defenses: The Army of City-States (ACS)--with 5000 troops--mans the city defenses and the huge castles protecting the outer perimeter. A total of 5000 Neunionians man the city guard enforcing the laws. The House of Groam has a force of 100 Clashers--warrior-wizards who police and guard magic for their house--and in times of war can muster another 200 mages for the war effort. The Hourani Embassy is protected by 110 troops from House Cortez: 60 warriors, 20 long-bowmen, 10 destriers, 9 sergeants, 1 master sergeant, 5 knights, 4 lieutenants, and 1 captain. Calcasse also has 20 sheriffs, each with 2 deputies. Finally, if necessary, the Council can activate 100,000 militia personnel.

Political intrigue: The Neunionian Wizard's Guild is currently trying to infiltrate the House of Groam to learn its secrets. Also, House Illiomis is currently under investigation by the Calcasse' Balentin Embassy, as an assassination was recently made by a "supposed" member of that House.

Travel access: The easiest and safest way to reach Calcasse is on the Great River. Although the High Lord's Road runs directly to Cortez, the path is almost impassable in winter and loaded with bandits and wandering grobber. The river is usually busy, with supply ships sailing to southern ports about two or three times a week and always willing to take on passengers for the right price.



The City-States of Neuon

History

Age of Creation: During the first 10,000 years, this area of land was untouched by all except the Dragon Prime, with coastal waters rumored to be clear and pure, holding an abundance of sea life. The cliffs of white stone were the only guardians overlooking the sea, aside from the gulls nesting in them, who would migrate to the southern part of the seashore only during harsh weather. This mediterranean coast was a jewel in the center of NeverWorld.

By the time the Dragons had truly proclaimed their new home in Mt. Kabi, the Amaranthians had discovered this wonderful jewel, determining it to be the harmony of Mequilmil in its most natural form, and they began to sculpt and carve away the last impurities that kept this heaven-on-earth from ascending to its proper place. For many generations, those known as Elves were invited to migrate to this new place. For many more, the Elves came and brought with them their practiced arts, to establish a place called Moliniaphenspheere (which, translated into High Speech, means "World of Flawless Purity"). The city was known for its collegiate studies, arts, and biological discoveries, and many things--both good and bad--came from this city before the Dragons returned to claim it.

The Amaranthians unhesitatingly rushed to the aid of the Elves as swarms of jealous Dragons honed in on Moliniaphenspheere. It was at this time that the megalomania of the Crystal began to infect most Dragon-kind, and these fliers were the first of the many waves that came to reclaim not just Moliniaphenspheere but all precious hideaways. The Elves abandoned the connecting continent that held their city in such perfect waters and launched a large island--known for a short time as the Isle of Kodan--into the sea. Left behind in the island's wake was a gaping sore of bare granite and churned waters. These rough cliffs continuously spilled avalanches into the sea for centuries, and the topsoil ran like blood under the heavy storms. The land itself would be uninhabitable for another 10,000 years, and not until the end of the Age that Killed Innocence would human settlers from both the east and west find this glinting facet of land, with impressions of a once-great jewel on the sea. The people would eventually call it Calcassee--Neuonian for "city on the cliff".

Age of Myth: Calcassee was the first port city of Neuon not on the Great River. Before the Unholy Ages, Calcassee was on the western side of the country, approximate 30 days portage away from the Great River's source, and was mostly influenced by the Mulgrayne and their shipping routes, as it was the

easiest Neuonian city-state to reach from Mulgra. Calcassee did not at first welcome this western influence, until the coliseum was built and large amounts of money started to roll in.

Early on, influenced by the merging cultures, the people developed a wide range of skills. Many Mulgrayne traditions were absorbed into the city-state, until the House of Groam established itself in the City Proper. The first conflicts came when Hourani of this house refused to teach their secrets to anyone else, causing the Mulgrayne to establish an actual Embassy (which included the Coliseum) so that they could enforce their own laws to some degree. Meanwhile, Neuonians continued to gather more popularity in trading circles and eventually became the major importers for the city-states in the way of Wolfihn, Mulgrayne, Tristleti, and Bock goods.

With the changes of western influence came changes in governing as well, to protect the citizens. Calcassee went through many civil disputes as the validity of the Hourani's presence was repeatedly debated. Finally, when House Illiomis established their college and museum, the Hourani were accepted under the land's laws as bona fide citizens.

In 2240 AM, riots involving over 3000 citizens forced the western Mulgrayne to flee the city in fear of their lives. The mob sought to regain control of lands illegally acquired by the Mulgrayne Embassy, a motive somewhat misdirected by a white Wolfihn searching for the runesword ID. The city was protected by a new faction created by the Duke--the Leather Gauntlet--and this team of sadists promptly began to root through the mob and executed over 400 people before they were stopped.

Age of Discovery: Various cataclysms shifted the city's position, moving it a few hundred miles away from its old position and a far distance from the Mulgrayne Empire. Although citizens still persevere in some of the more harmless traditions spawning from the Mulgrayne, they rarely encounter anyone of that culture. However, the cataclysms shifted the location of many fortifications, including those left in position by the Mulgrayne as they travelled outwards on their missions of conquest. Thus, some descendants of soldiers from these "lost keeps" occasionally wander into Calcassee, believing that the Mulgrayne still control the city, and are completely befuddled by the current public disdain for them and their empire.

While legends from the other Ages are faint, much evidence suggests that Calcassee was once a great seaport: ruins of an old shipyard reside next to the pool of the Zariah's Falls, and many buildings throughout the city bear the sea-trade symbols, similar to those of

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Harndin and Jondric. Adventurers passing through this area continually look for keys to the Isle of Kodan, in hopes of discovering any treasures left behind by the Tristleti.

The last 200 years has been fraught with invasion after invasion by the ogres of the northeast. Many older Hourani claim these attacks could have been avoided if the Neuonians had taken precautions in their adventurous days and not left behind so many trails leading to Calcasse. Not until the deadly winter of 816 AD did the Ogres have a reason to search for neighbors to raid. At this time, the dwarven tower to the north was first tested in barbaric siege as the Ogres brought their skills of Witchery and their ravenous cannabilistic appetites into Neuonian life. With help from the House of Groam, Calcasse repelled the attack. Still, every five years or so since that time, defensive forces prepare to repel similar but smaller attacks in the middle of winter. At this point, the battles are almost ritual for the three groups (Ogre, Neuonian, and Hourani). As 1000 AD ends and 1001 begins, people prepare for yet another siege.

Points of interests

The Abandoned Dwarven Tower: In the Age of Myth, the Dukes of Calcasse had a strong trade agreement with dwarves ruling the Worlds Crown, and the two cultures would almost meet at this tower, which was equally spaced between their borders. After the Unholy years, after the land masses had finished shifting, the tower appeared several miles outside the city-state, completely abandoned by dwarf and Hourani. Calcasse military cleared the tower of infesting grobber and restored it for use as an advance scouting base for the northern border. The tower is 80' x 80' at its base and rises 90' high, with nine floors, and is easily able to hold 40 infantry and 20 cavalry. The tower is built of an unidentified rock, as black as night itself and unscratchable by any material from Calcasse.

Elevators: Amazing devices used to reach the City Proper, the elevators are 20' x 20' wooden platforms hauled skyward by the harnessed force of the waterfall itself (using large geared wheels). Ten of these lifts are in continuous operation, two of which are used to haul materials and manpower to the mines and the others used to transport citizens.

Mulgrayne Gladiator Arena: This ancient building is a silent reminder of the evil ways formerly tolerated in the city, but now stands empty and abandoned. Hourani from all over the city-states come to view a piece of Western Empire history.

Tomb of the Desecrators: This monstrous building is located in the Lower City, where 20 Desecrators once rebelled against the Western Empire and gave their lives to free the slaves condemned to die in the gladiator pits.

Zariah's Falls: When ground shifted during the Age of Darkness and the city was split in two, a Solaris temple along the faultline was also ripped asunder--half tumbling into the depths below and half remaining on the cliff face. The huge waterfall now running through the ruins was named after the Dragon goddess whose temple was destroyed. The waterfall is said to spring from the tears of Zariah herself, weeping for the deaths of her followers that day long ago.

Cortez "City of the Blade"

Behold the military might of the Hourani culture! From the ancient Cyclopunomin Bridge to the gigantic Great Trees that hem in this city-state, Cortez is the seat of true military power. A Duke who rules with martial law and a practiced armed force backed by the honed warriors of the Holy Army itself makes Cortez one of the most intimidating cities in the City-States of Neuron.

Facts

Population: Hourani (500,000), Neuonians (500,000)

Location: Cortez is approximately 500-600 miles southeast of Calcasse by land and about 750 miles by river. It is 1100 miles north of LeGlassee by river. A small colony of Neuonians--River Swell--has settled on the west side of the Great River. However, most Hourani call this community "Slaughter Town", as it takes care of the unpleasant duty of slaughtering cattle (as the Duke had no desire to have his city filled with bloody carcasses).

Climate: Four distinct seasons, with bad winters and a short hot summer. Spring and fall are also short, but with pleasant temperatures. Annual precipitation is about 76 " (48" rain, 28" snow).

Topography: Cortez is located on the flat lands just east of the Great River. The land starts into gentle rolling hills that lead to a mountain and is dotted by small trees and fertile crop lands, although most farm land is slowly being converted to residential areas.

The City-States of Neuon

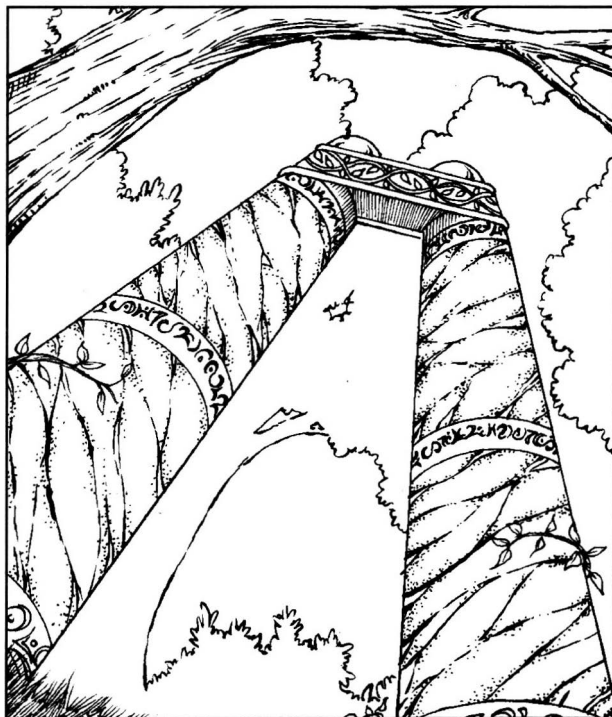


Divisions: Cortez is divided, similar to Calcasse, by a huge rift that cuts the entire city-state in half. The rift here runs from north to south, with the difference in elevation being 300' between the east and west sides. A huge ramp connects the eastern upper city with the western lower city. Most housing for lower- and middle-class Hourani and Neuonians remains in the lower city, while the wealthy of Cortez live in Nobility Row located in the Upper City. The lumber mill and the Cortez castle are both located in the Upper City.

Government: Connor Angelic is the current Duke of Cortez, who rules strongly and fairly. He is honest, trustworthy, and fair to all citizens but does not bend the laws for anyone. He remains on good terms with the Dukes of Calcasse, LeGonne, LeGlasse, and Per-Saal, and these cities lend each other support. The Duke's sole son, William, has just been knighted and serves as a Captain in the Holy Army, and is expected to become the next Duke when Connor passes on.

Laws: Hourani and Neuonians follow the same laws, some of which are listed here. Other laws can be added, GM's Creation.

- ☞ **Infractions:** Entering Cortez without a proper permit, stealing food, performing cantrips and stage magic without a permit, not having peace strings tied on weapons
- ☞ **Misdemeanors:** Prostitution, assaulting a commoner, breaking and entering a common



building, fencing, slandering, racketeering, magical malpractice not damaging persons or properties, stealing common goods that are recovered, drawing weapons for self-defense

- ☞ **Felonies:** Murder, rape, extortion, stealing from nobility, stealing common goods that aren't recovered, assaulting nobility, embezzling, slavery, torturing, magic malpractice where property, persons, or state security is jeopardized, espionage, tax evasion, kidnapping, and drawing a weapon (except for self-defense)

Institutions: Cortez Castle, House of Cortez, largest church of Dragonfay's Solaris sect, Dungeons of Mackni, Hourani Embassy

Resources: Cortez does well in mining and harvesting lumber, producing about 20% of both metal goods and lumber in the city-states. Although the city cannot match the industrial might of Calcasse, it has more successful agricultural harvests, yielding enough grains and corn in one season to feed the population for the year. With the recent growth of Slaughter Town, herding grazing animals for milk and meat is rapidly growing, affecting Cortez as well as Calcasse and LeGlasse.

Taxes: Standard annual taxes are 24% of all annual income, and those considered to be nobility pay 35% of their reported annual incomes.

Hazards: The Great River often floods, affecting those living nearby and becoming more of a problem as Cortez grows in size, spilling into the flat areas on either side of the river. Grobber and brigands are a lesser problem, willing to occasionally stir up some trouble but not stupid enough to direct attack the best warriors in the entire city-states.

Magic: Magic use is controlled by permits given at Cortez Castle. A permit is needed to use and to experiment with magic. Each permit lists the spells known by the permit's holder, and use of any spell not listed constitutes a crime (see the Law sections). Only law-enforcement personnel and those deputized by a sheriff can use offensive magic, although in times of war, spell casters will be given permission to use offensive spells to defend Cortez.

Military/Defenses: House Cortez is the military power in this city-state, and its armies are divided into two factions: the Army of Nobility and the Holy Army of the Dragonfay. Details and structure of each army is listed under House Cortez in Chapter 2 of this book.

Also, the Great Trees make a permanent barrier to help protect the city-state, and the only two publicly known entrances through them are heavily guarded by

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massive stone fortifications and the elite troops of the Army of Nobility. The Army of Nobility acts as a police force, to ensure a peaceful city-state. In addition, hundreds of castles dot the land, and each one helps defend the city-state from those who get through the wall.

The Duke is currently building defenses around Slaughter Town to help protect the Hourani interests, as well as control the lawless who reside there. The Army of Nobility numbers about 2000 strong in Cortez and another 750 throughout the various city-states, while. The Holy Army is about 700 strong in Cortez and has 250 scattered throughout the various city-states. Cortez also has 16 sheriffs, each with 2 deputies, to keep order, and the council is able to activate 50,000 militia in times of war.

Political intrigue: The Duke is respected by his military followers, but those in Slaughter Town do not fear to show him open contempt and hatred. Many say that the new fortifications being built around Slaughter Town are to help the Duke enforce tax collection from those who live there. Some even go as far as to speculate on a possible war between the Duke and the council currently "ruling" Slaughter Town. Several wealthy Hourani feel that the tax rate is currently too high and that the Duke is using his funds for the wrong reasons (such as to build the fortifications). Any internal war that occurs would split the wealthy into two fairly equal-sized groups, backing either the Duke or Slaughter Town.

Travel access: The only two entrances through the Great Trees are at the east and west sides of Cortez (although, prior to the Cataclysm, the entrances were to the north and south). Due to this fact, the west entrance is still known as the South Gate, leading to the Cyclopunomin Bridge and into Slaughter Town. The east entrance is still known as North Gate and leads to the High Lord's Road, which runs north to Calcasse and south to LeGlasse. The most common and safest way to reach Cortez is by boat, on the Great River.

History

Age of Creation: While the outer edges of the eastern forested continent were being settled by Dragons and Elves, the Cyclopunomins were teaching their children the Cyclops the arts of engineering and invention, in a place far down the Great River's path, known as Roin Does. Roin Does was only 42 square miles in size but contained a mountain of white marble on the north shore of the river. From here, the stone lacing the

structures of the Majestic Empire was mined. The Amaranthians were so enraptured with this marble that they settled with the Cyclops to have the mountain completely mined for them.

To achieve faster results, a direct road was constructed all the way to the Majestic Empire in the south, beginning with the Cyclopunomin Bridge, continuing through the wilderness until crossing the Triax and the Cyclopunomin Range, and finally stopping at Mairsol, the capitol city of the Majestic Empire. Sadly, the Bridge is all that visibly remains of this road today.

The marble mountain was eventually mined flat, and the Cyclopunomin called in their dwarven pupils to assess the properties of what remained behind. The dwarves found the land below to be solid and sound, with the only flaw being a rift in the plates some 300 miles to the west. Dwarves claimed this land for a short time, only to move on when the surface was engineered back to a green environment. Later, these clans of Dwarves would return to create the underground dungeon known as Thokmolin. In the mean time, the small plot of grassy plains that was once a white mountain grew unnoticed.

Age of Myth: The lands lay undisturbed, until a lost Hourani wearily crossed the Cyclopunomin Bridge to find a grassy plain in the middle of nowhere. This Hourani was the last of a squadron of Knights that had fought off Ogre invasions in the north on an annual basis, recently spared of the massacre of his companions by having discovered a powerful sword named Jeremiah. Jeremiah led the Knight to the location of the former marble mountain and prophesied that, although the Knight would never see the development in his lifetime, the Knight's offspring would bring ancient Roin Does to its fruition as a cultural epicenter.

Christopher Driskel returned to the human lands of the south and lasted through many hard days in battle with the last of the rebel Ogres still wandering the wilderness around Castle Aprast, the station of the Holy Army of the Fidei Draconus. His family grew to include two sons, one of which would inherit the now-forgotten lands of the northeast. This boy was Connor Driskel, and he worked hard to become a Paladin worthy of the Driskel name.

Unfortunately, in his travels and skirmishes, Connor made an enemy of Paul Syn, of the infamous Syn family of Mulgra. Connor had no idea the Mulgrayne was not just a family thief or assassin when he first slew him, but actually a vampire of awakening power. Not actually dead, Paul vowed revenge on the Paladin and eventually murdered everyone in the entire Driskel clan—including Christopher—except for Connor himself. The young Paladin found himself in charge of his

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family's land and bearing his father's sword and armor. He defended the south until the final Ogre invasions were too strong to withstand, then fled north with more than 1000 people to the plot of land his father had told him about as a child. Claiming the small plains as his birthright, Connor granted each and every person the right to own whatever land they tilled, and thus was the city of Cortez born, just as Jeremiah the sword had prophesied.

Cortez was first a land of free men and women and later became a safe haven for Hourani to act and speak freely, without fear of injustice under Neuonian law. Diggers from Cortez also rediscovered the original dwarven settlement down below, which had been infiltrated by the deepest demons of UnderWorld. Thokmolin was the first true test of the people, and the threat was not overcome before a rift in the plates caused an 80' shift in elevation between the north and south sides of the ravine (as, at this time, the ravine ran in a different direction).

During this time, Cortez also became the center for the Fidei Draconus religion. The Holy Army of Dragonfay trained here, as well as the Army of Nobility (both consisting 90% of Hourani). Cortez was a proud city of warriors and a strong religious center for Dragonfay worshipers, surviving quite well throughout the Unholy Ages and losing only a small percentage of its population to ravaging grobber and beasts. Oddly, Cortez' strong defensive position was not utilized to record the events of the Unholy Ages, and the people merely waited in paranoia as grobber dug themselves in for the long haul. Due to the inaction of Cortez, the land lay in a stalemate, waiting for light to return.

Age of Discovery: The stalemate broke with news from the city-state of Calcassee, as people came in boats and ships formerly meant for ocean travel. These ships had been drydocked from the shifting continents during the Unholy Ages, only to be released centuries later into the Great River that now flowed consistently from the falls of Calcassee down through the rest of the city-states. Great ships of travel and storage from Calcassee were unheard of before this. With these ships came the ores sorely needed by the Hourani to recoup their losses over the centuries, and Cortez was able to offer in return many fine goods that could not be found elsewhere.

Up to 462 AD, trade flourished and the people repaired the lands. They established laws currently in effect, increased their army's numbers, and began to burn the grobber from their various holes and crevices.

On the first day of spring in 462 AD, however, the Dragons came, and in great enough numbers to burn the forests away, to locate the object of their search--

supposedly a wise Hourani named Josh. Such sages had been said to live in the woods for centuries--nothing extraordinary, as Hourani normally lived for over 600 years anyway--and the name of Josh had been part of legend since the Age of Myth. But Josh was never located, and the Dragons continued to squat on the lands, burning forests through the year 512 AD, until the birth of a woman named Julianne struck fear in the great lizards' bellies.

Julianne was a stunning example of strength to the people of Cortez at an early age, when at age 6 she bested the court adviser in a logic contest. At age 12, she outpaced Illiomis runners; at age 15, she won the Army of Nobility's archery tournament at 15; and at age 17 she successfully prosecuted a Porter Thief Lord. By the time she became a ruling member of the Wizard's Council, she had led a team of mages to successfully defeat a young adult Dragon by the name of Flare, and by age 45, Julianne had successfully led fifteen missions of Hourani from all Houses to defeat the Dragons plaguing the land.

Unfortunately, Julianne's luck finally ran out, when she faced the father of all Dragons and lost. Although she died in 549 AD, her actions and words rippled throughout the Hourani culture, and the few female Hourani in existence began to band together for survival. Julianne had been one of the first female Hourani ever born since the race itself began over 1200 years ago, and although history did not record her as being Hourani, the women of House Raidir knew the truth and considered her the example for how they ought to live.

Carrying on Julianne's task was her sister Sharon, who organized and led a trek (along with prominent members of House Groam) in 609 AD, searching for the Dragon who had killed her sister. The group disappeared into the north and was not seen until only recently, in the year 1000 AD. While Sharon was absent, the city-state of Cortez protested the actions of these women, and Hourani buried any rumors stating that the females were anything other than Neuonian in origin. Thus, oppressed by the male Hourani, House Raidir went underground and began to grow and strengthen--ironically, just as the males had been forced to do 1200 years previously, among the humans of the south and Neuonians of the city-states.

Today, the city of Cortez has all but forgotten the women who made such marks, and the names of Julianne and Sharon are recounted only in lost fairy tales, describing girls who lost their way in the northern forests and were eaten by Dragons. However, the politics of House Raidir are bringing them dangerously close to publicly revealing themselves.

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Points of interests

Aqueducts: These ancient ducts are believed to be at least as old as the Cyclopunomin Bridge and are still used to carry vast quantities of water into the city and surrounding lands. Smaller versions of the aqueducts can be found through out the city-states of Neuron.

Cyclopunomin Bridge: This huge stone bridge has been standing over the Great River for as long as Hourani can remember, and not even House Wayne knows exactly how old it is. The bridge is tall enough to allow four war galleys to pass under it at once, and also marks the western entrance to the city-state.

Great Bazaar: This marketplace is indeed unique, not only in its construction but in the items sold and those who visit. The Bazaar itself is the foundation of an arena planned by the Western Empire but not allowed to be finished by the city of Cortez. The surrounding walls are 4-5' high, from which spring the tall poles from which the sole large tent overshadowing the Bazaar is fastened. Under the large canvas, hundreds of vendors set up their stands and sell or trade their wares. Almost any item within Hourani culture can be found there, as well as some items from other cultures. Items sold here will be of Style 3 or lower. House Porter considers the Bazaar a chance to practice their trade in front of the Cortez police force and not get caught, but many thieves have still been dragged from here to view the inside of a dungeon cell.

Great Trees: Many Hourani live out their long lives without seeing the towering oaks enclosing the entire city-state of Cortez. These awesome trees stand 3-5 rows thick and are spaced so close together that intruders cannot pass between them. All stand at least 100' high, while some are even taller.

Lars' Shop of Alchemy: This magnificent building was built in the year 2242 AM by the white Wolfihn known as Lars (or "Father Calico," to some). The shop was constructed by Thokmolin dwarves and is as sturdy and solid as Cortez Castle. It measures about 40' wide, 80' long, and is three stories high (each story being 16' high). The first floor is open for the public to see and hear the life story of Lars--one of NeverWorld's most famous adventurers. House Wayne has researched the facts from their ancient library, and some of House Illiomis' most skilled performers reenact some of Lars' most famous exploits.

Nobility Row: This lane houses the rich and noble Hourani of Cortez, from the Duke down to several Counts and a few military leaders. Each house stands a full three-stories high and is built to be defended. First floors are windowless, with only one heavy door

for access. Second floors have small barred windows and arrow slits and extend out over the first-floor entrance. Third floors have full-sized windows and a balcony and are the floors where the nobles actually live. Each house is strategically located to allow bowmen full fields of fire in each direction.

The White Tree: In the middle of the plaza under the Castle's southern shadow springs a magnificent tree, continually in bloom and bearing silver fruit. The White Tree shines with its own radiance, inspiring all who come to see it, and is a symbol of Cortez' unity with the land and the purity they share. The tree is always under watch by the Ivory Guard, an elite group of fighters from Cortez, and they will not hesitate to destroy any who threaten it. The fruit of the White Tree has brought many mysterious miracles to people who lucky enough to receive fruit as it falls from the branches, and only faithful pilgrims have a chance to receive these gifts, as fruit plucked from the branches themselves spoils in seconds.

Yellow Bark: This group of great trees is located in a small forest in the northwest section of Cortez and used to be the home of a family of elves. Some rumor that elves still haunt the forest, to keep out intruders, to protect the many elven tools and devices no doubt hidden there.

Harndin "Blood City", "Port City"

On the coast of the Blue Sea lies the largest port city in the city-states. From the huge ship-building yards to the River fortress to the market district, Harndin is by far the most populated and the wealthiest--the jewel in the crown of the City-States of Neuron. Harndin is where other cultures meet and trade, and it is no doubt from this port that brave adventures will sail off to the horizons, to face and conquer the unknown.

Facts

Population: Hourani (200,000), Neuronians (2,000,000)

Location: Harndin is about 450 miles east of Per-Saal, about 1200 miles southeast of Jondric by river, and about 1400 miles southeast of LeGonne by land.

Climate: Harndin's winters are mild, with very little snowfall and a great deal of rain. Summers are usually long and mild, with gentle breezes blowing in from the

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sea. Fall is very brief, as the temperature barely changes, and spring remains short and wet as the flooding from the north swells the rivers and finally reaches the sea. Annual precipitation is about 39" (4" snow, 35" rain).

Togography: The gentle rolling hills of the riverbank tower above the Great River itself, while small forests and heavy brush spread lazily to the water's edge. Most of the land to the west is very flat and good for agriculture and cattle-grazing.

Divisions: Harndin is divided by the three branches of the Great River. The westernmost branch of the river is known as the Tribunal, and located on the bank of this branch is the fishing industry and the city's residential section. The centermost branch of the Great River is known as the Imperial branch, and on both sides of this wide river stand the towering river fortresses guarding Harndin from any water-borne invasion and protecting the noble families. Also on these two fortified islands are the Duke's chambers and the Hourani Embassy. The House of Groam tower also rises above the Imperial branch. The easternmost branch is known as the Executive branch, and its banks hold the huge ship-building yards and lumber mills that produce the finest ships in the City-States of Neuon.

Government: James Wellington XXVI is the current Duke of Harndin. Although quiet in nature, he still possesses some backbone when necessary. Still, he lets the unions and guilds influence many of his policies. Although his wife's current location is unknown to the public, Wellington has two sons and one daughter--with the oldest son (James XXVII) next in line to be Duke.

Laws: Hourani and Neuonians follow the same laws, some of which are listed here.

- ✧ **Infractions:** Entering Harndin without a proper permit, stealing food, performing cantrips and stage magic without a permit, dumping waste into the river, not using the proper guild to unload the proper ships, building a ship without a permit
- ✧ **Misdemeanors:** Prostitution, assaulting commoners, breaking and entering common buildings, fencing, slandering, racketeering, magical malpractice not damaging persons or property, stealing common goods if goods are recovered, docking at the wrong dock, taking longer than the allotted time to unload a ship, unauthorized cutting of hardwood trees
- ✧ **Felonies:** Murder, rape, extortion, stealing from nobility, stealing from commoners if goods are not recovered, assaulting nobility, embezzling, slavery, torturing, magical malpractice where

property, persons, or state security is jeopardized, espionage, tax evasion, kidnapping, mutiny, pirateering

Institutions: House of Feznorth, Hourani Embassy, Ship Yards of Neuon Trade Building, House of Groam Tower, UEV Naval Academy.

Resources: The primary income for Harndin is ship building and fishing in the Blue Sea. They have a limited lumber harvest each year, and the agriculture yields enough to feed only half the population. About 60% of the citizens either work on or build boats, while the remaining people work the fields or harvest lumber or serve in the military.

Taxes: Standard annual tax is 20% of all annual income, and those who build a new ship over 30' long must pay 10% of the building cost as a "right-to-build" tax.

Hazards: The most feared hazard in Harndin is, surprisingly, the Hourani bloodlust. Minor hazards include flooding, high tide, low tides, and an occasional hurricane. The House of Porter does maintain some influence over Harndin, however, and the city's crime rate is higher than all other city-states except Calcassee. Travelling after nightfall without an escort is quite dangerous and actually considered foolhardy.

Magic: Magic use is controlled by permits given by the House of Groam Embassy. Permit must be acquired both to use and experiment with magic, and each permit lists the spells known by the permit holder. Using any spell not listed on the permit is considered a crime (see the earlier Law section). Only law-enforcement personnel and those deputized by a sheriff can use offensive magic, although in times of war, spellcasters will be given permission to use offensive magic in defense of Harndin.

Military/Defenses: The majority of the military is comprised of the United Eastern Voyagers, who ride the rivers in search of pirates and outlaws. They also patrol the Blue Sea and help guard the river entrances, acting as river police and checking cargo on all incoming boats. The UEV numbers about 45 ships and 11,500 men.

The Army of the city-states (ACS) mans the river defenses and works as a police force as well, numbering around 10,000. In times of war, the Council can activate about 200,000 militia. In addition, the Hourani Embassy houses 110 troops from Cortez to defend it: 60 warriors, 20 long bowmen, 10 destriers, 9 sergeants, 1 master sergeant, 5 knights, 4 lieutenants and 1 captain. Thirty-four sheriffs--each with 2 deputies--patrol Harndin.

Chapter Five



Each of the bridges connecting the islands to the main land is a defensive structure as well as a means of transportation.

Political intrigue: Some nobles say that Lord Porter is really running Harndin, and rumors suggest that the ship builders are going to strike unless the building tax is lowered. An extortion ring currently works the middle-class businesses, and the city law-enforcement agents have not been able to track it down, leading to rumors that those investigating the crimes have been "bought off". The Duke's wife Melissa has been missing from public view for awhile, and some suggest she has run off either with another Hourani to Jondric or is dallying with the Lord Porter himself.

Travel access: The easiest way to reach Harndin is by the Great River, although those coming from Per-Saal can take the Kahlil Highway. The huge river fortresses that guard the rivers at the Blue Sea keep out any unwanted guests.

History

Age of Creation: During the end of the Age that Killed Innocence, a small group of humans migrated north to escape the restrictive laws of their kingdom, desiring to follow their own wills and do as they pleased. These settlers eventually filled every defensible inlet or river mouth on the continent's eastern side, where fresh water met the cold sea. Many succumbed to battles against goblin and dwarf and elf mercenaries, as well as disease, and their corpses were buried in the forests and along the shores.

Those that survived, however, found shelter in a small community overlooking the gigantic delta of Har-nnn, so named after the Cyclops word for "dragon-bane". Cyclops revered this area and named it such because Har-nnn was where where many of the Dragon Prime and their minions had fought in mass with the Cyclopunomin and lost. When the humans settled the area--over 700 years later--the slang of the last cyclops travelers stuck with the place, and they named the town "Harndin," literally translating into "quickly ending danger". Over time, this word has now come to mean "sanctuary".

The last of the Cyclopunomins had stayed long enough to help build the fortifications now holding Harndin against the approaching tides. The base of the city originally was threatened by floods of all kinds, and a dike was erected to prevent this. This great construction brought many of the nearby settlements together in an agreement that would trade land and fishing rights for their investments in the laborious

seawalls. These humans had formed their first civilized station away from the southern kingdom, and began to make the rules again. Of course, their most basic premise was that no longer would any man, woman, or child feel the threat of society's cast: all people were equal. What they did not understand at the time was that "people" would eventually have to encompass more than just humans.

Age of Myth: With the sea held at bay and the farmsteads flourishing, the humans learned to live at peace with their countryside. Fur trading, fishing, and logging became productive, which eventually led to grain farming, basic crafted goods, and weaponsmithing. As with any new society, Harndin suffered the wrath of the war-like Orcs, Ogres, and their fiendish Goblin infiltrators but survived and learned from them as well. Battlements were built, castles and strongholds were fortified, ships were converted as war vessels to travel the waterways and destroy enemies. The people had an eager fire in their bellies to defend the land that took so much effort and time to tame.

In the 3rd century, people dealt with a new dispute. From the north had arrived trading vessels called "Rurs" the size of cities, carrying Wolfihn as large as two or three men and great treasures as well: cattle, tools, grains, specialized woods, and treasure maps to more places than humans had ever heard of. All of this was considered good, and the Harndin leaders saw no problems until culture clash occurred. Joos-Owoon, a Wolfihn marinade that could turn fish into red meat, interacted poorly with the human digestion tract and caused death in most cases. The distrust and fear resulting from Joos-Owoon and the following misunderstanding resulted in the Wolfihn being driven from Harndid. Sadly, when the Wolfihn left, all of Harndin's best laborers and shippers went with them.

In the 7-12th centuries, rumors of "True Magic" began to circulate, bringing many adventurers, questing knights, wizards, and wealthy or noble travelers to locate the one book that held True Magic. Some called this book the Arcanium, while others said they were looking for the Book of Saelex. While neither book was found, the inflow of new peoples required the establishment of a set of rules that later became the laws of magic within the city-states. Many areas of Harndin were used as hideaways during this time, and illusions were common, simply for protection. By the 13th century, the Churches began their crusades.

The Church of Morning Light sought to control Harndin by enforcing magic laws on their own initiative. Many priests and priestesses began preaching the evil natures of spellcasting, resulting in roster drops at the Wizard's College and overflowing admissions to the

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acolyte pool at the Church. The Church's hatred of magic--to the extent of not allowing magic to be cast in their presence--finally transferred onto the Duke.

Until the 18th century, when the refugees of the Ogre invasion arrived, the church continued to build its foothold in the community, and at this time the doctrine of Morning Light (espousing innocence) was part of everyone's daily dialogue. New refugees from the south found this hard to accept, and divisions formed between believers who wanted to help these new people and those who despised their worldly ways. The aura around Harndid was thus very tense, and an invasion of bloodthirsty Hourani didn't improve matters.

From 2238 AM until the end of that Age, humans locked themselves into their settlements and homes in hopes of avoiding Hourani from Houses Porter and Rosenthal. During the first year, over 10% of the human population was killed by such Hourani, and the Duke himself was overwhelmed by a mysterious fear paralyzing all city defenses except those of the United Eastern Voyagers. The ships of the UEV were led by Admiral Child to blockade the river mouth and stop trade with Cortez (where humans believed the capital city and origin of the Hourani existed). Naval battles ensued with mercenary frigates of Cortez, Neuonians and Hourani continued to die, Rosenthal members sacrificed many enemies in the open city streets--and all while the Church of Morning Light preached to humans that Iedras would bless them with protection for their continued innocence.

If not for the influence of Cortez' Army of Nobility and a Wolfihn priest of the Dragonfay, the city would have died at the hands of the Porters and Rosenthals. Eventually, Duke Wellington I was revealed to be mentally manipulated by Porter Aorik himself, and the two evil Houses were shown to not be indicative of general Hourani culture. In the short following years, many Hourani established simple trust again, but a true absolving for Hourani as a culture was never reached before the Unholy Ages.

Age of Discovery: The Unholy Ages weeded out many of the weak, and the surviving Neuonians and Hourani--driven by human heritage and Hourani code--bonded together to repel the goblin aerial attacks and the Molru'K water assaults. Faced with so many new enemies, the Harndid citizens broke the hold of the Church of Morning Light and searched for new ways--any ways--to protect themselves. Magic once again became popular among many survivors, giving power to the common man. Hourani remained unabsolved of their past evil in the state's eyes but had gained trust

with the common Neuonian as they both fought their common enemies.

With the dawning of the Age of Discovery, the Hourani joined forces with many scholastic, political, and mystical people of Neuonian culture, keeping them at the high end of the social spectrum and allowing uninhibited movement into leadership positions and wealthy businesses, farmsteads, and elegant homes. Hourani became family "uncles" to generations of Neuonian families, as they lived six times longer than the average human, and with every fresh generation, more and more trust was able to develop. The philosophies of the two cultures eventually intertwined. With ideas being shared and knowledge expanded, the fragile ego of the Church of Morning Light was pierced by the new religion shared in common by the two cultures. The Church of Fidei Draconus built new temple upon temple, squeezing the Morning Light into a tightly woven corner.

Now, with their hold broken over Harndin, the Church of Morning Light has begun to crusade into wild territories and unexplored seas. Any brave soul can attempt their impossible quests, and they will outfit such adventurers with the best in tools, weapons, people, animals, and ships. The only prerequisite to the challenge is that the pioneer must be baptized into the church and swear upon his faith that he will bring innocence to others.

Points of interest

Citizen Graveyard: This area serves as a grim reminder of the "Bloodlust Massacre" that took the lives of thousands back in the Age of Myth. It was here that the bodies of the slain were buried in a deep mass grave. Today a brass monument stands a silent vigil over the remains of those who perished.

Frostmans Canal: This man-made canal is the only one of its type in the City-States of Neuon, designed and constructed in the year 350 AD. William J. Frostman, the current guild master of the United Lumbering Guild, devised a way to use water power to turn the huge cutting devices at the mill. The only problem remained how to get water in mass volume at the mill. Frostman had a 50' deep, 100' wide, 17-mile stone-lined canal built to channel and control the speed of water to the mill, through a series of gates and valves. This canal is in perfect condition and still used today, despite its great age.

The UEV shipyards: These shipyards are the largest in the city-states and are where the huge war galleys are created. They also make the smaller and faster



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schooners that ride the great river looking for pirates and bandits. Over 2500 men work in the shipyards, and four ships can be constructed at the same time.

Jondric "Porterville"

A vast network of waterways make Jondric a maze of strife and trouble for those who do not know their way. Ever-vigilant lighthouses stand like silent sentinels over the harbor and guard the city from hostile intentions. Jondric is a never-sleeping city where danger and death wait around the next corner, and political plots and assassinations are an everyday occurrence. The citizens of this city are crafty and strong and find themselves living from day to day. Still, Jondric holds a veritable king's ransom for any daring and hardy enough to overcome the risks.

Facts

Population: Hourani (500,000), Neuonians (1,500,00)

Location: Jondric is about 325 miles south west of LeGonne and about 1200 miles north west of Harndin by river. The city of Per-Saal is about 900 miles south east by land.

Climate: Mild winters occur, with minimal snowfall and much rain, while summers are long and hot with much humidity. The fall and spring are both short, with fall being mostly damp and foggy and spring being rainy and damp. Annual precipitation is about 52" inches (12" snow, 40" rain).

Topography: Jondric lies in the middle of a low basin surrounded by low rolling hills, with scattered groups of small trees and heavy brush. The area is covered with rock outcroppings and as such is very poor for agricultural purposes. Small ponds and lakes dot the city-state, while the southern portion is a vast wetlands and at places uninhabitable.

Divisions: The city is divided by the five waterways meeting the Great River and forming the Cyclopinomin Lake. The entire city is built on stilts and sits above the water, and most of the lake front is occupied by warehouses and docks. Residential areas are located between the rivers, while the government buildings are located on Center Island.

Government: Duke George Gedafenlic XVI is a strong and passionate leader, who hates House of Porter and

all the havoc they've caused within his city-state. Because his life is constantly threatened, he rarely makes public appearances. Because the matter is close to his heart, Duke Gedafenlic fights hard to control disease within Jondric and personally funds the Institute of Disease Research; his wife Emily died from scarlet fever, and both his sons also perished in the last black fever plague. Next in line to be Duke is thought to be Duke Gedafenlic's nephew, currently Harbor Master Morgen.

Institutions: Harbor Masters Headquarters, Hourani Embassy, Academy of Constellations & Navigational Learning, Institution of Disease Research

Laws: Hourani and Neuonians follow the same laws, some of which are listed here. More can be added, as per GM's Creation.

☞ **Infractions:** Entering Jondric without a proper permit, stealing food, performing cantrips and stage magic without a permit, having a pet water rat, having an expired small watercraft permit.

☞ **Misdemeanors:** Prostitution, assaulting commoners, breaking and entering a common building, fencing, slander, racketeering, magic malpractice where no persons or properties are damaged, stealing common goods if goods are recovered, selling water rat meat for consumption, having an expired medium watercraft permit, dumping waste in the water, leading a craft through the harbor without charging proper fare, killing a cat within city limits

☞ **Felonies:** Murder, rape, extortion, stealing from nobility, stealing from commoners if goods aren't recovered, assaulting nobility, embezzling, slavery, torturing, magical malpractice where property, persons, or state security is jeopardized, espionage, tax evasion, kidnapping, damaging or stealing a boat, having an expired large water craft permit, mutiny, and piracy

Resources: Jondric's primary income is the harbor itself. Any water craft entering or leaving must pay a fee: large vessels, 1 gold to enter or leave; medium vessels, 40 silver to enter and 20 silver to leave; and small vessels, 10 silver to trek through the harbor. Any war vessels (UEV) must be boarded and inspected and are charged 10 silver per man on board. Besides the harbor income, the southern portion of the city-state is well-suited for growing rice and sugar cane--the only crops grown in Jondric. Jondric imports a majority of its agricultural and steel products. About 50% of the population works on the loading docks or on local ships for harbor use, while the remaining populace works in the fields or runs small city businesses.

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Taxes: Standard taxes amount to about 23% of reported annual income. Dock owners pay an additional tax--usually 10% of gross annual income.

Hazards: The most common hazard in Jondric is flooding. When the snow melts in the north, all the rivers flood, raising the water level so high that almost every building has at least one story under water for a month. After this comes the high crime rate, with the black market always lurking around every corner. Disease and plague are common in Jondric, as the waterways provide an excellent avenue for both waste and water rats. Water rats are about 18" long, weigh close to 3 pounds, and carry many forms of disease. Jondric has suffered from two scarlet fever plagues and one black fever plagues in the last 200 years; thousands died (including members of the Duke's family), and tens of thousands were scarred for life.

Magic: As elsewhere, magic use is controlled by permits, given at the Harbor Master's Headquarters. A permit is necessary to both use and experiment with magic, and each permit lists the spells known by the permit holder. Any spell used and not listed on the permit constitutes a crime (see Laws for more details). Only law enforcement personnel and those deputized by a sheriff can use offensive magic, although in times of war, spellcasters are given permission to use offensive spells to defend Jondric.

Military/Defenses: Jondric's military is divided into four sections, each fulfilling a certain role. The Harbor Guards man the lighthouses and patrol the rivers and harbor in small fast boats, as they are responsible for policing the harbor and defending it during war. They number 5000 strong and are controlled by the Harbor Master. The ACS (Army of the city-states) mans the castles surrounding the basin in which Jondric sits, numbering about 10,000 strong and being responsible for the city's safety should a land invasion be attempted. The ACS also acts as a police force and keeps the city in order. The third military force is a UEV barracks that houses enough crew to man two large war galleys and six smaller war sloops--around 1500 sailors and corresponding administration. Finally, the Hourani Embassy houses 110 Cortez troops for personal protection: 60 warriors, 20 long bowmen, 10 destriers, 9 sergeants, 1 master sergeant, 5 knights, 4 lieutenants, and 1 captain. Jondric is also patrolled by 30 sheriff, each with 2 deputies, and the Council can activate 150,000 militia during wartime.

Political intrigue: Rumors say that the headquarters of House Porter are located here in Jondric, suggesting that these evil Hourani have infected the water rats in order to keep the city in a permanent state of chaos.

Recent word states that the most vicious Porter assassin is currently in town, and some nobles have fled the city in fear of losing their lives, although the Duke has ignored any such rumors about his own impending demise. A different rumor suggests that a Hourani Solaris priest is this assassin's intended target.

Travel access: The easiest and safest route to Jondric is by river. A riverside trail also runs southeast to Harndin, dotted with several small shelters. The Douglas Highway runs from Jondric north to LeGonne and is used by merchants travelling in large caravans for protection.

History

Age of Creation: The oldest tales of Jondric refer to it as a camp for Cyclopunomin during their treks through the wild, vast lands now known as Neuon, although the fact that this occurred some 30,000 years ago makes things uncertain. Legend has it that the Cyclopunomin created the lake that Jondric crowns, in order for them to bathe after a long day's trek, churning the bedrock bottom with their gigantic tools and creating the sandy cover that exists today.

Age of Myth: Jondric played an important part in the trade route between Cortez and the rest of the known world. Many sea travelers found themselves paying extra taxes or tariffs when travelling to or from Cortez. Jondric marked the battle between pirate vessels commanded by Captain Fyr of Cortez (appointed by Duke Angelic in hasty times) and Captain Edmunds of the UEV of Harndin and the other city-states. The harbor of Jondric suffered heavily from the wreckage left behind, and it took years before her waterways were passable again.

Jondric became known as the "haven" for Hourani exiled from all other Houses and eventually was filled with the dregs of Hourani society. This made the city dangerous to live in until the Paladins of Lagrimon arrived and cleaned up the town, arresting many of the wizards casting "illegal" spells. Valley elves who worked for the last Amaranthian, the Paladins hunted the rebel wizards so thoroughly that much of the city ended up in magically damaged ruins.

Points of interest

Centaur Lanes: In the city's north and central area is a public plaza containing a fountain surrounded by a mosaic of different colored cobblestones. Carved from granite, the fountain resembles a Bullmihn, although

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Neuronians call it a "Centaur". Five other Bullmihn statues reside in a frozen gallop around the plaza's oval, as if in a race. These mystical statues are supposedly good luck to sit upon. A few people have found actual horseshoes buried in the plaza's cracks, but everyone believes them to be placed there as practical jokes.

The Grim Eye of Jondric: Fabled to be the actual size of a Cyclopunomin's eye, this stone relief carved into the south side of the Northern Lighthouse overlooks the entire harbor from 220 feet above water level. The eye is over 4' tall, with a pupil made of amethyst, and during the night, a portion of the lighthouse's beacon is redirected out through this pupil as the light sweeps past it. The amethyst is rumored to be worth 50,000 gold to whomever steals it and brings it to the House of Porter. The Eye also carries an enchantment that makes it shine directly upon any ship coming into the harbor with intentions to attack the city.

Lighthouses of Jondric: These five-story cylindrical building are located around the harbor and the incoming rivers to help ships navigate. Outfitted with huge catapults and ballistas, they are also used in defense of harbor and city. Each lighthouse is manned by 40 Harbor Guards.

Pike-bottom Harbor: In the silt of the bay lays the half-buried and gutted shells of iron-bound warships-remnants of the UEV's battle with pirate vessels of Cortez during the Age of Myth blockade. These ruins make the harbor treacherous to navigate, adding difficulty to such attempts. Jondric is trying to raise enough money to pay for excavation, but such funds are slow in coming.

Season of the Cat: Every spring, a collection of domestic cats outnumbers the population of the city by 2:1. No one knows why they come at this same date every year, but they remain for up to 3 weeks and kill more than their numbers in water rats. Some sages at the Institute of Disease Research are examining tissues from these hardy felines in order to one day perhaps create immunities to diseases carried by the rats.

Vampire's Cult: Rumored to be somewhere in Jondric is a safehouse for bloodthirsty Hourani needing a place to hide. Those who pay the fee can hide indefinitely, with room and board provided.

LeGlasse "Ironsides"

Within the massive iron walls protecting this ancient city lies the most beautiful and elegant community in Neuron. Tall towers and buildings of all sizes are crafted out of solid bedrock and inlaid with blue quartz, while stained-glass windows and elaborate tapestries decorate every home. Yet, for all of its beauty, LeGlasse (*lay-GLAH-say*) is still fraught with peril. Every year, citizens must endure countless raids from grobber and bandits, providing a setting where fighters become warriors and mages learn what real power consists of.

Facts

Population: Hourani (40,000), Neuronians (1,500,000)

Location: Cortez is located about 1100 miles north of the city and LeGonne lies about 400 miles southwest of LeGlasse.

Climate: Mild winters occur, with moderate snowfall and much rain. Summers are usually long and mild, with gentle breezes blowing off the rivers. Fall is very brief, as there is not much change in temperature, and spring is short and wet as the rivers swell from the northern floods. Annual precipitation is about 47" (12" snow, 35" rain).

Togography: LeGlasse is wedged between the Great River and the Eastfork River on a flat bench of bedrock with rich topsoil. The area is covered with small shrubs and an occasional pine forest. On the city's eastern edge roll gentle hills, sometimes becoming boulder-strewn, with small crevices and tiny caves.

Divisions: LeGlasse is broken down into three sections. The walled city is where government buildings, food warehouses, and nobility homes are located. Within this part of the city are multiple steel walls isolating it into defensible sectors. The section north of the walled city is known as the Upper City and is where grains and corn are grown. Orchards and other types of crops can also be found here, and most citizens who work the fields live in the Upper City due to it being a bit safer. The section south of the walled city and across the Eastfork River is known as Lower City, and it is here where most of the blue quartz decorating LeGlasse is found and shaped into the desired forms. Also located here are foundries and the mills producing the metal used in the defense of the walled city.

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Most citizens who work in the mills and foundries live in the Lower City.

Government: Although a good-natured ruler, Duke Richard Isernbyrne IV fears to make mistakes and often hesitates when important decisions must be made. He is currently trying to raise an army of mercenaries to send into the eastern section of the city-state--to destroy the grobber once and for all--but he insists that all specific military strategy be determined by his commanders rather than by him. His one son, also named Richard, is next in line to be Duke.

Laws: Hourani and Neunionians follow the same laws, some of which are listed here.

- ☞ *Infractions:* Entering the city-state without a proper permit, stealing food, performing cantrips and stage magic without a permit, not killing grobber when able
- ☞ *Misdemeanors:* Prostitution, assaulting commoners, breaking and entering common buildings, fencing, slander, racketeering, magical malpractice where no persons or properties are damaged, stealing common goods if goods are recovered, taking a grobber prisoner instead of killing it
- ☞ *Felonies:* Murder, rape, extortion, stealing from nobility, stealing from commoners if goods are not recovered, assaulting nobility, embezzling, slavery, torturing, magical malpractice where properties, persons, or state security is jeopardized, espionage, tax evasion, kidnapping, aiding or helping grobber or Trols in any way

Institutions: Council of War Wizards, Hourani Embassy, MARC (Mercenary Army Reserve Corp), Headquarters

Resources: Agriculture comprises 70% of LeGlassee's resources. Corn and many types of grain are grown in vast proportions and shipped to the other city-states for raw materials such as iron ore and wood. LeGlassee also mines coal from the eastern hills to feed the fires of the rolling mills. Tourists who travel up the river must pay for protection they receive when staying the night within the iron walls of the city--normally 15 silver pieces per person.

Taxes: Standard tax rate is 32% of annual reported income, although this goes even higher if mercenaries are needed to attack the grobber.

Hazards: Citizens of LeGlassee most commonly fear the constant raids by grobber--not just from direct attacks but also from disease. Still, grobber kill any living creature they can get their hands on, and anything that cannot be carried away will be burned. At least once

a year, a Trol will appear in the middle of the city itself and smash everything in sight. Some believe that the Trols come to eat the blue quartz, although fresh meat is not something to be shunned by them either.

Magic: As elsewhere, magic use is controlled by permits, given at the House of Groam's Embassy. A permit is necessary to both use and experiment with magic, and each permit lists the spells known by the permit holder. Any spell used and not listed on the permit constitutes a crime (see Laws for more details). Only law enforcement personnel and those deputized by a sheriff can use offensive magic, although in times of war, spellcasters are given permission to use offensive spells to defend LeGlassee.

Military/Defenses: The ACS (Army of the city-states) mans the city's iron walls, numbering about 15,000 strong and comprised mostly of veterans of countless grobber raids. These troops also act as the city's police force, and only the Duke himself can order these troops out of the city. The MARC numbers about 3000 mercenary warriors and are usually called when the grobber are about to raid, fighting them outside the city before they can damage the crops. The Council of War Wizards numbers 150 and is made of wizards specialized in slaying Trols. They also help guard the Gates of Purity and turn back any extremely nasty grobber raids. The Hourani Embassy has 110 Cortez troops for protection: 60 warriors, 20 longbowmen, 10 destriers, 9 sergeants, 1 master sergeant, 5 knights, 4 lieutenants, and 1 captain. In addition, 24 sheriffs--each with 6 deputies--patrol the city, and the council can also activate 140,000 militia during wartime.

Political intrigue: The general populace of LeGlassee supports their Duke, but a few nobles who have lost great amounts of money to past grobber raids complain that the Duke is too soft on grobber and is getting rich off the heavy taxes used to protect the city. The Council of War Wizards has a great amount of influence with the Duke. Also, a secret group of enforcers is currently scouring the city, looking for members of the Fellowship of Humanity.

Travel access: The easiest way to reach LeGlassee's nearest neighbor, LeGonne, is by river or the Eastman Riverside Trail (which runs southwest). The most efficient way to get to Cortez is either by river or by the High Lord's Road. Caravans are commonly found on the Road, travelling together for safety.

The City-States of Neuon



History

The sister city of LeGonne, LeGlassee is known as the city of crystals, due to the indigenous, rare blue quartz crystal that can be found in the eddies of the Eastfork River, where it meets the Great River on the city-state's southern side. Although this blue quartz has no known inherent value for Neuonians, it is valued simply because LeGlassee owns the only known source. The Cyclopunomins were said to use the quartz for strange concoctions of power, giving them strength to move mountains and drag rivers into position. Their symbol--that of the single eye--can be found carved into many old ruins they left behind, and many Neuonians fear that mining too much quartz could upset and wake the Cyclopunomins as they slumber in unknown parts of NeverWorld. Even Dragons have hinted that the quartz is the property of these sleeping giants, although the words of Dragons are never transparent.

In 2244 AD, the city council began construction of the huge iron walls, as LeGlassee needed a way to protect its agricultural resources from the Western Empire and other dangers. Coal-mining picked up greatly, as the coal was needed for war purposes. The city of LeGlassee earned the name "Ironsides" after the completion of its first metal wall twenty-five years later. When the Neuon City-States went to war with the Western Empire in 2245, LeGlassee provided the ACS with huge amounts of coal and agriculture products and eventually became one of the hubs of industrial might.

When the Unholy Ages came around, LeGlassee was forever changed. The eastern hills and coal mines became the haven for hordes of grobber that nightly assaulted the city. Many citizens died, and the agricultural and coal industry came to a complete halt. Even to this date, grobber are still a problem.

Points of interest

Eastern Mine's Lost Artifacts: Back at the beginning of the current age, the reigning Duke outfitted an army with magic weapons and armor and sent them to slay grobber. The grobber force was so large and fierce, however, that the warrior army was finally slain, down to the last man. Three other armies were given the thankless task of retrieving the lost weapons and armor but were also soundly defeated. To this day, literally thousands of mercenaries and adventurers have been slain over the centuries trying to locate and retrieve the lost artifacts, and it is rumored that some of the grobber have even armed themselves with the gear.

Fellowship of Humanity: This group of healers sells their services through the black market to keep grobber disease from spreading. Returning mercenary armies have often been infected by their foes and are not permitted back into the city, so Fellowship members contact diseased mercs and heal them for whatever money or valuables he currently has with him. The Fellowship remains secret, to avoid being sent out on the front for active duty by the Duke. Their numbers are small enough that only about 45% of the infected soldiers ever get healed by them.

Gates of Purity: These huge gates are made of solid stone 4' thick and 30' high, plated with 1' of solid steel. These gates lead to a 300'-long tunnel guarded at its far end by 3 wizards and 10 men-at-arms. The wizards use their magic to scan all who pass through the tunnel, and those with disease magically begin to glow and are asked to leave the tunnel. Epidemics are taken very seriously by LeGlassee: any diseased persons who refuse to leave will be trapped between descending portcullises, then blasted into ashes by magical fire. One of these gates stands at each of the four major compass points into the city.

Iron Walls: The iron walls protecting the walled city are the strongest in the city-states, each being made from five 2'-thick steel sheets bonded together into one solid mass. The wall is 10'-20' thick and 60' high (with 20' being below the water line). These huge metal sheets are produced in the rolling mills of the lower city.

Shrine of the Blue Quartz Trol: In the center of the walled city is an open shrine with a dome ceiling, covering a 15'-tall statue of a Trol. Made of blue quartz, the statue is rumored to be a real Trol turned into rock by the city wizards, and can supposedly be returned to flesh and bone if the correct words are spoken. This shrine honors the brave warriors and wizards who perished while defending the city from Trols.

LeGonne "The Wheel" or "Haven"

Huge oak trees and vendor stands line the wide, shaded avenues leading into the city central of LeGonne (*lay-GOH-nay*). The buildings are low to the ground and made of elegant woods covered with intricate carving. Peaceful surroundings make this city the perfect place to raise a family or retire, and many a weary adventurer has come here to rest. The Church

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of Morning Light keeps the citizens content and relatively safe.

Facts

Population: Hourani (60,000), Neuonians (1,000,000)

Location: LeGonne lies about 400 miles southwest of LeGlasse and 325 miles northeast of Jondric.

Climate: Mild winters occur, with moderate snowfall and much rain. Summers are usually long and mild, with gentle breezes blowing in from the rivers. Fall is very brief, with little temperature change, while spring is short and wet due to rivers swollen by the northern floods. Annual precipitation is about 50" (8" snow, 42" rain).

Togography: LeGonne is wedged between the Great and Southbend rivers on a flat bench of bedrock with rich topsoil. The area is covered with small shrubs and an occasional pine forest. Vast grasslands stretch lazily into the eastern horizon.

Divisions: LeGonne is divided into sections much like that of a wagon wheel, with the hub acting as city center and the spokes acting as dividers between the lands of the eight Barons selected by and subservient to the Duke. Each divider is actually a wide avenue lined with many shops and retail stores, while the city's center holds the government buildings and the Duke's castle. The Shrine of the Anointed Knights is located across from the Uillis Training Dome, with Nimbus centered in the middle, while the Orb of the Cyclops is just north of Nimbus.

Government: Duke Michael Torrian is the first of his lineage to succeed to this position. He relies on his barons to handle most of the day-to-day events associated with running a city-state and generally does not overrule their decisions unless absolutely necessary. He is fair in his dealings and shows deep concern over his citizens--one avenue of this being the relief center for LeGlasse refugees he wants to create. The Duke is currently on good terms with all other Dukes in the City-States and he tries hard to keep these friendships active, which sometimes makes him seem too accommodating. His current marriage has produced twin sons Roger and Phillip, one of which will eventually succeed him.

Laws: Hourani and Neuonians follow the same laws, some of which are listed here. More can be added, per GM's Creation.

- ✶ **Infractions:** Entering the city-state without a proper permit, stealing food, performing cantrips and stage magic without a permit, carelessly using fire in the outer baronies, gambling without a permit
- ✶ **Misdemeanors:** Prostitution without a proper permit and clean bill of health, assaulting a commoner, breaking and entering a common building, fencing, slandering, racketeering, magical malpractice where no persons or properties are damaged, stealing common goods if goods are recovered, damaging another baron's crops
- ✶ **Felonies:** Murder, rape, extortion, stealing from nobility, stealing from commoners if goods are not recovered, assaulting nobility, embezzling, slavery, torture, magical malpractice where property, persons, or state security is jeopardized, espionage, tax evasion, kidnapping, starting a wildfire

Institutions: Hourani Embassy, Institute of Agricultural Research, Library of Demonology, Cathedral De Uillis, Sihm Family Haven

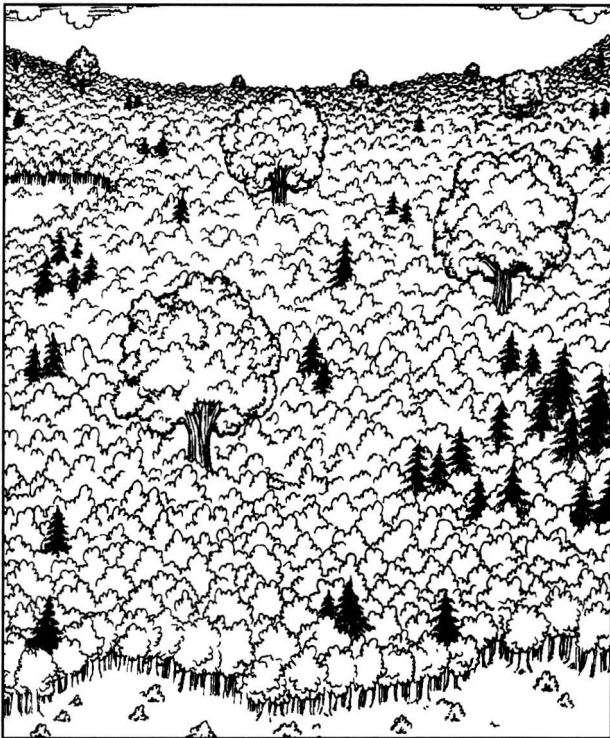
Resources: Agricultural products are the main incomes of the city-states, sold or traded to other cities for necessary goods. LeGonne has strong trade with Calcasse and with Jondric. LeGonne can grow some of the more exotic foods and crops, and 60% of the populace works in agriculture. The city also pulls a small profit from the gambling and prostitution at the Sihm Family Haven.

Taxes: Standard income tax is 20% of reported annual gross income, although in times of fire or other disasters the Duke will raise them to higher percentage (27% or whatever is needed).

Hazards: The most common LeGonne hazards are the wildfires that sweep in from the eastern grasslands, damaging crops and forests and--occasionally--the city itself. At least two or three such fires occur each summer. Flood waters in the spring are also a mild hazard but are mostly channeled into the irrigation ducts. (See Points of Interest.) A small amount of grobber has drifted south from LeGlasse, usually raiding the outer portions of the eastern baronies once a year. Finally, mercenaries from LeGlasse occasionally enter town bearing some disease, although this hazard is rare.

Magic: As elsewhere, magic use is controlled by permits, given at the House of Groam's Embassy. A permit is necessary to both use and experiment with magic, and each permit lists the spells known by the permit holder. Any spell used and not listed on the permit

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constitutes a crime (see Laws for more details). Only law enforcement personnel and those deputized by a sheriff can use offensive magic, although in times of war, spellcasters are given permission to use offensive spells to defend LeGonne.

Military/Defenses: Each Baron is responsible for defending his barony in time of war, as well as providing a police force inside that barony. The Duke requires that each barony maintain a minimum of 1000 warriors, although some barons have many more troops. Each barony contains a large main keep for the Baron to rule from, as well as several small keeps. The Duke himself has 2500 ACS soldiers at his disposal to defend the government buildings. The Hourani Embassy has 110 Cortez for protection: 60 warriors, 20 longbowmen, 10 destriers, 9 sergeants, 1 master sergeant, 5 knights, 4 lieutenants, and 1 captain. In addition, 17 sheriffs--each with 2 deputies--patrol LeGonne, and the Council can activate 40,000 militia during wartime.

Political intrigue: Many are the plots of evil minds, and LeGonne is no different. Rumors suggest that several barons plot to overthrow the Duke and appoint one of their own as leader. The Church of Morning Light is upset with the gambling and prostitution taking place in the Sihh Family Haven and are con-

stantly searching for ways to close down the establishment.

Travel access: The easiest way to get to or from LeGonne is by river. The Douglas Highway also runs south to Jondric, while the Eastman Riverside Trail runs north to LeGlasse.

History

LeGonne has long been the center of the Neunionian Pantheon of Iedras. Before becoming a "holy" center, however, LeGonne was home to necromancy and strange experiments. During the Age of Creation, no Cyclopunomin would stay in the area of LeGonne, naming it after their word "leigiounnes," which means "soft spot" and is transcribed in the books of Iedras as "rotten center". The Age of Creation brought with it many tragedies to match the city's legacies. This area was where Dragon Prime laid the bodies of the dead to rest, as well as where they butchered garnered meat into dinners for the other races. (For more information, see Chapter 5 in The Tome.) Dragon Prime were never concerned about the vast quantity of dead bodies laying about in the forests and fields, considering the area to simply their own private, covert waste pit.

In the Age of Myth, however, a whole millennium before Cortez was settled and Jondric's trade levels grew strong, the unattended and overgrown graveyard quickly became a weak spot in the membrane between UnderWorld and NeverWorld--an open invitation for Demons to "weave" into the physical plane. The "rotten center" became rotten indeed--full of the stench of brimstone and black ichor--and the Church of Morning Light sent their strongest knights to do battle with the demons and undead, armed with holy weapons, shields, armors, and devices. For 250 years, generations of humans brought their best skills and tools--fighting, winning, losing. The next line of heroes would search out the implements of the last, then don them in hopes of being the ones to vanquish LeGonne's evil inhabitants. Not until the Church of Morning Light established a holy ground in the area were the heroes even able to gain a foothold. The most renown knight of the battles there was Sir Patrick O' Brian, known to have slain a Dragon with his bare hands. O' Brian himself perished somewhere in the interdimensional graveyard, but not before closing the hole between NeverWorld and the UnderWorld and allowing LeGonne to finally prosper.

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Points of interest

Blessed Tribune of Osthis: This river once was able to revive any dead people within its waters if the will of Osthis and Iedras was called upon. The waterwar is wide, shallow, and warm, flowing from a clear hot spring from the east. Although its fabled powers do not currently exist, most citizens still attribute it some healing power.

Figure Forest: Only ten miles northeast of the city, this spot marks the beginning of the battlegrounds. Here can be found statue after statue of man and beast locked into eternal struggle--petrified bodies of priests, knights, and others who did not have enough faith to withstand the initial demonic attacks.

Nimbus: Over the city's center hangs an eternally dark rain cloud, from which lightning repeatedly strikes one of the petrified statues among the battlegrounds. This stoned knight is said to have killed two demons and then foolishly drunk their blood in triumph, bringing a curse upon his own head: to be eternally shocked by Nimbus, demon of the air. Rather than suffer pain for eternity, the knight drank the rest of the blood, permanently petrifying himself, yet Nimbus still remains, cursed to punish the knight for eternity. A grassy area of 100' radius lays around the statue, continuously pelted by rain no matter how much sun falls on the rest of the city.

Orb of the Cyclops: A mystical device planted in the city's center, the Orb causes nightmares for weeks in any mages who sees it. Some say that mages who stare into their orb are unable to use their powerbases for at least one month, although no mage would be foolhardy enough to reveal such to the general public.

Shock Warriors of Uillis Training Dome: The practices of the Knights of Uillis (Pantheon of Iedras) are still carried on here by a dwindling number of Neuonians and a handful of Hourani who believe the land will always carry the infection of evil. All Shock Warriors are eunuchs who train day and night, learning mythical styles in preparation for the Day of Sickening--a time when they believe the people's blind faith will lead them astray and darkness will once again try to take over LeGonne.

The Shrine of the Anointed Knight: This shrine is the faith-center of the LeGonne citizens, daily reminding them of how the Church and its knights fought and turned a "soft spot" into the major center of culture it is today. Many Hourani disdain the statue, as it credits a single hero as the savior of LeGonne, rather than all those who fought in the numerous battles. Neuonians, however, believe the image--supposedly that of Sir

Patrick O'Brien himself--to represent all the knights and priests who bravely died here.

Weirhammer's Glass Mill: Originally producing bottles daily to capture the essence of the Blessed Tribune during the Age of Myth, this building is now a museum to the history of LeGonne, as well as an apothecary. The museum is in the front part of the mill and displays technique for blowing glass, while the second floor holds the apothecary. The owner, Jillen Hartsdale, has the place heavily guarded both by magic and by huge wolves that are rare in the city-states.

Per-Saal "Domed City of Gold"

Welcome to Per-Saal (*par-SAWL*), the city of urban perfection! Thanks to the guidance of House Balentine, who have their base of operations here, everything from the structure of homes to the temperature of the city are specifically tailored to provide the ultimate in comfort and style. Being home to the only operating gold mine in the city-states, Per-Saal is one of the wealthiest provinces, second only to Harndin. But never forget that this veneer of perfection has been put into place by the machinations of the masters of metaphysics... and, thus, the mind.

Facts

Population: Hourani (1,500,000), Neuonians (120,000)

Location: Harndin is 450 miles east of Per-Saal and is connected by the Kahlil Highway. Jondric is located 700 miles northwest of Per-Saal.

Climate: Per-Saal's is indeed unique--a steady 68 degrees all year long. About 12" of rain falls a year, and no snow ever graces the city landscape. Gentle breezes continually blow through Per-Saal at a comfortable 8mph. These perfect weather conditions are allowed due to the atmospheric dome over the city. (For more details, see Points of Interests.)

Togography: Per-Saal lies in the middle of a very dry grasslands, and the majority of terrain is very flat and covered with thick grass.

Divisions: Per-Saal is divided into squares, each 796' on each side. Every block in the city is exactly the same size, and the streets running between them are 20' wide. Streets run from exact north to south, while avenues run from exact east to west. The entire

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city-state is inside the city boundaries, marked by the edges of the atmospheric dome. House Balentin controls a 10-block-square area in the city's center.

Government: Duke Mequin Balentin-Aorik II is also current House Lord of Balentin, and all of his actions are intensely loyal to his House. Hourani of Per-Saal support him infallibly and are loyal unto death, while Neunionians of Per-Saal follow his lead without question because they have no choice. In addition to totally commanding Per-Saal, Duke Mequin's lead is usually followed by the other city-state Dukes during joint councils. Duke Mequin has close ties with the Duke of Harndin and good working arrangements with the Duke of Jondric. He currently has three sons--Scott, Richard, and David--of whom Richard is presumed to be the successor, as the whereabouts of Scott and David are unknown.

Laws: Hourani and Neunionians follow the same laws, some of which are listed here.

- ☛ *Infractions:* Entering Per-Saal without a proper permit, stealing food, performing cantrips and stage magic without a permit, not registering metaphysical powers
- ☛ *Misdemeanors:* Prostitution, assaulting a commoner, breaking and entering a common building, fencing, slander, racketeering, magical malpractice where no person or property is damaged, stealing common goods if goods are recovered, using unregistered metaphysics S1-4.
- ☛ *Felonies:* Murder, rape, extortion, stealing from nobility, stealing from commoners if goods are not recovered, assaulting nobility, embezzling, slavery, torturing, magical malpractice where property, persons, or state security is jeopardized, espionage, tax evasion, kidnapping, using unregistered metaphysics S5-10.

Institutions: House of Balentine, Asylum of Inner Conflict, High Court of the Hourani

Resources: Gold, gold, and more gold. The tunnels underneath the city hold vast veins of gold, and Per-Saal is the only city-state that mines and mints gold currency. Also located in the tunnels are small silver veins, mined and minted into currency. These metals are the only resources of Per-Saal; 60% of the population works in the mines in some way, while the remainder is either self-employed or wealthy and retired.

Taxes: Standard tax rate in Per-Saal is 35% of reported annual income--necessarily high to keep the city in pristine shape.

Hazards: The most common hazard in Per-Saal is the random kidnappings by death cults. Monthly raids on the population are common, and victims are often used as sacrifices. Understandably, House Balentine is currently trying to banish these cults from Per-Saal. Being above ground provides protection from these sinister cults, but the mazes below the city are crawling with members. In addition, located throughout the city-state are pockets of negative metaphysical energy; any citizen randomly entering one necessitates rolling on the Metaphysical Instability chart to determine the effects. House Balentine is currently working to eliminate these pockets as well. House Porter's hold is weaker in this city, resorting to practical jokes rather than actual aggression in order to taunt an establishment they could probably not overcome.

Magic: Metaphysics are highly encouraged in Per-Saal as long as such powers are registered and cause no harm to others, and entire groups of citizens commonly carry on conversations without ever saying a verbal word. Magic use is controlled by permits, given at the House of Groam's Embassy. A permit is necessary to both use and experiment with magic, and each permit lists the spells known by the permit holder. Any spell used and not listed on the permit constitutes a crime (see Laws for more details). Only law enforcement personnel and those deputized by a sheriff can use offensive magic, although in times of war, spellcasters are given permission to use offensive spells to defend LeGonne.

Military/Defenses: Balentin members are judge, jury, and executioner in Per-Saal--probably the only police force that never has to walk a beat or chase down a convict. Per-Saal currently has the lowest crime rate of the city-states. Lord Balentin can muster 1000 metaphysics to neutralize any threat to the city. In addition, the Hourani Embassy has 220 Cortez troops for protection: 120 warriors, 40 longbowmen, 20 destriers, 18 sergeants, 2 master sergeants, 10 knights, 8 lieutenants, and 2 captains. Also, 32 sheriffs with 2 deputies each patrol Per-Saal. The Council is able to activate 15,000 militia during wartime.

Political intrigue: The Church of the Morning Light has a small following in Per-Saal and are constantly undermining Lord Balentin's efforts, preaching that House Balentin is brainwashing the population. Also, some believe Lord Balentin to be dragging his feet in dealing with the death cults, although no one understands why. Finally, many Per-Saal nobles feel that the Duke is too busy nosing into other Hourani's affairs rather than dealing with the problems at hand.



The City-States of Neuon



Travel access: The easiest way to reach Per-Saal is to travel on the Kahlil Highway. Rough uninhabited country lies between Jondric and Per-Saal, however, and many are incapable of traversing the harsh terrain.

History

Per-Saal did not exist during the Age of Creation. However, during the Age of Myth, by using rising trade profits of the southern human kingdoms, Harndin began to use a small, uninhabited area of land as a bank vault for all those too rich to keep their own money, calling it "Persaal" or "safe", which later translated into the words "vault" or "bank." This town of 5000 people ran the most inconspicuous bank of all the ages: it wasn't able to be seen.

A 56-mile road ran from the west side of Harndin, first south and then southeast to Persaal, guarded by fortifications every mile. Men stationed belonged to the UEV and were sworn to protect the special caravans that consistently trekked back and forth, day and night, carrying the gold of the lords of the south. Town inhabitants all had their parts in protecting Per-Saal, most of them by carrying on the daily chores, promoting the illusion of commoners living normal lives. These "commoners" were actually retired warriors, agents, priests, mages, bards, leaders, and thieves of previous generations, who were all promised a percentage of Per-Saal's earnings by retiring to its lands. Yet no one knew exactly where the bank was located.

Many attempted to discover and invade the bank but none ever succeeded. Newcomers were weeded out immediate upon arrival, keeping Per-Saal small and tidy. However, as its reputation grew, the stationed "populace" was finally unable to cope. More riches accumulated, drawing the attention of more than mere humans: hordes of Wolfihn, ogres, dwarves, elves, and orcs.

When Kahlil Aorik visited with his eldest son Balentin, Per-Saal finally took a new course. Kahlil had known many people from Per-Saal from the times they lived together in the southern cities, for he was as old as their great-great-great grandfathers. Given credibility by his father, Balentin offered to secretly move the riches to a safer haven. Although the town's leaders and investors quickly refused this first offer, Balentin convinced some of them to travel metaphysically with him and see the possibilities for themselves. Those who travelled with him were impressed with his plans and powers and convinced the others to his side. In return for Balentin's helping to protect the gold, Per-Saal would become a place where House Balentin could construct its personal "Mecca." Riches would continue

to pour into the city, and the inhabitants could continue with their normal lives.

Throughout the Age of Myth, Per-Saal grew slowly-most newcomers being Hourani. Rumor soon became cold hard fact that kingdoms of treasure were being stored like grain in silos in the fortifications of House Balentin. This finally led to sieges near the end of the age, right before the world entered the Unholy Ages. By this time, House Balentin was powerful enough to defend against any attackers, but managed to allow some "accidental breaches" into the fortifications--enough to show that not a single amulet, gold bar, or magic weapon could be discovered within its confines. The yearly sieges abruptly came to a halt.

However, those who had deposited their wealth into the hands of Balentin had nothing to fear, as each one had been anointed with the ability to travel to the wealth's location. Although a few frightened souls had taken their riches elsewhere, most had remained confident in House Balentin's capability. Unfortunately, with the advent of the Unholy Ages, many of those who owned treasure in Per-Saal were slain and knowledge of their wealth lost, so many treasures went unclaimed even up to the current day.

Age of Creation: After the Unholy Ages, most of Per-Saal's history had been lost to the outside world. It was now a city like any other, with an unusually large Hourani population and a very large structure belonging to House Balentin. Its population grew rapidly, going from a mere 150,000 to over 2,000,000 people in less than a thousand years. While this would be chaotic growth for other cities, Per-Saal's leaders socially engineered the growth to promote civility between the many neighbors. Arguments, fights, threats, and general hostility still occur, but most evil thoughts never find voice in action. The decidedly evil usually resort to taunting the good-natured without directly confronting them.

Other annoyances do exist, however. Hundreds of Neuonians and Hourani commonly appear at the gates of House Balentin, to reclaim the treasures of their forefathers. Unfortunately, the high majority of these people are frauds. Owners of any treasure placed in Balentin's care were given tickets, to prove the ownership of their treasure, but many of these tickets were lost throughout the centuries, leaving vast amounts of treasure unclaimed. Currently preying off hopeful visitors to Per-Saal (and even some citizens) are "ticketeers," who create and sell tickets that just might be able to allow a buyer to "reclaim" a treasure not belonging to them. Such hopefuls (as well as the ticketeers themselves) are looked down upon as scavengers by the local populace but continue to flood into

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the bars and taverns of Per-Saal, contacting ticketeers and hoping beyond hope that the next successful ticket written will be the one they purchase. This scam is probably the most apparent "crime" currently occurring in Per-Saal, as House Balentin's eyes and minds are everywhere and thus prevent more blatant scandals.

Below the city is another matter altogether, however, for even Lord Balentin cannot force everyone to live in peace. In addition, due to the volatile nature of the mind, some metaphysics applicants cannot withstand the mental stress of using psychic powers and are driven mad before they reach a stage where they can consciously control their powers. Others, mad to begin with, arrive in Per-Saal to be cured but are unable to be helped and reach new levels of paranoia. To protect the common citizens, such people are thrown into the underground passages worming their ways beneath Per-Saal, the largest such pit being referred to as the Asylum of Inner Conflict. Only cockroaches and the most insane criminals are not tortured by perceptions of this place. Rumor has it that some of these confused souls might still possess psychic powers, but such a possibility is currently too frightening to contemplate. Most citizens are satisfied to let the death cult members and deranged psychics struggle with each other in the bowels of the earth.

Points of interest

Atmospheric Dome: Using vast powers of metaphysical energy, House Balentine has been able to construct a huge mystical dome over the city. This dome is translucent and has no other effect except to control the atmosphere inside it, and both creatures and citizens may pass through the dome at any point at any time unhindered. This huge dome provides a 68° F temperature at all times of the year, day or night, and precipitation is on an as-needed basis. The dome was created in the year 398 AD by Kirk Grayvern, master metaphysician of the age.

Cave of Mushrooms: Mushrooms standing 12-15' high fill an underground cavern 14 miles long and 9 miles wide. These mushrooms are edible and are a main entree in many homes of Per-Saal, and travelers come from as far away as Cortez to taste them. The mushrooms have a faint yellow glow to them, and their hard outer skin can be treated and dried into a material as tough as some leathers. Seasonal harvests can bring in enough crop to feed the city for two or three months, with the crop growing back in about four months. Some of the mushrooms sprout a poisonous fungus on their outer skins, however, so only mushroom experts should harvest them.

Dragon Eggs: In the northeast corner of Per-Saal sits a large mound of earth and bones, and on top of the mound are three gigantic eggs. Each egg is light blue, with red specks, 25' long and 16' high. A small energy field surrounds the eggs, protecting them. Sages from all over the Neuon city-states come to see them, with most believing them to be Dragon eggs.

Eternal Torch of Kahlil: Standing in the courtyard of the House of Balentin, this 18' torch is a memorial to the founding father of the Hourani. A huge clawed hand made of jet-black rock holds a torch made from copper and bronze with silver engraving. This torch has burned as long as any Hourani in Per-Saal can remember. Some consider it to be the life symbol of the Hourani culture, and when the flame finally dies, all Hourani will give into their inner beast and the culture will collapse. As with the street lamps, metaphysics is thought to keep the torch burning, but no one is sure.

High Court of the Hourani: The Hourani's strict code is broken more than Hourani leaders usually admit, and those breaking the code are sent here to answer for their crimes. The High Court meets twice a month in the House of Balentin to judge those who have offended the Hourani culture. These judges are Hourani nobles, and some travel from as far away as Calcassee to attend the hearings.

Maze of the Libraries: Located deep beneath the city-state are a network of tunnels that wind in every direction, beginning at the Cave of Mushrooms and accessible by the Asylum of Inner Conflict. These tunnels were created when diamonds were first found in the ground underneath Per-Saal and have over the years become so extensive that only a few of the older miners can navigate them without getting lost. Various portals in the tunnels will transport people to one of the seven Libraries located in each city-state, and rumor even suggest that one leads to the House of Wayne library. House Balentine has several entrances into the tunnels and know the locations of most of the portals. There was at one time a tunnel entrance through the Asylum of Inner Conflict, but this entrance has been reported closed. Members of the dreaded death cult of Gipetor have been found practicing their rites in the abandoned tunnels.

Street Lamps: These strange devices can be seen throughout the city--6' carved wooden poles topped with glass globes that shine with bright light at night. Although rumor accredits metaphysics with powering them, no one knows for certain.

GOODS AND SERVICES LISTING

Goods and services with a price of "n/a" are not available in the given culture. A percentage listed, instead of a value, means that the service costs that percent of the desired item (in addition to normal cost).

Availability of unlisted items or services depends on the GM's ruling. To make things easier, just determine how common the item is and then roll equal to or less than the given percentage to see if the item is available in the culture:

- ☞ *Scarce (3%)*: Includes unique and valuable items. Any book and most black market items should be considered scarce.
- ☞ *Low (15%)*: Includes items of luxury or crafts that took a long time to create. Also, any item specifically from another culture should be considered at least low (or possibly scarce).
- ☞ *Moderate (55%)*: Includes items that don't seem to fit other descriptions. In a large city, almost all items will have a moderate chance of being located.
- ☞ *High (70%)*: Includes items that are specialties of the culture in question, although the price could still be quite high. The Felihn culture and the Hourani House of Porter can offer black market services with this degree of availability.
- ☞ *Everyday (95%)*: Includes common goods such as clothing, toiletries, and food.

Items marked "n/a" are not found in that culture. Note that, due to the fact that Hourani and Neunionians live in the same society, many items have only a Neunionian price. Items marked as "special" have prices depending greatly on the specifics of the service being rendered.

All values are given in terms of FPs.

ITEM NAME	LBS	HOURANI	NEUON
Black Market			
Assassination			
SL7 (Heroes)		30,000	25,000
SL8 (Royalty)		75,000	50,000
SL9 (Imperial)		150,000	100,000
SL10 (Saints/Legends)		2,000,000	n/a
Burglary		500	500
Foreign (Illegal)		500%	400%
Information/Tailing		1000	1000
Hired Mercenary		125/day	100/day
Message by mugging		200	500
Murder			
SL0 (slave/serf)		2000	2000
SL1-3 (commoner)		6000	5000
SL4-6 (wealthy)		13,000	10,000
Package delivery	1-8	150	100
Safehouse/hideout		1400/day	1000/day
Smuggle/Transport		special	special
Unique service		special	special
Books			
Algebra/Early physics	20	9000	9500
Astrology	15	4000	4000

ITEM NAME	LBS	HOURANI	NEUON
Astronomy	15	9000	9000
Brewing recipes			
Beer, ale, mead	4	3000	2500
Hard alcohol	3	4000	3000
Wine	3	3700	3500
Potions	6	8400	7500
Chemistry	8	9000	9500
Clothes design	2	1000	1000
Cooking	2.5	250	500
Demonology			
Basics by culture	2	10,000	10,000
Dark pawns	2	25,000	20,000
Demons	5	45,000	50,000
Devils	10	125,000	100,000
Monsters	5	17,000	20,000
Engineering & Architecture	5	9000	9500
Farming	2	5500	5000
Fortune telling*	2	6000	6000
Herb lore	4	7000	7000
History, general AM	15	100,000	125,000
History, general AD	15	50,000	75,000
Heraldry*	3	40,000	50,000

ITEM NAME	LBS	HOURANI	NEUON
Law	15	15,000	20,000
Mathematics	13	3000	7500
Military			
<i>Motivation</i>	5	8000	8500
<i>Strategy, Siege, Ambush</i>	8	9000	9000
<i>Discipline</i>	5	7000	8000
Myth & Lore			
<i>Cultural basics (by area)</i>	8	10,000	10,000
<i>Cultural hero basics</i>	7	10,000	10,000
<i>Specific</i>	12	25,000	25,000
Philosophy	20	8000	8000
Plays & Musicals	10	2000	2000
Poetry or Prose	4	2000	2000
Pyrotechnics	3	55,000	50,000
Religion			
<i>Theology</i>	20	2000	5000
<i>Pantheon</i>	20	6000	10,000
Sheet Music	2	1000	1000
Stage Magic	2	7000	7000
Statecraft	12	20,000	25,000
Traps	2	8000	8000
Val Zen's medicine tome	25	175,000	200,000
Clothing			
Belt	.5	12	10
Boots	3	55	50
Breeches/Overalls	4	25	20
Coat, Winter	3	125	100
Hat/Cap/Headwrap	1	20	15
Hooded cloak	3-5	50	40
Gloves	1	30	25
Gown/Dress	3	175	150
Robe, Hooded (summer)	3	50	35
Robe, Hooded (winter)	6	90	75

ITEM NAME	LBS	HOURANI	NEUON
Sandals	1	40	35
Shoes	3	75	60
Stockings	.5	15	12
Surcoat	4	250	200
Tabbard	5	180	160
Tunic	4	20	10
Consumables			
Ale, beer, or mead (1 mug)	1	2	1
Fruit juice (bottle)	2	n/a	.5
Schnapps (1 oz)	.1	1	n/a
Hard liquor (1 oz)	.1	2	1
Herbs, cooking (3 months)	.2	6	6
Meal (poor)	.75	n/a	1
Meal (common)	1	5	5
Meal (wealthy)	2	25	20
Meal (royal)	5	125	100
Rations (1 week)	7	35	30
Spices (3 months)	.2	10	10
Wine, red or white (bottle)	3	30	20
Luxury Items			
Art (average)	10	40	20
Art (great)	25	1000	500
Art (near-priceless)	10-30	50,000+	10,000+
Brandy (bottle)	4	25	25
Champagne (bottle)	3	45	45
Court armor (any)	25	45,000	30,000
Court uniform/dress	10	4000	2000
Fiction books	2	1000	1000
Hemp (1 oz)	.06	250	200
Religious symbol	1	50+	20+
Perfume	1	45+	40+
Silver & china set	5	n/a	400+
Soap	.25	2	2
Tobacco (1 oz)	.1	5	5

ITEM NAME	LBS	HOURLY	NEUON
Services			
Armorsmith			
<i>Repair damage</i>		n/a	50/point
<i>Style decorations</i>		n/a	special
Artist		1000	1000
Blacksmith			
<i>New invention</i>		n/a	100/day
<i>Repair (anything)</i>		n/a	100
Bodyguard (1 day)		1400	1200
Entertainment (1 day/night)		50	50
Escort date (1 night)		150	100
Fortune teller		n/a	25
Guide (1 day)			
<i>City</i>		5	5
<i>Country</i>		75	75
<i>Ocean/Lake</i>		100	100
Lawyer		400/hour	300/hour
Leathersmith			
<i>Repair (damage)</i>		n/a	20/point
<i>Tailor</i>		n/a	50
Libraries			
<i>Cartography</i>		25	25
<i>General</i>		10	10
<i>History</i>		15	15
<i>Magic</i>		300	n/a
<i>Mythical</i>		160	150
Lodging			
<i>Inn (common)</i>		n/a	10
<i>Inn (merchant)</i>		70	80
<i>Inn (luxury)</i>		250	200
Medicine			
<i>First aid</i>		100	100
<i>Salves/potions</i>		25	40
<i>Surgery</i>		1000	1000
Messenger		2/mile	2/mile
Religious			

ITEM NAME	LBS	HOURLY	NEUON
<i>Blessing</i>		free	free
<i>Communing</i>		15,000	10,000
<i>Endowment</i>		1000+	1000+
<i>Exorcism</i>		5000	5000+
<i>Healing</i>		500	1000
Sage			
<i>Magical questions</i>		2000+	1000+
<i>Metaphysics questions</i>		3000+	n/a
<i>Miscellaneous</i>		50+	25+
<i>Mythical questions</i>		1000+	1000+
Scribe/Translator		10+	25-100
Tailor		75	50
Weaponsmith			
<i>New invention</i>		n/a	100/day
<i>Repair (damage)</i>		n/a	100
<i>Style decoration</i>		n/a	special
Travel Gear			
Animal traps	15	n/a	75
Backpack	4		40
Barding			
<i>Cloth or leather</i>	10	n/a	2000
<i>Chain</i>	20	n/a	2800
<i>Plate</i>	40	n/a	4200
Bedroll	5	n/a	50
Bit & bridle	8	n/a	175
Camp cookery & cutlery	7	n/a	60
Canvas (1 sq ft)	.2	n/a	2
Chain (10')	20	n/a	30
Chest			
<i>Large, w/ lock</i>	45	n.a	230
<i>Small, w/ lock</i>	20	n/a	80
Field kit (medical)	1	n/a	45
Field kit (surgery)	2	n/a	265
Fishing gear	1	n/a	15

ITEM NAME	LBS	HOURANI	NEUON
Flint, tinder, & steel	.75	n/a	13
Grappling hook	10	n/a	36
Horseshoes (4)	12	n/a	130
Lantern	3.5	n/a	69
Mess kit	2	n/a	17
Money belt	1-5	n/a	35
Navigational instruments	10	n/a	340
Oil (burning, 1 qt)	2	n/a	2
Oil (cooking, bottle)	1	n/a	1
Saddle			
<i>Riding</i>	15	n/a	700+
<i>Pack</i>	15	n/a	300
<i>War</i>	17	n/a	1200+
Saddle bags	5	n/a	120
Saddle blanket	5	n/a	55
Snowshoes	6	n/a	85
Spelunking gear	20	n/a	145
Spikes/pitons (12)	6	n/a	17
Strongbox or safe	50	n/a	400
Tents			
<i>2-person</i>	14	n/a	95
<i>4-person</i>	30	n/a	210
<i>8-person</i>	50	n/a	450
Torches (treated, 6)	7	n/a	1
Travel Mounts			
Horse			
<i>Draft</i>	500*	1500+	1200+
<i>Riding</i>	325*	2500+	2000+
<i>War</i>	680*	10,000+	8000+
Mule	445*		500
Pony	160*		500+
* Carrying capacity rather than weight			
Travel Vehicles			
Cart (2 wheels)	300	n/a	300
Cart (4 wheels)	800	n/a	900

ITEM NAME	LBS	HOURANI	NEUON
Carriage	1000	n/a	2500
Chariot	200	n/a	2000
Freight wagon	2000	n/a	2000
Dogsled	40	n/a	255
Canoe			
<i>Birchbark</i>	85	n/a	600
<i>Leather & wood</i>	75	n/a	500
Longboat	8000	15,000	12,000
Longship	30 tons	50,000	45,000
Tools			
Axes			
<i>Metal</i>	7	n/a	18
<i>Metal, 2 heads</i>	9	n/a	24
Anvil			
<i>Portable (for war)</i>	100	n/a	100
<i>Stationary</i>	325	n/a	275
Block & tackle	10	n/a	100
Construction tools	30	n/a	150
Forge			
<i>Portable (for war)</i>	200	n/a	350
<i>Stationary</i>	350	n/a	600
Hammer (sledge, metal)	12	n/a	22
Kiln	700	n/a	1000
Kit			
<i>Armorsmithing</i>	15	n/a	2000
<i>Blacksmithing</i>	15	n/a	1700
<i>Glassblowing</i>	3	n/a	1200
<i>Jewelry crafting</i>	5	n/a	2500
<i>Leatherworking</i>	5	n/a	1200
<i>General repair</i>	20	n/a	75
<i>Weaponsmithing</i>	15	n/a	1500
Hoe	5	n/a	15
Mattock or pickaxe	10	n/a	26
Manacles or cuffs	2	n/a	30
Net (fishing)	15	n/a	18

ITEM NAME	LBS	HOURANI	NEUON
Rope (hemp, 10')	1	n/a	10
Rope (silk, 10')	.5	n/a	75
Sickle	7	n/a	35
Shovel	2	n/a	16
String/twine (100')	2.5	n/a	5
Thieving tools	.75	500	450
Waterskin/bucket	2	n/a	10
Whip	2	n/a	25
Scholastic Supplies			
Book			
<i>Blank</i>	3	n/a	5
<i>Blank, w/ lock</i>	3.25	n/a	25
Candle	.25	n/a	1
Cards of Fate	.25	50+	25+
Chemicals (1 oz)			
<i>Common</i>	.1	75	100
<i>Rare</i>	.1	400+	500+
Crystals	1	50+	25+
Eyeglass	.5	n/a	300
Glass jar/tube	.75	n/a	3
Herbs (medicinal, 1 month supply)	1	n/a	30
Hourglass	2	n/a	200+
Ink (4 oz)	.25	n/a	10
Instrument			
<i>Horn</i>	7	750	500
<i>Percussion</i>	12	500	250
<i>String</i>	10	600	400
<i>Wind</i>	2	600	400
Linen (10' x 3')			
<i>Cotton</i>	3	n/a	25
<i>Silk</i>	2	n/a	75
<i>Wool</i>	4	n/a	10
Lock (simple)	2	n/a	5
Lock (complex)	3	n/a	50
Magnifying glass	.5	n/a	40
Makeup			

ITEM NAME	LBS	HOURANI	NEUON
<i>Affectation (60 days)</i>	.5	n/a	35
<i>Stage/disguise</i>	.75	n/a	45
Map/Scroll tube	1	n/a	16
Medical items			
<i>Supplies (full set)</i>	2	500	465
<i>Tools (full set)</i>	3	2500	2200
Minuteglass	.5	n/a	85+
Mirror (handheld)	1	n/a	4
Mirror (full length)	50	n/a	15+
Paint (4 oz of each major color)	1	10	8+
Paint brushes/tools	4	120	100
Parchment (20 sheets)	2	n/a	3
Sculpting tools	15	50	30
Stones (divination)	1.5	40+	40+
Telescope (simple)	8	800	700
Vellum (1 page)	.1	n/a	5
Writing stylus	.2	n/a	3-100
Weapon Accessories			
Arrowheads and fletchings (20)	4	n/a	30
Arrows			
<i>Shortbow (20)</i>	5	n/a	80
<i>Longbow (20)</i>	10	n/a	95
Ball bearings (100)	4.5	n/a	9
Bolt case	5	n/a	40
Bolts (20)	8	n/a	120
Caltrops (100)	25	n/a	20
Sheath			
<i>Dagger/Knife</i>	.5	n/a	10
<i>Sword</i>	1	n/a	30
Scabbard (sword)	4	n/a	200
Quiver	4	n/a	30
Weapon belt	1	n/a	30
Weapon repair kit	2	n/a	18

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Mastery List of Skills

Comprehension Table: Complexity Bonus: Maximum Skill Increase: Days subtract
Cost to raise skills with EP's: 5 x Complexity (+/- bonus) per skill point.

Character Name: Kyle Menthas		Pathway: Neutral Taker		Extra Chances: 1	
Played by:		Attitude: Adventurous			
Race: Metamorphoun		Current Life Level: 1		(PL + FL + SL) / 3	
Culture: Houmanz		Maximum Achieved Life Level: 1			
Sub Culture: House of Porter		Career: Employee			
ADVANTAGES					
PHYSICAL		MENTAL		SOCIAL	
Strength: { 1 } / { 15 } / +2		Comprehension: { 1 } / { 7 } /		Appearance: { 1 } / { 6 } /	
Agility: { 2 } / { 15 } /		Awareness: { 2 } / { 10 } / +3		Charisma: { 1 } / { 4 } / -2	
Dexterity: { 1 } / { 15 } /		Logic: { 1 } / { 8 } / -2		Etiquette: { 1 } / { 4 } / -2	
Stamina: { 1 } / { 15 } / +2		Perseverance: { 2 } / { 18 } /		Style: { 1 } / { 6 } /	
Reflex: { 2 } / { 16 } /		Confidence: { 1 } / { 8 } / +3		Avoidance: { 2 } / { 13 } / -3	
Physical Save: 30/50		Mental Save: 20/40		Social Save: 15/20	
Age: 65		Movement Rate: 56/66		Heal Rate: 28/36	
Gender: MALE		Size Level: 4		Max Health Points: 32/47	
Eye Color: BROWN		Lifting Capacity: 200/160		Max Willpower Pts: 35/55	
Hair Color: BLONDE		Encumbrance Max: 80/140		Power Tolerance: 40	
Skin/Fur Color: TAN		Build: AVERAGE		Magical Powerbase: —	
Handedness: RIGHT		Sleep Level: +15/30		Channeling Pbs: —	
Birth Date: 5/28/1935AD		Height: 5'10" Weight: 162lbs		Metaphysical Pbs: —	
Special Career Skills: <i>These are skills that are not already found on your Mastery List of Skills.</i>					
Lvl		Skill Name & Comp		Special Bonuses:	
BEGINNING PERSONAL POSSESSIONS					
1- SOFT LEATHER ARMOR - 6-THUMBING DANGERS.					
1- SHORT SWORD - 2- STILLETOS - LOCK PICKS.					
2- SMALL LEATHER POUCHES - BLACK HOODED CLOAKS.					
BLACK COTTON SHIRT - BLACK COTTON PANTS.					
KNEE - HIGH LEATHER BOOTS.					
Career Assets: EQUIPMENT LISTED ABOVE					
Money/Furs/Trading Values: 1 GOLD 14 SILVER					
Friends: 4					
Enemies: 1					
Pawns: —					
Followers: —					
Family Trade & Background: DEATH KNIGHT					
Obligations:					
Missions:					
Adventures:					
Personal Goals:					

INITIATIVE BASE 2035 = 5Reflex + 5Awareness - Encumbrance Difficulty
SOAK PER HIT 57 = Size Level + Stamina. You may soak this many Damage points of each attack by expending equal Willpower pts instead.
HEAL RATE 2836 Pts Gained Per Month = (Health Factor + Stamina + Perseverance) x Size Level

BLOOD LOSS: Willpower Points Lost Per Round (Total of ruptures)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30

OCF

DCF

Init Cost	WEAPON NAME	Type	Weight	WC	Attack Skill	+Adv Bonuses	+Spec OCF	-Diff	=	Defense Skill	+Adv Bonuses	+Spec DCF	-Diff	=
20	8	STILETTO	M	5lbs	4	20	15/25	---	8	27/37	10	15/25	---	8
30	12	SHORT SWORD	M	8lbs	6	40	15/25	---	12	93/53	10	15/25	---	12
12	---	TH. DAGGER	T	8lbs	2	30	15/25	---	6	39/49	---	---	---	---
40	20	HTH: H. WEND	M	---	10	30	15/25	---	20	25/35	30	15/25	---	20

WEAPON NAME	Damage								Range in feet			# of Missiles on Person
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	S	M	L	
STILETTO	1	1	2	3	4	5	10	18				
SHORT SWORD	1	2	4	6	8	12	18	24				
THROW. DAGGER	0	0	2	4	5	6	8	15	5	10	20	6
HTH: H. WEND	1	2	4	7	10	14	18	25				

WEAPON NAME	ARMOR TYPE	Absorb Rate	Max Points	Current Points	Weight
STILETTO	SOFT LEATHER	2	16	16	4lbs
SHORT SWORD					
THROW. DAGGER					
HTH: H. WEND					

Init Cost	EVASIVE MOVE	1/2 HTH	+Adv Bonus	-Encum Diff	-Skill Diff	=
20	Dodge	30	20	---	20	30
8	Duck	30	20	---	20	30
	Shield Block					

ROLL	1-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-74	75-89	90-124	125-199	200-399
Outcome	miss!	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Init Pts	*	50	67	83	100	120	135	144	150
EP Pts	--	--	--	--	--	10 ep	25 ep	50 ep	100 ep

Initiative Cost: Melee 5WC, Thrown 6WC, Bow 7WC, Crossbow 9/1WC, Aimed 2x, HTH WCxSize Level. Parry 2WC, Dodge 2SL+Enc Dif, Duck SL+Enc Dif, Block SL+1/10 Shield weight.

Difficulty: Melee, Bow & HTH 2WC, Thrown 3WC, Crossbow = WC

Advantage Bonuses: HTH, Melee & Thrown 5Ref + 5Strength, Missile 5Dex, Aiming +10Confidence

Evasive Advantages: Dodge 5Agility + 5Reflex, Duck 10Reflex, Shield Block 5Reflex + 5 Strength

Evasive Init Cost: Dodge: 5xSize Level, Duck: 2xSize Level, Shield Block: 2xSize Level + 1/10 Shield Weight

Scholarstics []

- Archaic Science (6 min) []
Algebra & Early Physics (19)
Astronomy (18)
25 Bandaging & Bones (17)
Cartography (15)
Chemistry (19)
Disease (20)
Engineering & Architect (19)
15 Mathematics (15)
Philosophy (16)
Surgery (20)
History (All) []
Age of Discovery (10)
Age of Myth (14)
32 Heraldry (13)
Research (All) []
Bookkeeping (13)
Experimentation (16)
Sage Science (19)

Travel []

- Carts & Ships (3 min) []
Barges, Traders, Fish, Boats (11)
Canoes/Rafts/etc (10)
Carts, Wagons & Plows (11)
Chariots (13)
Longships (15)
Royal Fleets (15)
War - Rowing (17)
War - Sailing (18)
Animalship (3 min) []
Breeding (13)
Combat (10)
30 Riding (5)
Stunts (9)
Training (16)
Terrain Knowledge (5 min) []
Arctic (12)
90 Cities (8)
Desert (13)
Dungeoneering (14)
75 Fields/Plains (6)
Forestry (7)
Jungle (12)
Mountains (11)
Navigation (9)
Spelunking (10)
Swamp (10)

Endowments (Continued)

- ()
()
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()

Brewing (3 min) []

- Alcohol (6)
Beer (5)
Wine (7)
20 Poisons (9)
Poisons (15)
Leatherworking (All) []
15 Armor (9)
Barding (9)
Outfitting (8)
Shoes & Boots (10)
Smithing (3 min) []
Bronze (10)
Farm Tools (9)
Gold (14)
Scientific Instruments (15)
Sieve Tools (8)
Silver (14)
Trades (1 min) []
Carpentry (9)
Ceramics (7)
Masonry (6)
Roper (2)
Ship Building (17)
Tailoring & Weaving (10)
Weaponsmithing (3 min) []
Bladed (14)
Blunt (12)
Pointed (13)
Bowyer & Fletcher (9)

Religion []

- Church (All) []
Education (18)
Order (13)
30 Theology (Lovers Secret) (15)
Gods (All) []
Opposing Deities (16)
Patrons (15)
Channelling Power (20)
Demonology (2 min) []
Dark Pawns (10)
Demons (11)
Devils (12)
Legendary Evils (8)

Endowments (No Emphasis)

- ()
()
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()

Myth & Lore []

- Fabled Lands & Beasts (9 min) []
Ariels (13)
Black Forest (10)
Brown Sea (11)
Burning Lands of Ior (10)
90 City States of Neoun (9)
Eppela (11)
Heg Mtn Kingdom (10)
Icy Death Ocean (10)
Imp. Lands of New Mulgr (10)
Isle of Lars (11)
Klyberr Islands (11)
Majestic Empire (12)
Mt. Kabi (13)
Nation of Yucazon (10)
Northern Wilds (12)
Ogre's Pot (10)
Olde Mulgr (12)
Ontonoma Plains (11)
Province of Winter (13)
Silver Gulf (10)
Southern Barrens (12)
Stronger Range (11)
Thokmolim (10)
World's Crown (10)
Fortune Telling (min 2) []
Astrology (8)
Bones (7)
Cards of Fate (9)
Crystals (14)
Palms (12)
Stones (6)
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Beastish (13)
Dwarves (12)
Elves (11)
Giants (14)
Grober (15)
70 Humanoids (10)
30 Hourani (15)

Prof Crafts []

- Armorsmithing (All) []
Chain (9)
Helmets (10)
Plates (9)
Shields (8)
Arts (2 min) []
Casting & Jewelry (8)
Painting (13)
20 Poetry, Prose & Cligphy (13)
Sculpting (14)

Metamorphouns living as strangers in their own lands...

"Alas, we are the fortunate few to have survived the passing of an age. The Age of Myth was a cold, hard age fraught with war and chaos, in which our forefathers forged our great race. We children of the Hourani now live in the Age of Discovery, the Third Age since Creation, and so named because we must discover what changes in the world the Great Cataclysm has made for us."

...chambering the power of the beast within them...

"This age has brought wisdom to our people. By our code, we must indeed remember the words of our forefathers, for they have taught us much with their sacrifices.

...masking their secrecy while scoping their opponents.

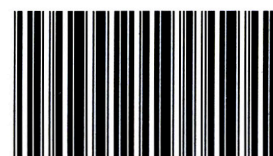
"As we boldly set forth in this new age, proudly holding our banners aloft, we shall remember well the wise words of our forefathers so that we may honor their memories. So let our eyes guide the way, and let our enemies tremble with fear as they feel the heat of our breath on their backs- for we are the Hourani!"

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dedicated to the memory of Connor Driskel Aorik

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