

CASTLES CRUSADES[®]

RUNE LORE



STEPHEN CHENAULT

CASTLES & CRUSADES®

RUNE LORE

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A VERY KIND THANK YOU

TO DERRICK "OMOTE" LANDWEHR FOR HIS TIRELESS ASSISTANCE IN WORKING ON THE RUNE LORE
CLASS AND READING THE COUNTLESS RENDITIONS OF MY RAMBLING MECHANICS! ~ STEVE



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INTRODUCTION – USING RUNE LORE



une Lore is the end product of a long line of thought here at Troll Lord Games. Originally conceived in the halcyon days of d20, it was part of a series of books, the first of which we titled *Winter Runes*. Eight follow up books were planned, each highlighting a type of runic magic.

The second one we worked on was *Blood Runes*. We developed the runes to our mode of play, with a focus on the storytelling aspect of any adventure and heavy emphasis on player interaction and interpretation. All spell use and magic had long enjoyed a broad interpretation with the Trolls. This, coupled with the “rules-light” philosophy, led directly to the creation of rune magic. Here we envisioned a type of magic that broke the normal rules of cat and roll, allowing the character to use singular spells (or in this case, runes), to have a wide range of effects. Controlling fire means you can ignite it as easily as you can extinguish it.

The rune magic we designed for the d20 system, and the rune mark itself, we presented as a prestige class. As good a system as d20 is and was, it was an imperfect fit for our concept of the rune magic, for the mechanics of the game severely limited the broader interpretation of the rune’s magic. After *Winter Runes* was released, work on *Blood Runes* was halted as the d20 market shifted and *Castles & Crusades* became our main focus.

The move to *Castles & Crusades* opened up a whole new vista for the rune mark and his magic. The rules-light approach, the simplicity of game play, and the heavy reliance on the adjudicating powers of the Castle Keeper all play perfectly into the concept. Development problems arose early on as it took some time to break free of the d20 mechanics built into the class

in almost all legibly written forms. But once the breakthrough came, the class opened up, and has become, we hope, the perfect addition to the C&C game.

A cautionary note for all those CKs and players embarking upon the rune mark class play. The runes themselves are not given levels. Any rune mark can possess any rune, and, once translated and mastered, use that rune. Some of the runes are very powerful and CKs should limit their distribution until higher levels. This is, however, left entirely up to the CK. *Castles & Crusades* is your game, to tailor as you see fit. The runes themselves may require some adjudication as players attempt to do things with the runes, or to weave the runes together, in such a way that doesn’t work for the campaign or the world. As always, the CK stands in command of the Challenge Level of any action the players attempt. Raising it puts an end to the rune’s effectiveness.

The book is presented in three parts. The rune mark is first, complete with rune magic and how it works, the class itself and 45 runes. A huge swath of the Aihrde setting is next, the region of the Gottland-Ne, with town and area descriptions and an encounter chart. The third part of the book contains about a dozen short adventures. These are only loosely tied to the acquisition of rune magic, allowing for a broader use of the adventures in a variety of settings and times.

Rune Lore captures the essence of the C&C game, requiring imaginative play from both the CK and Players.

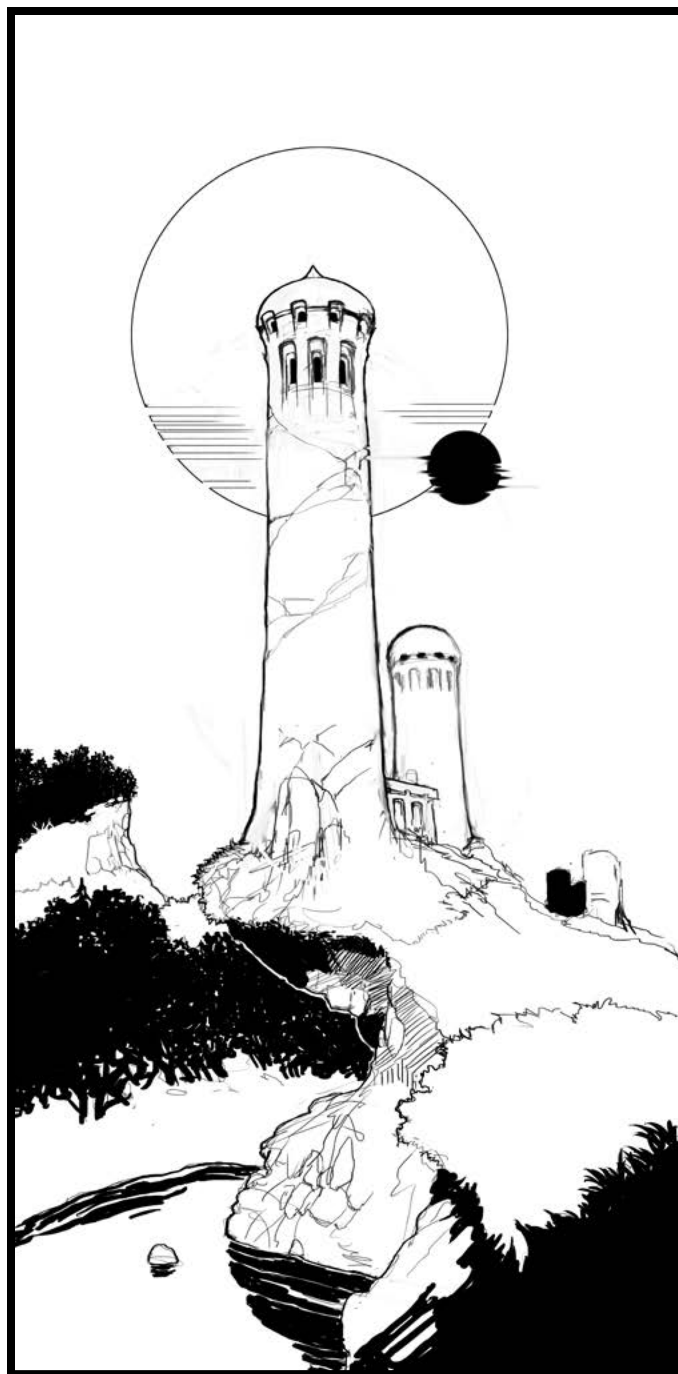
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RUNIC MAGIC



The magi master the arcane. Their magic is powerful and is contained in their own abilities. It is the bowl of the tree. The priests call upon the divine. Their magic is far removed from the world. It graces the heavens and is the canopy of the tree. The marks use the runic.

Their magic is the root of the tree, for from it all magic comes.

WHEN THE ALL FATHER SPOKE

The Alenerde-ut-Pilt, the Language of Creation, the Holy Tongue, is the language of life. The All Father spoke the world into being, fashioning it from the Void. From his voice, the language, its parts, its tone, the nuances of inflection, and their order sprang all that it is or ever will be. It is said that the All Father used the Alernerde-ut-Pilt to spin the magic of his being into the world of Ahrde. And those who heard the sound of it knew power beyond any other.

It is a powerful language, and being the greatest source of magic, serves as the root of all things.

To master the language is almost impossible. Only a few have come close. The goddess of the inner world, Inzae, could not understand it when the All Father tried to teach it to her. He wrote it for her, laying it down in glyphs and symbols in the Obsidian Book. But she tainted the language, changing it into a language of chaos of evil.

The sentients, trees of old, learned it in the Days before Days, as did the dragon Frafnog; the All Father taught it to them. But the early trees had no interest in it, for their minds were ever on cool earth, fresh water, the sun and wind. The dragon, mightiest of all that breed, folded the language into his mind and whether he knows it still or has forgotten it no tale tells.

And the All Father taught it to the Dwarves. Few of that folk, as clever as they are, managed to comprehend it, and even when they did, it was a collective endeavor. Eventually the Greater Dwarves of Inzae wrote it down, scribing its magic in a vast set of runes, which they set upon the brass halls, walls and stairs they constructed between the worlds, the Rings of Brass, and later, some small measure of it, in the Mammoth Scrolls. But the Rings are too great for any one man to translate, and the Scrolls that were scattered or remained within the confines of the dwarven realms are now lost.

Some clever men sought out the Dwarven Runes, finding them in wild places. They taught themselves the runes they had, and grew powerful besides. 'Tis said that the Arch-Magi Nulak-Kiz-Din mastered much of the Language when he discovered The Paths of Umbra, and that Daladon used its power to bind the Unicorn to the Ephremere, Queen of Aachen. Aristobulus One Eye, too, understood many pieces of the Language.

Any spell, written or spoken, represents a small portion of the Language. "Nothing so much as a singular drop of water in the Amber Sea," or so the Mage Patrice used to teach his students,

in reference to their individual spells when compared to the overall Language. To master it, a nearly impossible task, would bring the wielder infinite power.

DWARVEN MASTERY

As is known, some dwarves worked with the Language of Creation, taught to them by the All Father. The early fathers could speak it, though in practical application it failed them. Its subtleties escaped the hard minded dwarves and their craft suffered for it. The Dwarven All Fathers, priests of their realm, managed the language better, but even they suffered in its use. Their creations require the hammer to shape and the mind to mold. In the fashioning of items of metal and stone, and carving great halls of wondrous beauty from the bones of the earth, they excelled, surpassing all others that came before or after. The Language proved greater than that, however, for its power comes from the everlasting Void and the deeps of the All Father's mind. It is subtle and brutal, fair and foul, it flows without restraint but is bound in iron, it is a rope with no end. The dwarves, ever masterful, sought to control the world through which they trod, but both the seen and the unseen and the nuances of the Language escaped them. They might create, but their creations fell short of the maker's desires.

They greatest of Dwarven smiths took their knowledge, that which they understood, and marked it down in the Mammoth Scrolls, those holy writings of the early dwarves. The scrolls they cast in thin sheets of brass and etched all the history of the world, its making, those that moved across it, the runes and the language of creation as he understood it. The Scrolls were rolled up and placed them in stone cases and set in the high halls of Gorthoraug atop Mount Austrien.

The ever practical dwarves understood their limitations, and using the Mammoth Scrolls, recast the language in those long ago days. They set to crafting the words of the language into physical constructs, making tools of its power. This power they captured in a complicated and vast set of written characters, the dwarven runes. The runes contained power, often one power layered upon another. These runes the dwarves used, crafting them into items and objects of their own desire. Thus the runes came to be; glyphs with the power of the All Father's words bound within them.

The dwarves learned how to write them and keep the runes, for few substances could contain the written marks so that stones would break, wood fall to ruin, bones to dust and so on. Brass, they found kept the runes intact, as well as parchment made of dragon wings, and flesh. So they turned to this new craft, placing the runes upon sheets of brass, dragon parchment or their own bodies to carry them out into the world where their power might better serve the dwarves in war and peace. With these runes they made many wonders, building halls of deep glory, treasures of renown, worked jewels into crowns unsung by man or elf. The runes of Dwarven manufacture were later grouped into schools by the wizard Nulak Kiz Din; The Four Pillars, the Arcs of Time, Paths of Umbra, Gray Mist, etc.

So it was for many long centuries until the rise of the goblins and the sorcery of Ondluche.

THE SORCERER'S RUNES

Too many knew of the Language, or pieces of it, for it to remain wholly secret, and in time of years one of the Eldritch Goblins, Ondluche by name, unraveled some of its secrets. From where it is not certain, but it is known that he began the mastery of it long before in the Quiet of the World. Some have it that the Red Duke, who men call the Bull or Thorax, taught it to him, others that he gleaned it from walking among the sentients, while others more correctly surmised that Ondluche was a dwarven Father, steeped in the knowledge of the runes, who was corrupted by evil.

But howsoever he came by the language, Ondluche used it for his own personal power. He was the first to do so, and the greatest of the sorcerers that came to plague the world.

Ondluche spent many centuries bent over his great alchemies, unraveling more of the sacred Tongue and ever increasing his power in sorcery. It is said that he possessed a great tower, Lugtundra, which loomed over the whole world, and within it were hosts of rooms and passages wherein he conducted all manner of vile experiments. Cloistered thus he learned ever more and rose to even greater power. Many came to him to learn of his witchcraft, and these bore it into the wide world, spells written on parchments or cast into swords, shields, staves or whatever item they fancied.

In later days, the sorcery he practiced, matched the true language of Creation and he bent the world and destroyed much. These powerful dweomers he kept for himself, burnt into the recesses of his mind. In time the power of these sorceries drove him near mad so that he could not keep them all contained. In secret he rewrote them, casting them into runes of power. These runes he carved on stones and totems, but he kept them well hid. These magics were the Ondluch-Eroan, or in the Vulgate, the Runes of Ondluche. He used them against the Dwarves and all who stood against him and in later ages they destroyed the All Father and split the world, opening it to the ravages of the multiverse and the planes beyond.

Ondluche's reign ended when the Dwarven King of Norgorad-Kam, Dognur VII, entered the halls of Lugtundra and slew the sorcerer. It is said that the Dwarf waded through a sea of rune magic like a ship in water and he took up the sorcerer in his hands. Grasping him by the neck he ground his neck and bones to gristle and cast him aside. But the Goblin's sorcery was forever a part of the world of Aihrde. Though few would ever understand its origins or what it was, most forgot that the sorcery was the Language of Creation, only corrupted, and foul. And the runes were scattered far and wide.

Through the machinations of the Red Duke the dwarven power came to an end, their kingdoms waned and their power faded. For the most part the runes fell into darkness, lost in time.

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A MAGI'S QUEST

The knowledge of the runes lay forgotten for many ages. Rumors of the powers of the dwarves and the wizard Ondluche came down to scholars and adventurers, but few believed them and even fewer still sought them out. But eventually word of them came to the scholars of kings and the wizards of men.

Those who did know understood that mastery of the Language could bring ultimate power, and they sought to find the magic stones and the runes written upon sheets of brass and dragon wing. The runic tongue was born in these quests, a tongue comprised of the vulgate speech of traders and the tattered understandings of the language. The tongue was never complete and few understood the words or how to unearth their power. It was left to a single wizard to unearth the rune lore.

A human magi, whose own history is mired in the depths of time, rose during the Age of Heroes to become one of the greatest of his peers. In those days he bore the name Trigal, and served the Emperors of Aenoch. He founded the White Order, a gathering of like minded men and women, who learned the arts of sorcery from him.

But Trigal was an evil man, and in his true purpose he used the power of the Empire to scour the world for the magic of the ancients, particularly for the Rings of Brass, the Mammoth Scrolls, and the Obsidian Book. But he found them not; the latter remained hidden, the Scrolls lost and the former long ago destroyed in Inzae's War of the Gods. But what he did find was evidence of the Ondluch-Eroan, those spells that Ondluche cast into runes. He learned that there were many runes, single, paired or in whole sets; he also learned that the runes possessed different powers when used singly or together.

Trigal's evil lost him the support of the Emperor of Aenoch. He named him then anew and called him Trigal Dark Tongue, and drove the wizard from his halls. Trigal took another name, Nulak-Kiz-Din and he continued his quest for The Paths of Umbra.

In those days there were tomes in the Dwarven Halls that recorded much of the history of the world and that of the Dwarves. Nulak took the guise of a Gnome scholar and gained entry to the deeps of Norgorad-Kam where the greater part of these manuscripts were kept and studied them for many long years. His sorcery was so great that the Dwarves did not know of the deception for a long while. When they discovered that he was a magi they cursed him. In those days, much as today, the Dwarves carried a great malice for all sorcerers, for it was the Goblin Ondluche and his sorcery that destroyed all that they had loved in ages past. They bound Nulak and branded his hand with an iron from the Hall's Forge and named him Baeglulth which is Hand of Ash. This mark stayed with Nulak forever, and he bore it with him where ever he went, no matter the guise he took. And it gave him away more often than once. The brand named him a thief and a liar and a sorcerer.

The Dwarves drove Nulak from the Hall, but it mattered little to him, for Nulak had more than enough information. He

gathered to him a group of stout fellows, rogues and warriors and a few priests and he began a trek into the west in search of Gorthurag, the First Home of the Dwarves, long abandoned.

His long adventure, filled with dreadful deeds, great heroism and battles with ancient beasts do not come into these tales, but suffice it so say the wizard found what he was looking for.

Gorthurag, long abandoned after its destruction in the Goblin Dwarf Wars, stood like a hollow tomb. He sought after the Mammoth Scrolls, those ancient texts within which the Dwarves recorded their own and the world's history. He hoped that they must somehow reveal the hidden knowledge of any of the Runes, the Obsidian Book, or other devices which would lead him to greater power. Though he never found the lost archives where the scrolls were buried, he did find other clues, and dangerous ones at that.

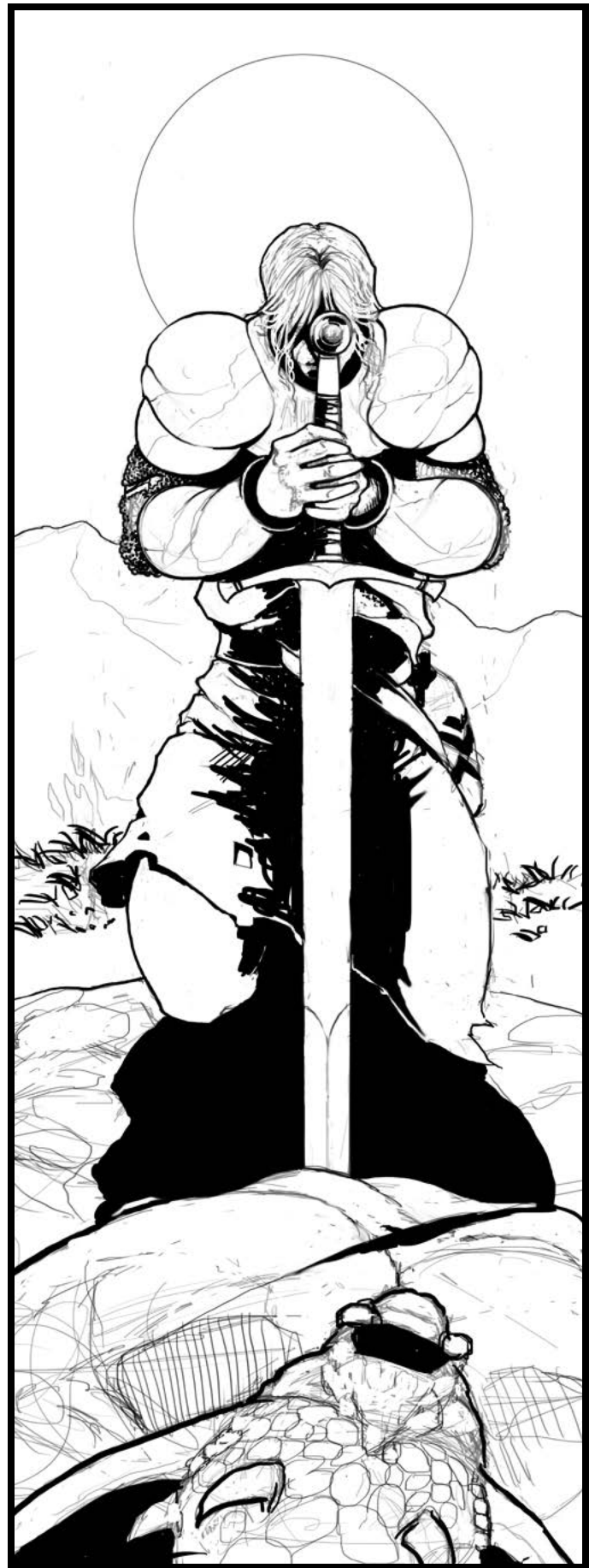
He learned that when the Dwarf King Dognur VII slew Ondluche, he found upon the Goblin's broken body a tube of brass within which were many sheets of magical runes. They fell out of the history of the Dwarves when Dognur gave them over to some of his allies. Nulak learned also of Dognur's ordering of the Runes into schools, and to include the greater runes, those of the dwarf fathers of old. And so the schools, Four Pillars, Arcs of Time, Paths of Umbra, Gray Mist, etc., came to be.

So Nulak took up his staff once more to quest the world over, until he at last gathered the fabled Rune Sheets to him. He knew then that these were a set of the Ondluch-Eroan. From them he garnered the power to cross over from the material world and enter the outer planes. During the long plague that followed, his followers spread throughout the world, and with them, many of the Runes. What Ondluche had guarded with care, the magi did not. Greater knowledge of all of Ondluche's sorcery came to them, and more runes as well. Men sought other sets, the Blood Runes called the Arc of Time, the Dream Runes called the Deep Waters and the Bone Runes called the Dead's Chorus and more besides. In all these travels Ondluche's other runes came to light as well, a host of lesser runes and other greater still.

RUNE MARKS

So men hunted them, questing for their power and the wealth they promised. Many tried and many died, but some few won out and in the end, unraveled the sorcery of the runes. These men, some masters of Nulak's White Order, others wild adventurers, scholars and explorers, wandered the world seeking the knowledge of the runes. In time, men called them rune marks, and they marked the beginning of a new age.

They learned to distinguish the greater dwarven runes from the lesser Ondluchian rune. They mastered them and learned to channel their power. But all knew that only a few such runes had found their way into the light, and many more lay buried, waiting to be unearthed by those stalwart enough to crawl into the hidden recesses of the world.



THE RUNE MARK

RUNE MARK

In the crumbled ruins of ancient cities, tombs, and crypts where dead kings lie, in the halls of libraries upon tablets of stone and vellum scrolls, echo the secrets of a language spoken of only by gods. In their ruin lie written clues and faint memories of their power and glory, unnoticed by all but a few, passed by as curiosities or riddles best forgotten. Unraveling these carvings come the rune marks, scholars and adventurers driven by a wild lust to know the Language of Creation, to unravel its secrets and master its eldritch might, for with it they open the hidden deeps of the world's mysteries and the treasures of the gods are made bare. With knowledge comes power and with this power they can govern or guide, beguile or dissuade, but more, the runes command a power beyond mortal man, for with its mastery comes a mastery of creation, to reshape the world into one of their own making. The rune marks are craftsmen, artificers of a world of runic magic.

The rune mark derives his power from runes. The runes themselves are glyphs that contain the magic of the Language of Creation, words of power. Through their mastery the rune mark alters the world around him. The ancient languages come to him easily; he masters the tongues of men with all their subtleties. Cultures diverse, great, and small, open to him as if in a book. His mind is ever-bent toward understanding. Early on he masters the forge and the making of tools, potions, elixirs, arms and armor, of how things work, both magical and mundane. He etches a rune upon a blade, drawing flames from the steel. He carves the glyph upon a stone to waste away its strength. He forges items of wonder and imbues them with magic. With these skills he combines use the runes themselves and masters their greater magic potential.

The rune mark's craft requires that he understand the machinations of the temporal world, and the clamor of the spiritual. He can be headstrong at times, for his is a knowledge that harnesses the powers of both worlds, giving him an insight he believes others never attain. He is able to look into the hearts and minds of men, and using an amazing ability to remember nuances, see them for what they are.

Rune marks do not master spells as other magic using classes do; they master runes and the magic within them.

The rune marks do not shy away from combat. They are skilled in the use of most weapons and are able to wear armor. Generally they have no desire to fall upon their swords and sacrifice their lives needlessly. Though they do not fear death, their lusts are for creation, not the end of it. They do not generally call men to arms, and only rarely lead them into battle. They do, however, bend their minds to guiding others in their own rule, and aiding them with advice or understanding through influencing their leaders. Theirs is the power behind the throne and the arm of that power if need should call.

He quests to unravel the secrets of the ancient world, for his own purpose or another's, or the challenge of it. Rune marks come from all walks of life, joined with their brethren through a common desire for knowledge. The rune mark may choose any alignment.



ABILITIES

Runes: Rune marks study the Codices, books of lore that contain the runes. They learn to read and write these runes and the basic principles of understanding them. In order for a rune mark to unleash the magic of a rune from the Codices, he must master it first. Once he has mastered a particular rune he can use that rune; however, he can only use a limited number of runes per day. The rune mark Class Table below lists the base number per level they are able to use.

Beginning Runes: Rune marks begin play with four mastered runes. For each new level, they are able to master new runes of their choice from the Codices. Refer to the Rune Mark Class Table below for the number of mastered runes they gain per level. They may also find new runes not in the Codices and attempt to master those, though this does not increase the limited number of runes they can use per day.

BONUS RUNES

With a high charisma score, the rune mark gains bonus runes. The rune mark adds his attribute bonus to the base number of runes he can use. For example, a 1st level rune mark with a charisma of 18 has an attribute bonus of +3. The base number of runes he can use per day is four, plus the attribute bonus, allowing a total of seven.

EIDETIC MEMORY (Intelligence): Rune marks study the vastly complicated Language of Creation and the many variations of its written and spoken form. To master this language, their minds are trained to focus on and recognize a great deal of nuance. As such, they can recall people, places, events, and items with uncanny accuracy. So long as a rune mark has encountered it, he can attempt to recall it; this holds true even for things that he may not have actually noticed, such as a person within his peripheral vision. The recall works for all five senses: taste, hearing, touch, smell, and sight.

ALCHEMY (Charisma): The rune mark practices alchemy. As such he must learn a variety of crafts, from metallurgy, to chemistry, to the properties of flesh, blood, and bone of a wide variety of beasts and monsters. The rune mark begins play with simple skills to work a forge, and to identify and utilize plants and similar materials. As such he can mend small objects such as sword handles, reset an axe in its haft, sharpen blades, etc., or identify plants for their properties, cultivating a leaf to draw out its healing properties, etc. For instance, with a successful attribute check, and assuming the plants or chemicals are available, a rune mark can locate particular plants and herbs that have particular abilities, such as identifying white willow trees, whose bark has aspirin, or the Taefless leaf that has healing powers in Aihilde.

As they increase in level, their skills grow as well.

At 4th level they are able to make any weapon or armor, etc. Their knowledge of the properties of things has also expanded, allowing them to concoct potions and poultices. They can also, with a successful attribute check, create magical potions that

have similar effects to 1st and 2nd level spells. At 8th level they can make expert weapons and armor. They can make greater magical potions similar to 3rd-5th level spells. At 12th level they can forge +1 magical weapons and armor. They can make even more magically potent potions similar to 6th level spells. The potion ability increases as follows: at 16th level they can make 7th level spells, at 18th level they can make 8th level spells and at 20th level they can make 9th level spells.

Concerning the creation of potions, the CK should consult the *Monsters & Treasure* pages 87-88 for potion creation. The rune mark must spend money for the proper materials, equipment, and ingredients to create potions.

NOTE: The CK may have to adjudicate this from time to time. Characters are going to attempt to create potions that are not on the list. In this case, consult the *Creating Potions* section in the *Monsters & Treasure*, pages 87-88 for more guidelines.

To do any of the above, they must possess the necessary tools and materials. Materials cost money and the rune mark must secure them before he can commence. Consult the *Monsters & Treasure* pages 87-88 for a better understanding of cost.

LANGUAGE MASTERY: The rune mark strives to master cultures, social norms, and languages. In order to use this ability the rune mark must be immersed in the language for at least four days. Once this minimum requirement is met he can master the tongue. At 1st level, he can greet in the language, ask simple questions, and communicate simple wants and desires. At 3rd level this ability improves, and the rune mark attains a greater grasp of a language, able to carry out simple conversations with native speakers. At 5th level the rune mark is able to rapidly master a language. His experience and knowledge of language allows him to pick up words and intonations involved in complex languages. At 7th level the rune mark understands intonations of speech and the cultural norms. For instance, at this level the rune mark might quickly detect that shaking with the left hand is a grave insult in a warrior-based society. At 12th level this power extends to magical tongues and languages. This ability is limited, for as a rune mark may be able to decipher the script, he can do little with it. He might read a fire ball spell scroll, know the contents of the scroll and what the sorcery does, but he cannot himself cast fire ball. However, if a door is locked with a magical language and he deciphers the language he may be able to open the door.

TRACE RUNE: At 6th level a rune mark no longer needs to write a lesser rune down. He can trace it in the air to unleash its power.

VOCALIZE RUNE: At 10th level a rune mark no longer needs to trace a lesser rune; he can speak the words and unlock its power.

ATTRIBUTE BONUS: At 15th level the rune mark gains 1 point of charisma.

IMPART ESSENCE: At 18th level, a rune mark is able to create magical relics that enhance his own powers. He does this by imparting, or sacrificing, part of himself and passing that sacrifice

(referred to here as his essence) into the item (relic). The sacrifice comes in the nature of attribute points, HP, or XP. By Imparting Essence, the rune mark makes a relic to enhance his own power. Foremost, it can enhance the rune mark's abilities; when the rune mark has possession of the item it can increase attribute points, HP, or impart special abilities through creating a greater relic.

CREATING THE RELIC

Creating the relic requires all the necessary tools (including a forge) and materials that creating any mundane item requires. If the item is an arm band, the rune mark must be able to melt down and shape the metals to make it. He must possess the metals as well. Anything that requires the actual smith craft is required. Creating the relic is called the "casting". The relic can be anything of the rune mark's choosing - a ring, bracer, crown, band, sword, etc.

Once the item is chosen the casting begins. The rune mark creates the item, imparting what abilities, HP, or levels he desires into the item. At the last he carves the rune breath of life into the relic. The breath of life "awakens" the item, and it immediately becomes sentient. He or she then places the rune slivers upon it. It is important to note that the rune mark must have translated both these runes in order to create a relic.

By placing the *slivers* rune upon the item, the rune mark creates an empathetic bond with the sentient relic. The relic can communicate with the rune mark through empathy, passing basic emotive responses between the two. The item's sentient abilities depend upon its will, which in turn depends upon what the rune mark imparted.

When a rune mark creates a relic, he must keep that relic in his possession. The item must be physically touching the rune mark's flesh, or within 12 inches of his living flesh in order to pass along the enhancements. It cannot be magically stored or placed in such a way as there is any barrier (physical or magical) between the rune mark and the relic. It can be worn over clothing, but this practice risks that piece of clothing be lost or maimed. If at any time the item passes outside the 12-inch limit or is lost, the rune mark instantly suffers from loss of the item (see below). If the rune mark fails to retrieve the item within one day per level of the rune mark, he suffers permanent losses. (See below.)

A rune mark increases his own power by passing power into the relic. This is done by sacrificing HP, attribute points or XP; the sacrificed points are given to the relic. So long as the rune mark has possession of the relic, the relic's HP, attribute points and experience are added to the rune mark's (effectively adding the sacrificed points back). In addition the rune mark gains the enhanced points as noted on the chart below.

NOTES: Increasing one's constitution does not mean that HP are gained retroactively. If one sacrifices XP sufficient to lose a level, they must subtract HP and class abilities accordingly.

SACRIFICED: This column refers to the specific amount of HP, attribute points or levels the rune mark sacrifices and gives to the relic.

RELIC GAINS: This column refers to the physical HP or will points the item itself gains from the rune mark's sacrifice.

RUNE MARK/RELIC ENHANCED: This column refers to the amount by which attributes, HP or special abilities are increased, so long as the rune mark is in physical possession of the item. A rune mark can only sacrifice attribute points for similar attribute points.

COST: This is the cost associated with the relic. The rune mark must spend 1000gp per HP or attribute the relic yields to the rune mark, and 3000gp per ability.

EXAMPLE: Hale of Mickleberg has a charisma 14 and 49 HP. He casts his relic, a crown, which he passes 24 HP and 8 points of charisma. At this point, Hale has 25 HP and a charisma of 6; the relic possesses 24 HP and 2 charisma with a will of 2. However, Hale takes up the relic, adding the relic's HP and attribute points to his own, which places him back at 49 HP, with 14 charisma. He also adds the enhanced attribute and HP; this gains him 16 more HP as well as 2 points of charisma. Combining all together, and as long as Hale holds the relic, he has 65 HP and a charisma of 16.

The relic is a sentient item; its own strength depends upon what is imparted to it. Once it has a will, the item becomes sentient and can automatically communicate with its maker. It always possesses the same alignment as its maker.

CASTING THE RELIC: The rune mark must have access to a forge, or smithy of his own design, and the materials required to create the relic. A fully functional forge costs at least 10,000gp. Physically creating the relic is time-consuming and expensive. It requires five days of smith-craft. For each HP transferred, the process requires one additional day, each attribute point requires three additional days, and for each 100,000 XP it will require five additional days.

RELIC ABILITIES

Will	Communication	Sense	Power
1-10	Semi-Empathy	None	None
11-13	Semi-Empathy	Sight	None
14-15	Semi-Empathy	Sight, Hearing	1 lesser
16	Empathy	Sight, Hearing	1 lesser

SACRIFICED	RELIC GAINS	RUNE MARK/RELIC ENHANCED	COST
3 hit points	3 hit point	2 enhanced hit point	250gp/hp
4 base attribute points	1 att. point, +1 will	1 enhanced attribute	5000 gp/bonus
200,000 ex. points	1 point will	1 lesser ability (see Iniate Runes)	9000 gp/ability
500,000 ex. points	3 point will	1 greater ability (any Rune)	19000 gp/ability

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When a relic reaches a will of 17, consult the Monsters & Treasure page 90 for its abilities. At any time anyone other than the rune mark possesses the relic, the item will attempt to master him via its will. The more powerful the item, the greater its ability to master others.

The rune mark can never sacrifice more than the original HP total, or attribute score, -1. For instance, if a rune mark has a 14 wisdom, he cannot sacrifice more than 13 points of wisdom, even though he may have gained some wisdom through the impart essence. That would leave him with 1 point of wisdom. All attribute modifiers apply. If a rune mark sacrifices enough strength attribute points so that he only has a strength of 2, he suffers the necessary penalties.

LOSING A RELIC: Losing a relic means that the item has moved more than 12 inches from, or has been magically blocked by some barrier from the rune mark's possession. The rune mark immediately loses all the relic's HP and attribute points, as well as the enhanced HP and attribute points, and the relic's abilities. Furthermore, if the rune mark does not recover the relic within one day per level, he suffers a permanent loss of 1/4 of his hit/attribute/experience points from the relic's hit/attribute total. That is to say, he suffers a permanent loss of 1/4 of the hit/attribute/experience points that were passed into the relic.

EXAMPLE: Hale of Mickleberg wears his relic, the crown that he cast into an iron helm. He has a charisma of 16 and 65 HP while wearing the item. In battle, a fire giant smashes his head with a mace, knocking the crown from his head and causing 10 points of damage. Hale immediately loses the 10 damage from the blow, reducing his points to 55, but the loss of the crown is far more catastrophic. He loses the enhanced HP, 16, and the relic's HP, 24, reducing him to 15 HP. Worse is to come. Failing to retrieve the relic within the prescribed time means Hale loses 1/4 quarter of the relic's HP permanently; 6 HP are lost. After he is healed, without his relic in hand, Hale only has 43 HP.

If, due to the separation, the character's HP are reduced to 0 or lower (down to -9), or an attribute is reduced to 0, he becomes a shadow of his former self, losing his corporeal form and the vast majority of his powers. He has HD 3d8, AC 15, and HP 21, and his primary attributes are mental. The shadow can communicate, knows who he is or was, and he can cast runes as before, but only as a 3rd level rune mark. The shadow can grow over time, gaining 1 HP and 1 more level of rune mastery for every 25 years, to a maximum of 15 HD. If the shadow is reunited with the relic his abilities return at the rate of 5 HP per week and 1 attribute point per week until he is fully restored.

DESTRUCTION OF A RELIC: If the item is destroyed the rune mark's essence is destroyed with it. He instantly suffers the loss of quadruple the amount of enhanced HP, attribute points, or XP. This damage is subtracted from the total attribute or HP score. It is permanent and cannot be magically restored. Note that the rune mark can lose levels due to XP loss.

If, due to the destruction, the character's HP are reduced to between 0 and -9, or an attribute to 0, he becomes a shadow of his

former self, losing his corporeal form and the vast majority of his powers. He has HD 3d8, AC 15, and HP 21, and his primary attributes are mental. The shadow can communicate, knows who he is or was, and he can cast runes as before but only as a 3rd level rune mark. If the item is destroyed and he is reduced to -10 or lower, or his attributes are reduced to -1 or lower, the rune mark is killed.

FOR EXAMPLE: Igarn has a charisma of 15 and 70 HP. He creates a relic and uses 12 charisma points and 24 HP to cast the relic. He gains 16 enhanced HP and 3 enhanced charisma points. This increases his HP to 86 and his charisma to 18. A red dragon's fire strikes the relic and destroys it; Igarn instantly suffers the loss of 40 HP (24 passed into the relic and the 16 enhanced) and 15 points of charisma (12 passed into the relic and the 3 enhanced). Even before the damage from the dragon's fire is deducted, Igarn's HP drop to 46, and his charisma to 0. In this case, Igarn dies, for his attribute score went below 1.

WILLINGLY DESTROYING A RELIC: A rune mark can unmake a relic any time he desires. This is called reconciling the relic. Doing so requires the same amount of time it took to create the relic, however there is no cost associated with it, aside from the forge itself. All enhancements the relic granted the rune mark are removed, and the rune mark suffers a permanent loss of 1 point of constitution.

CREATE LIFE (Charisma): At 24th level, a rune mark is able to detach small slivers of his own essence and give them a life of their own. Some small sliver of the rune mark's essence goes over to that which he creates. By doing so the rune mark gives shape and form to a creature of his own design by sacrificing slivers of himself.

Creating life requires all the necessary tools (including a forge) and materials that creating any mundane item requires. To create life, the rune mark must have access to the elemental substance of the life he is creating. For example, the creation of an elemental creature of fire requires the rune mark must be near fire. Creating life is called the "awakening". The creature can be anything of the rune mark's design - an orc, goblin, manticores, or something he conceives on his own.

Once the creature is chosen, the awakening begins. The rune mark creates the creature, imparting the abilities, HP, or levels as desired into the item. At the last he carves the rune breath of life into the relic. The breath of life "awakens" the item, immediately calling it to life. He or she places the rune slivers upon it. It is important to note that the rune mark must have translated both these runes in order to create life.

By placing the slivers rune upon the creature, the rune mark creates an empathetic bond with it. The creature can communicate with the rune mark through empathy, passing basic emotive responses between the two, or through language, depending upon the creation's language ability.

To create life requires a successful charisma check, CL of base 10 adjusted by its HP, attribute points, and abilities. Consult the following table:

SACRIFICE	CREATURE GAINS	CL	COST
1 hit point	10 hit points (1 d10 hit dice)	1/HD	250gp
1 attribute point	5 attribute points	1/5	5000/gp bonus
10,000 experience points	I Special Ability	1	5000/gp bonus
50,000 experience points	II Special Ability	3	9000gp/ability
100,000 experience points	III Special Ability	5	19000gp/ability

You can never sacrifice more than the original HP total or attribute score. For instance, if a rune mark has a 14 wisdom, he cannot ever sacrifice more than 13 points of wisdom, even though he may have gained some wisdom through the impart essence.

Any creatures called into being look upon the rune mark as their master. However, their attitude towards their master may vary, from looking benignly on him, to utter hatred and desire to slay him. In contrast, most rune marks are bound to the creatures they've made. They know that the creatures reflect their own essence in some way, and killing them is something akin to suicide. Any creature the rune mark himself destroys, causes 1 HP of permanent damage to the rune mark.

At times the rune mark may be unable to control that which he has created. If the rune mark fashions a creature meant to serve him, that creature may possess qualities of the rune mark that he did not know existed.

THE CREATION

Once a successful charisma check is made, the creature comes into being. It is necessary to determine how close to the rune mark's vision the creature has come.

If the attribute check exceeds 7 beyond what was needed, the creature comes out perfectly. If it exceeds by 5-6 it possesses a minor flaw, if it exceeds by 3-4 it possesses a major flaw. And if it is equal to the check or exceeds it by 1-2, the creature is an abomination.

PERFECT: This result means the creation possesses the exact qualities the rune mark intended. There may be some slight imperfections, particularly if the rune mark created a living creature, but they would be small, such as different eye color, a personality twist, etc.

MINOR FLAW: This result reflects some type of interference with the spell. This could be as complicated as a small bolt of positively-charged energy hurled through him during casting, causing the spell to misfire without his knowledge. The creation resembles much of what the rune mark intended, but with some noticeable difference: long hair may be scaly, fingers become claws, etc. Otherwise, everything turns out fine.

MAJOR FLAW: A major flaw reflects a huge mishap with the creation process and the creature possesses polar opposite qualities to those the caster envisioned; a water elemental becomes a fire elemental, good becomes evil, plated scales becomes fibrous tissue, etc. The creature will not turn on its master directly, but may try to disguise its flaw. It will, at the nearest possible point, try to flee, or sabotage whatever tasks are given to it.

ABOMINATION: This means the magic utterly failed, and the rune mark has made a monstrosity. What erupts from his act of creation is beyond his ability to reason with or control. He must either destroy it or let it flee.

PRIME ATTRIBUTE: Charisma

ALIGNMENT: Any

HIT DICE: d8

WEAPONS: Any

ARMOR: Leather, Padded, Hide, Studded Leather

ABILITIES: Alchemy, Attribute Bonus, Create Life, Eidetic Memory, Impart Essence, Language Mastery, Trace Rune, Vocalize Rune,

Level	Runes/Day	HD	BtH	EPP
1 Pupil	4	d6	0	0
2 Novitiate of the Rune	5	d6	+1	2,251
3 Apprentice of the Rune	6	d6	+1	5,001
4 Alchemist	7	d6	+1	9,001
5 Layman of the Rune	8	d6	+2	18,001
6 Auger	9	d6	+2	35,001
7 Journeyman of the Rune	10	d6	+2	70,001
8 Craftsman	11	d6	+3	140,001
9 Savant	12	d6	+3	300,001
10 Loremaster	13	d6	+3	425,001
11 The Gray	14	+3	+4	650,001
12 Master Auger	15	+3	+4	900,001
13 Master Alchemist	16	+3	+4	1,250,001
14 Farseer	17	+3	+4	1,500,001
15 Rune Master	18	+3	+4	1,750,001
16 Rune Master (of Copper)	19	+3	+5	2,000,001
17 Rune Master (of Brass)	20	+3	+5	2,250,001
18 Rune Master (of Bronze)	21	+3	+5	2,500,001
19 Rune Master (of Iron)	22	+3	+5	2,750,001
20 Rune Lord	23	+1	+6	3,000,001
21 Rune Lord (the Brown)	24	+1	+6	3,250,001
22 Rune Lord (the Gray)	25	+1	+6	3,500,001
23 Rune Lord (the White)	26	+1	+6	3,750,001
24 Rune Lord (the Wise)	27	+1	+7	4,000,001

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THE RUNE MARK IN AIHRDE

Most rune marks come from the Paths of Umbra or the subsidiary guild, The White Order. Both guilds trace their origins into the depths of history. The White Order, the older of the two, was founded by Trigal the Mage and was dedicated to the acquisition of Rune Lore. During the long dark of Winter, Trigal, having changed his name to Nulak-Kiz-Din, founded the Paths of Umbra, a guild in the service of the Horned God, Unklar. The Umbrians, as they were called, followed the same paths as the White Order. They ruled at the side of the Horned God and dominated the magi of Aihrde for a thousand years, often occupying positions of wealth and privilege.

The Umbrians suffered much during the Winter Dark Wars, many of their folk being killed and destroyed, and many more driven from their halls and temples into the wilds. This served them in the long run, for most of those who suffered were evil and vile of heart. In the aftermath the guild never fully recovered, with many of its branches going into hiding. In time the guild recovered some of its strength, though many of those who joined later did so for the wealth of knowledge that was theirs to command. Eventually these reconstituted the White Order.

The White Order is a much smaller guild, owing its allegiance to none but the Rune Lore. It is loosely organized, with many small branches in various cities. Its members generally support one another in the acquisition of runes and the knowledge of the ancients. They generally serve one another in small schools, teaching young aspirants. Despite this atmosphere of cooperation, many in the White Order guard their Runes from each other. To gain a Rune can be a difficult and expensive prospect and giving it away to another an act of foolish charity. Oft times they slay one another for knowledge. But in general these are wise folk, and they are reasoned in their dealings with one another.

PLAYING THE WHITE ORDER

After the Winter Dark, many of the Paths of Umbra returned to their roots and abandoned any desire to bring back the horned god and the long winter. They again refer to themselves as the White Order, and are dedicated more to the acquisition of power and knowledge than to any acts of evil or planar degradation. Their search now is for the rune stones of the Language of Creation, of which the Paths of Umbra are a small part.

The guild is spread far and wide throughout almost all the known kingdoms. In many cases, they built their libraries and halls, which are generally referred to as schools, upon the very foundations of their predecessors, the Paths of Umbra. There is no particular guild master or hierarchal command structure. There is, however, a system of ranks to which the magi adhere. These ranks mark both the power and acquired knowledge of a guild member and are delineated by color and title.

The greatest school of the White Order is Aranowl. It lies upon the Isle of Eleriath, the southernmost island which covers the approaches to the delta along the Ardeen River. This massive complex sits atop a high cliff overlooking the seas to the south.

During the Winter Dark, this edifice served the Lords of Aufstrag as their fortress to overlook the sea and river beyond. Soon after the war, the King of Kayomar seized the castle and decried using it as a fortress, for its walls were too wasted. Eventually, he granted the right of occupation to the White Order. They have occupied it ever since, rebuilding its holds and halls, the outbuildings, and eventually the walls.

It is not used in a warlike capacity. In fact, the White Order has made a gesture to the King of their peaceful intentions by removing the gates surrounding the structure. Aranowl is a university, filled with libraries, laboratories, school rooms, dormitories and the like. At any given time there are between 150-250 rune marks, magi and priests in the complex. Much of the collected wisdom of the world is gathered in this place, for the guild masters here keep in constant contact with other lore masters from all walks of life, both good and evil, by letter and magical means.

Access to the school by non-guild members is common, but expensive. Non-members must pay 25gp a day to scour the shelves and racks for themselves. To have a guild member do it, the costs is 50gp + 5gp per level per day. Those granted access to the libraries gain a +10 to any attributes checks concerning legend lore, history etc etc.

Members of the White Order can be of any alignment. They tend to be chaotic neutral, lawful neutral or neutral. They include rune marks, wizards and priests. They possess tremendous skills in the acquisition of knowledge.

GUILD TITLES

Rank is designated by an Alb, a tunic, usually worn only during formal occasions*

- 1 Token (gray alb, sleeveless)
- 2 Ward (gray alb with sleeves)
- 3 Candidate (gray alb, sleeves, waist olive length chasuble)
- 4 Pensioner (blue alb, sleeves, chasuble with blue cap)
- 5 Keeper (blue alb, blue berretta "square" cap)
- 6 Benefactor (blue alb, wide brim added to the blue cap)
- 7 Tutor (lawn sleeves added to the blue alb)
- 8 Seminarian (white Amice added, chasuble becomes white)
- 9 Pedagogue (Mitre staff)
- 10 Mark of the White Order (white alb, over all, no sleeves)
- 11 Knight of the White Order (white alb, with sleeves)
- 12 Lord of the White Order (all above, a pale white color)

* There are guild members who do not follow the recommended hierarchy. These are generally called Proselytes and are usually found alone in their travels. They are revered by the rest of the order. Proselytes are ideal for characters.

COMMON SAYINGS & EXPRESSIONS

MASTERING THE RUNES: To gain knowledge of and learn how to use the various runic spells.

WALKING THE PATHS: To use the Runes to breach dimensions of space, to plane travel.

PLAYING THE PATHS OF UMBRA

In the waning days of the Winter Dark, Nulak-Kiz-Din, servant of Unklar, realized the futility of the war. Some report that he saw the power of the Council, or the hubris of his dark master and knew that in the end evil could not prevail. But this is not so, for Nulak had mastered the Arcs of Time, the Blood Runes and seen the end before it ever came to pass. And when he fled, the Paths of Umbra were left leaderless. When Unklar fell to the might of Discipero, the order collapsed.

Some tried to find their master, others tried to lead, still others joined Coburg the Undying, or whomsoever they felt would take the mantle of the Dark God. But all were hunted. With ruthless efficiency the Confessor Knights hunted them, rooted them out and killed them. In the span of a few short years the order was almost utterly destroyed.

Some who survived changed their paths, and reconstituted the White Order. But others clung to the old ways and worshipped the horned god in all his majesty and evil. They secreted themselves away, in temples, dungeons in the deep, dark places of the earth, forests, mountains, trackless wastes, and abandoned ruins. Some took refuge in Aufstrag, and there, for a time served Coburg, but rose against him in the end and sought to summon Unklar on their own terms. Others hid themselves in plain site, adopting normal lives to spy on the worlds of men and the Young Kingdoms

The guild has little order, though they rank themselves as of old. When they gather in the meets to learn, trade news and runes, spells and powers, to plot the return of their master, they are arranged so that the Novices (1st-4th level) sit in a half circle around the Laymen (5th-9th level) who also sit in a half circle around the Masters (10th-15th level) who face the Lords in their own half circle.

But as with all things evil, it corrupts. But this evil corrupts most of all. For the Masters become consumed by the filth of Unklar and begin to change. They morph into creatures most foul - giant cunam-liath, floating stalks of nightmare and terror.

Umbrians are always neutral or lawful evil. They worship Unklar and Nulak-Kiz-Din. They have no organized practice of worship for their dark god, but consider the winter nights special.

They are steeped in rune lore and always seek to find the Winter Rune of Nulak-Kiz-Din, for with it they believe they can bring Unklar back to the plane. For a similar reason they seek the horn of Unklar as well, a piece of his great horn shorn off by the blade Discipero and stolen by thieves. They generally believe their master lives but has hidden himself, awaiting his time when he can bring back the Dark God.

Their strongest bases of power are in Aufstrag but they are found everywhere, especially in the Gottland.



RUNE MAGIC

Words carry power. Wizards use them to channel their arcane sorcery, and priests to intone the divine power of their gods. But there is a power in words beyond that which is used by the wizard or the priest. Words reflect the order and chaos of all things, capturing that order and casting it back out in understandable forms. Language and words carry their own power, and their own magic.

RUNE MAGIC DEFINED

Rune magic is derived from magic bound in words of power as found in the Language of Creation. These words are difficult to master; they are complex both in form and in sound. To draw forth the power bound in a word, it must be repeated with the utmost precision, intonation, pronunciation, emotion, and in some cases, expression. The runes as created by the dwarves are markings that capture the power of individual words, removing the impossible complications that come with using the word itself. Many runes contain multiple words of power, bound together and interwoven to make a more powerful rune. Rune magic's source lies in the word(s), because they are expressed in the form of the rune. They are written and found upon stones, special parchments, scrolls, etc.

Rune marks translate and master runes that they know from the Codices or that they have acquired. Once they have mastered the rune, they know it, and they can use it again. No special vessels are required to contain their magic; i.e. they do not have books, totems, holy items, etc. However, once a rune is unlocked and committed to memory its translation may be lost or forgotten because of other rune spells or physical circumstances. If a rune mark suffers from such an attack, they can lose some or all of their knowledge of the runes. For this reason many carry items or hide items with their runes written upon them.

USING RUNES

The magic used by rune marks is classified as runic; it is derived from mastering the runes of power. Rune marks gain power not through deliberate study or prayer, but through mastering the Codices or finding previously unmastered runes of power and first translating them, then mastering their hidden magic.

TRANSLATING RUNES

Rune marks do not memorize runes daily as do wizards, nor do they pray for them daily as do clerics. Early in his career the rune mark studies and learns the basic meaning and use of a litany of runes found in the Codex of the Runes of the Initiate; these are listed in the Rune Magic section that follows. At 1st level the rune mark has translated each of the runes in the Codex of the Runes of the Initiate. Like learning a foreign language, he has learned to translate these runes; he does not need a book or device to hold them (though he may wish to keep such a book or device). It takes on average 1 month to translate 1 rune.

Once a rune has been translated the rune mark knows it permanently. He does not have to re-translate it unless some mind-altering event erases the rune from his memory.

The rune mark will eventually come across runes that are not in the Codex of the Runes of the Initiate. To translate such a rune requires a successful charisma check and at least one week of study to translate a new rune. Once the rune mark has translated a rune, it is added to his list of runes he can master and use.

MASTERING RUNES

A rune mark can only master a rune he has translated. A mastered rune is a rune the rune mark can inscribe to unleash its power.

The rune mark begins play with four mastered runes, plus any runes he gains from his attribute bonus (refer to rune mark class below). The player chooses the runes he wishes to master first. These cannot be switched out once chosen.

With each level gained, he is allowed to master one rune plus his charisma bonus. For example; a rune mark with a charisma 15 can master two runes per level.

To master a rune the rune mark makes an attribute check against the rune's listed attribute, either intelligence or charisma. If successful, he has mastered the rune and can now use it. If unsuccessful, he cannot attempt to translate that rune again until after attaining another level of experience, however, he is allowed to master another rune in its place.

As with translating, once mastered, a rune needs never be re-mastered unless a mind-altering event erases the rune from the rune mark's memory.

TYPES OF RUNES

Inscribed (being cast) runes are either active or static. If active, their power unleashes immediately. If static, their power unleashes under particular circumstances as set by the rune mark. It takes a full round to write any one rune.

ACTIVE RUNES: The power of an active rune is released at the end of the round in which it is inscribed, after all actions have taken place.

STATIC RUNES: At times the rune mark does not wish an inscribed rune to be activated immediately. To achieve this he must contain its power through a series of runic inscriptions, including the containing rune, the reactive rune, and the conditional rune. The containing rune, *linking*, is written first, as it contains or holds the magic of the next rune, the reactive rune. *Linking* requires one round to inscribe. The reactive rune, that rune being held in a stasis until triggered, whether it is *fire*, *arrest motion*, etc is written next. This requires a second round to inscribe. The conditional rune follows the reactive rune. This is the rune that establishes the conditions which release the power of the reactive rune. This requires a third round to inscribe. Conditional runes are other runes the rune mark has translated.

For example, the rune mark wishes to create an item that allows him to breath under water. He inscribes the *linking* rune upon a ring and successfully makes his attribute check. He follows that with the the air rune and makes a second successful attribute

check. He follows with the conditional rune, the water rune. No attribute check is necessary, and he informs the CK that the ring's rune power activates the moment it touches water, at which point the static rune becomes active, and the air rune lasts only so long as the air rune normally would.

DAILY USAGE

Runes are complicated forms of language, allowing the rune marks to manipulate the world around them. They require a great deal of mental fortitude. Because of this, a rune mark is limited in the number of runes he can use each day. Each begins with four at 1st level, plus the attribute bonus. A rune mark's level and attribute bonus determine the number of runes he can cast each day. The number of runes allowed each day increases incrementally with the character's level.

The rune mark can use a rune multiple times in a day; however, he cannot use the same active rune simultaneously. For example, he cannot wield two fire runes at the same time. He can have a number of static runes equal to his level plus charisma bonus going at the same time. For example, a 3rd level rune mark with a charisma of 15 can have four static runes. A static rune can be used simultaneously, such as two static fire runes. A static rune can also be used as an active rune simultaneously, meaning the rune mark can have a static fire rune, and still wield the rune actively.

Runes can be used in conjunction with other runes.

Each rune's description lists either charisma or intelligence; this is the attribute required to successfully use the rune. The challenge base is 12 or 18, depending on the rune mark's prime attributes. The rune mark adds level and attribute bonus to the check. The challenge level is zero, unless the rune lists a challenge level or the CK determines that the circumstances require one (e.g.: casting a fire rune underwater), or unless the rune is being cast against a monster or character, in which case the HD or level serves as the CL. For instance: if a rune mark uses an arrest motion rune against a 4 HD ogre they must make a successful check with a CL 4.

To release the power of a mastered rune the rune mark inscribes the rune with his finger or with a stylus if he so chooses. At 6th level a rune mark learns to trace runes in the air, without having to physically inscribe them. At 12th level the rune mark can vocalize the rune, releasing its power with the spoken word only. Once the power is released, consult each individual rune for the result. Some runes do not allow tracing or vocalizing.

Spell resistance does not work against the power of a rune.

Once a rune mark has exhausted his rune usage for a day, he must rest for at least eight hours before he can use runes again. Once he has rested he can begin using runes again.

Runes are broken up and listed in the Codices; some runes, when combined together, make schools of runes. Mastering one type of Codex gains the rune mark the title of Master of that

particular Codex. So, one who successfully translated the Shadow Runes would be a Master of the Shadow Runes.

A CAUTIONARY NOTE

The runes themselves are not given levels; any rune mark can possess any rune and, once translated and mastered, use that rune. Some of the runes are very powerful and CKs should limit their distribution until higher levels. This is, however, left up entirely to the CK. Castles & Crusades is your game, for you to tailor as you see fit. The runes themselves may require some adjudication as players attempt to do things with the runes, or to weave the runes together, in such a way that doesn't work for the campaign or the world. As always, the CK stands in command of the Challenge Level of any action the players attempt, raising it puts an end to the rune's effectiveness.

THE CODICES

THE RUNES OF THE INITIATE: These are the Foundation.

AIHRDIAN RUNES: These are the Four Pillars.

BONE RUNES: These are the Dead's Chorus.

BLOOD RUNES: These are the Arc of Time.

COLOR RUNES: These are the Marks of Madness.

DRAGON RUNES: These are the Long Tale.

DREAM RUNES: These are the Deep Waters.

SHADOW RUNES: These are the Gray Mist.

WINTER RUNES: These are the Paths of Umbra.

OTHER CLASSES

If a non-rune mark wishes to become a rune mark, consult the class and a half or multi-class rules as found in the Castles & Crusades Players Handbook. Characters that do not wish to become rune marks, but still wish to use runes, are restricted to the use of the magic rune stones, which act as magic items.



RUNES OF THE INITIATE

These are the foundation.

1	ARREST MOTION Stops objects in motion, or keeps them still	20
2	BEND LIGHT Camouflages by manipulating light	20
3	BINDING Magically binds targets	20
4	BOTTLE Creates a bottle of magical capacity	20
5	BREATH Creates breathable air	20
6	COMPOSITION Reveals the target's make-up	20
7	DARKNESS Removes light	21
8	DRAIN HEAT Pulls heat from a source	21
9	ECHO Creates a sensory sentinel over a sleeper	21
10	HORN OF PLENTY Enhances mental attributes	21
11	LIGHT Creates a source of light	21
12	LINKING Allows several runes to be linked for simultaneous release	21
13	LUCK Increases successful outcome	21
14	LURE Draws in others	21
15	MARKING Links an item to the rune mark	21
16	MIND CALM Clears thoughts	21
17	MIND'S EYE Allows sight through another's eyes	21
18	NUTRIENT Draws sustenance from the nord stone	21
19	OFFERING Transfers HP or attributes points to recipient	23
20	OPENING Breaks magical bonds	23
21	PILLARS Strengthens support structures	23
22	REDIRECT Veers movement off-course	23
23	RENDING Breaks things apart	23
24	REPULSION Pushes things away	23

25	SHIELDING Protects against magical attacks	23
26	SNARE Sets an all-consuming trap in the ground	24
27	THREADS Creates threads of ice that can be manipulated	24
28	TENSILE Increases the tensile strength of an item	24
29	VOICE Increases influence	24
30	WEIGHTLESSNESS Reduces the weight of an item or person	24

WINTER RUNES

These are the Paths of Umbra.

1	BRIDGING Creates a liquid bridge between worlds	25
2	DIMENSION SIGHT Allows one to see into other dimensions	25
3	FOLD SPACE Allows user to travel great distances by folding space	25
4	MINOR DIMENSION Creates a pocket dimension	25
5	MIRRORS Creates a mirror portal, allowing one entry to other realms	25
6	MYSTIC ORB Creates an orb that travels through non-terrestrial environments	27
7	RECALL Transports the rune mark to pre-designated place	27
8	TETHER Connects two realities or planes with a magical tether	27
9	SOMNAMBULATE Allows user to hibernate	27
10	SUMMON PLANAR Summons a denizen of another plane	27

AIHRDIAN RUNES

These are the Four Pillars.

1	DREAMING Forces the target into a dream world	30
2	ENCHANTMENT This rune enchants items	29
3	FIRE This rune allows the rune mark to create fire	29
4	UNMAKING The rune, once inscribed, invokes instant destruction	30

RUNES OF THE INITIATE

These are the foundation



ARREST MOTION (Chr) (Roan ot Kepulch)

Arrest motion stops objects in motion or keeps them from moving, if already motionless. It has an area of effect of 10'x10' +5' per level and lasts one round per level.

The targets are held exactly as they are when the rune is activated. If they are in flight, they are held in flight. Both humans and monsters can be stopped, as can items thrown or hurled. The rune mark must make a successful charisma save for the rune to work. The caster can cast it on himself; in such cases there is no attribute check required.

The item or person in stasis can be moved by outside influence, or in the case of a living creature, it can attempt to move itself by making a successful strength check (CL equal to the level of the rune caster) in the round following the rune's activation. If an outside force is attempting to move the target, the source of the interference must make the strength check.



BEND LIGHT (Int) (Roan ot Amnuel)

Bend light allows the user to manipulate light, forcing it away from the rune's target. It affects a 20-foot diameter sphere and lasts one turn per level.

The redirected light makes the target invisible from any looking at it, as no light is reflected back from the target for the eye to see. It does not, of course, hide the target from any other senses, such as smell, touch, or even magical vision such as true seeing.



BINDING (Chr) (Roan ot Paath-uk)

Binding has many uses, as it can be used to join two mundane objects together. The binding is permanent until the rune mark releases it. Spells such as *dispel magic*, *knock*, or a similar spell can be used to break the binding. It affects one object, great or small.

The binding runes can be used to bind a door and the door jamb, two covers of a book, torn armor, a broken sword hilt, etc. Any existing portal, magical or mundane, bound with the rune remains open. If used with the opening rune, the binding rune binds the target open, keeping a door from closing, a book from closing, etc. The rune also has broader implications, as it can be used to close magical portals or open them, etc.



BOTTLE (Int) (Roan ot Ili)

Bottle creates an interdimensional space within a vessel. It is permanent until dispelled magically or canceled by the rune mark. The space is shaped much like a bottle, being round and rather small. The space created is equal to one square foot for every level of the rune mark. It commonly serves the traveler as a vessel for carrying water, as it serves to hold simple substances such as liquids and gases. The space cannot be corroded, so any substance placed within it does no harm to the vessel. Bottle must be cast upon a flask, bottle, or similar container.



BREATH (Chr) (Roan ot Higl)

Breath creates breathable air and is useful in almost every environment - under water, in sulfurous caverns, in the Void, or on other planes where air might be in short supply or does not exist at all. The rune is cast by touching the target, living or otherwise. This rune does not expire as normal runes do, but rather creates enough air to keep an adult human alive for 24 hours. If the rune is cast upon an object, it creates a 20-foot diameter sphere. Its power dissipates, though it gives breathable air to more than one person. One adult human has enough air for 24 hours, or two adult humans for 12 hours, or three adult humans for 6 hours, etc.



COMPOSITION (Int) (Roan ot ietulth)

Composition allows the user to know the substance of things. It has a range of up to 10 feet per caster level. The rune lasts one round per level. Casting the rune allows the rune mark to understand what something is composed of, i.e. what types of minerals, liquids, gases, or elements are present. He cannot determine the exact breakdown, such as percentages, ratios, or other measurements. One could ascertain if an approaching gas cloud has acid qualities within, the wood of which a door is made, the magical metal(s) within a sword, etc. Upon a second successful intelligence check (CL determined by CK), the user can determine the age of the substance in question.

If cast on magic items, the item is allowed a saving throw against the level of the user. If it fails, the user can understand the magical make-up item, allowing him to know its bonus power as well as any special qualities it possesses.

When cast upon a living target, the composition reveals the creature's alignment. As with magic items, the target is allowed an intelligence saving throw, CL equal to the level of the rune mark; any bonus for level, attribute, or magical protection are included.



DARKNESS (see below) (Roan ot Unk)

Darkness extinguishes any normal, natural light source, such as fire, candles, torches, etc., in a 20-foot radius. No attribute check is required. However, for the darkness to extinguish magical light, the rune mark must make a successful attribute check, the CL equal to 10 plus the item's bonus. In the case of a light or similar spell, the CL is equal to the level of the one who cast the light spell. Items with no bonus receive a +1/+2/+3 at the CK's discretion.



DRAIN HEAT (Chr) (Roan ot freaul)

Drain heat draws the heat from any individual target. If cast on an object it affects 5'x5' +5 square feet per level. The rune lasts one round per level.

The rune can be deadly, freezing the blood in the target's veins, killing all bodily functions. In the case of torches, camp fires, and other heat-producing targets, it can cause them to fizzle out and die. Once cast, the rune master can draw out the heat of a target for as many rounds as it survives or the rune lasts; it draws out 1d4 HP of heat per round. If cast upon an object, it draws out 1d2 HP per round, eventually making the item brittle.

Any creatures or substances caught in the cloud suffer the effects of the rune. Water freezes, rain turns to ice and snow, fingers become frostbitten, etc. The user can cancel the rune at any time. If the target's HP is drained, the target dies, burns out, etc. The CL is adjusted by any spell or spell-like effect that might counter the drain heat, such as endure elements.



ECHO (Chr) (Roan ot Arvagen)

This rune allows the user to rest without losing his awareness. Echo can be cast on any single individual, and remains until dispelled or forced to collapse in on the host source.

Once activated, the rune mark is able to create a disembodied echo of his own senses - sight, hearing, taste, touch, and smell. The echo remains within 10 feet of the user, watching, listening, and smelling for signs of danger. It can use the senses just as the host source would, including darkvision. The moment the echo detects something that the host source would normally construe as a threat, it wakes the host source while collapsing in on him at the same time, so that as the user awakens, the echo vanishes, and the user regains normal control of his senses.

There is a small chance that the echo will become sentient, creating a disembodied doppelganger of its host source. Every

time the spell is cast there is a 1% chance of this occurring. In such cases the echo lingers near the host source, but eventually drifts away. The host source suffers no apparent damage, but will from time to time, at the CK's discretion, see what the echo sees, hear what the echo hears, etc. Anytime this happens the host source automatically suffers a -1 to all combat or rune-related roles for so long as he experiences the echo's senses. This usually doesn't last more than a few rounds.



HORN OF PLENTY (Chr) (Roan ot Pfilk)

When this rune is cast upon a drinking horn or similar vessel containing mead, the mead is blessed with knowledge and wisdom. The rune affects only one physical horn and lasts for five rounds +1 per caster level. Whoever drinks the entire horn gains a +1 bonus on all intelligence, charisma, and wisdom checks for the rune's duration. The horn can be refilled once drained, and used again, however, it takes three rounds for the new mead to become potent. Any bonuses granted from drinking a second horn are cumulative. If three horns are consumed by the same individual he must make a constitution save or pass out for 1-6 hours (CL equal to the rune mark's level). For each horn consumed thereafter, the drinker must make a constitution save, with the CL going up by 5 each horn, as does the corresponding number of hours; for four horns he would pass out for 5 hours +1-6, for 5 horns, 10 hours +1-6, and so on.



LIGHT (Int) (Roan ot Mur)

This rune sheds light that extends up to 20 feet in radius from the inscription. It lasts one turn per level.

The light's intensity depends upon the pressure placed on the rune when it is inscribed. If the rune mark wishes the light to be dull, he inscribes the rune lightly; for more intense light, more pressure is placed when the rune is written. If vocalized, the rune's inflection determines its intensity. The light can be dull and dim or exceedingly bright as the rune mark chooses.



LINKING (Chr) (Roan ot Lam-uk)

Linking allows the rune mark to create static runes, runes that will go off with a set trigger. The area of effect of the linked runes depends upon the reactive rune, and it remains in force until the condition as set down by the conditional rune is met.

Linking is the containing rune, that rune that establishes other runes that can only be set off under certain circumstances. Any rune that can be intelligently linked to another rune can be linked. For more, see Runic Magic Defined.



LUCK (Chr) (Roan of Erigress)

Luck tips the circumstances in the rune mark's favor. The luck rune lasts for one round per level of the rune mark. It can affect only one item.

Luck changes or affects the outcome of any single event. Whoever bares the luck-inscribed rune gains its benefit. The luck can range from re-rolling a die to gaining a +1 to an attribute check; the CK must determine and adjudicate the rune's activation.



LURE (Int) (Roan of Loke)

Lure creates a pulsating point of light that attracts living things. It lasts for 2-12 rounds and affects all creatures within a 50-foot area.

The point of light is little more than a foot in diameter and puts off a very bright light equivalent to 10 torches. Any living creature that spies these beams must make a successful wisdom save or be attracted and drawn to the light at standard movement rate. Once within 20 feet of the rune/light he is held enraptured, unable to move. However, every four melee rounds he may make a second wisdom save in an attempt to break the power of the spell. If the victim is attacked, jostled, or in any way interrupted, he may make another wisdom save with a bonus of +4.



MARKING (Chr) (Roan of Naum)

Marking magically places the rune mark's personal sign or symbol upon a non-magical item. The runes last for as many turns as the caster has levels.

That sign can be any symbol, shape, or design of the rune mark's choosing. The sign establishes a link between the item and the rune mark. Any action taken using the marked item grants the rune mark a bonus +1 to any charisma check. Other than the rune mark, anyone attempting to pick up or wield the item will struggle with its weight and suffer a -1 to all charisma checks. The rune mark can cancel the rune at any time.



MIND CALM (Int) (Roan of Kanu)

Mind calm clears one's mind of all turbulent thoughts, allowing the caster to calm all emotions, stress, or other mental processes that might distract him.

The rune empties the mind, creating a shield against all forms of mental attack or mental fatigue. Once activated, the caster gains +1 per level against any mental attack or mental fatigue he encounters or suffers. The rune's specific design protects one while traveling through the Void or any other plane of entropy; it serves as well against planes of chaos, law, etc.

The "kanu rune" can also be used to mentally attack an enemy, by creating a void within his mind which wreaks havoc in the form of 2d6 points of damage. The target is allowed an intelligence save. If successful, mind calm does 1/2 damage. For this to work the rune must be inscribed upon the target's person.



MIND'S EYE (Int) (Roan of Nuclus)

Mind's eye allows the wielder to see through the eyes of someone else. Mind's eye can be inscribed on one individual only and lasts for 10 rounds +1 per level of the rune mark.

The rune does not allow for any type of control, nor does it allow the user to read the target's thoughts, or even grasp at the target's interpretation of what he is seeing; it allows only the actual vision. If the target possesses twilight, dusk, or dark vision, or any magically enhanced vision such as a true seeing spell, the rune mark is able to see that as well. The rune mark must inscribe the rune upon the target.

There is a small chance that the target may discover the invasion and realize what is happening. Any target with an intelligence of 12 or greater must make a successful intelligence save, CL equal to the level of the rune mark, to notice the sorcery and to attempt to block it. He can block with a second successful intelligence save.



NUTRIENT (Int) (Roan of Nordfuel)

Nutrient allows the caster to draw greater nutrition from the nord stone. It is one of the few runes which require a component.

The stone itself is rare and found where receding glaciers have ground against veins of sandstone. When exposed to the sunlight, it expands and flakes (see New Magic Items). The flakes are edible and serve to heal whoever eats them for 1-2 points of damage. The rocks are very fragile, light, and dissolve when consumed.

When nutrient is cast upon the nord stone, the stone's natural healing powers are enhanced. Whoever consumes these flakes heals 1d4 points of damage; the flakes also provide him with enough sustenance to survive for a day without food or drink. Someone may consume more than one flake to speed up healing time, but he will not feed himself for more than a day. For example, consuming two flakes of the stone at the same

time heals 2d4 points of damage but only provides enough sustenance for one day.



OFFERING (Chr) (Roan ot Hile)

Offering allows the rune mark to give of himself or another willing subject. By carving the rune upon the body it allows the subject to give 1-2 of his HP per level to another.

The rune mark, or the subject, suffers the transferred damage. At 8th level the gift can consist of 1-4 attribute points per week. Any losses the rune mark suffers are healed normally, or in the case of attribute points, 1 per week. Unless used with another rune that allows it, at no point can the recipient of the offering gain more than his normal amount of HP or attribute points.



OPENING (Chr) (Roan ot Kast)

This simple rune breaks magical bindings. It affects one bound item. Its duration is immediate.

Once carved, opening breaks wizard locks, hold portals, and similar spells, as well as the binding rune. It can overcome doors held by riddles, etc. The rune mark must make a successful charisma check (CL equal to the level of the spell caster).



PILLARS (Chr) (Roan ot Hugin)

Pillars strengthens walls, pillars, battlements, and similar structures, as well as anything that bears weight, from simple canes and walking sticks to posts.

The rune increases the strength and durability of the item on which it is inscribed, effectively doubling its strength. If it is a door with 4 HP, the rune grants it 8. If it is a pillar that can support 1000 pounds, it would hold up 2000 pounds. For every 10 levels of the rune mark, the rune also imparts SR 1 to the item in question, protecting it against magical attacks.



REDIRECT (Int) (Roan ot Ahff)

Redirect forces a moving item or person in a different direction. Redirect can affect items that weigh 50 pounds per level of the user. Anything encountering the rune or the item upon which it is inscribed is affected.

The target cannot be made to turn back 180 degrees, but is

rather deflected off its current path. The rune can move things left, right, up, down, etc., up to five feet off target. When used against human or monster targets, the rune forces any charging opponent to veer in the desired direction. Arrows, spears, and the like also move in the desired direction. The rune requires the use of a piece of flint to cast.



RENDING (Chr) (Roan ot Burnetu)

Rending tears the target apart. The rune can impact one item, targeting up to one cubic foot per level of the rune mark. Any item upon which rending is inscribed must make a successful strength save (CL equal to the rune mark's level) or break, splinter, or shatter. Large items may only break into a few pieces; fragile items, such as glass, shatter. The rune may be used against almost any target; it can be used in cracking a door, breaking a rock, opening a fissure in the ground, breaking swords, armor, etc. This rune has no vocal form.



REPULSION (Chr) (Roan ot Fremstod)

Repulsion creates a repellent field around the desired target. The rune lasts one round per level of the caster after it is activated.

Although used on themselves by the rune masters to move through the outer planes, protecting them from various debris or substances they may encounter, its use is varied. It can be inscribed upon an item, used on a sword or shield, etc. The field creates a perfect circle that expands with time. It extends one foot per round from the target to a maximum of 20 feet. The field can move or repel items 100 pounds or greater +100 pounds per level of the caster. If an item is too large to be repelled, then the target is moved away instead. Any creature able to resist is allowed a strength check. If successful it does not move. The rune is indiscriminate, moving possessions of the rune mark, friends, etc.



SHIELDING (Chr) (Roan ot Taraj)

Shielding creates an extra-dimensional space around the body. The rune works on only one person at a time and lasts for one round per level of the rune mark.

The extra-dimensional space shields the caster's body from physical and magical damage by absorbing or redirecting the attack. The shield can absorb 10 HP +1 per level of physical damage on any energy based attack. These include lightning bolt, all fireballs, magic missile, magic arrow, etc. The extra-dimensional space is invisible until struck.



SNARE (Int) (Roan of Nahluk)

Snare creates a magical trap that can both maim and kill. The snare affects a 5'x5' area +1 foot per level of the rune mark. Snare lasts one turn per caster level.

The rune hardens the ground, making it brittle. Anyone walking within the area of effect sets off the snare; the ground gives way, and anyone caught within the area falls into a pit several feet deep. The ground immediately hardens around them, penning them in the earth. Those caught suffer 1d4 +1 HP per level as their legs and/or torsos are crushed. Those caught in the snare can attempt to break out, which requires a successful strength check.



THREADS (Int) (Roan of Luetfrea)

Threads draws out threads of ice from very small amounts of moisture. This rune can be inscribed in the air at first level. It lasts indefinitely or until destroyed.

These threads extend out from a point of the user's choosing; the user must touch the point where the threads begin. The threads of ice are extraordinarily strong, able to hold or pull a tremendous amount of weight. Threads is generally used to hold items or people, for it lasts until dispelled or destroyed by the user. It serves those who travel on the planes as a floating disk, for multiple castings will produce several threads which are easy to weave into a platform. The rune has other applications as well. It can, for instance, be used to create restraints and rope, or to bind doors, etc. The spell may also be used as a weapon, freezing the moisture in a target's mouth, etc.

For every ounce of water the user possesses or has access to, he is able to freeze 100 feet of ice; the thread is no thicker than the lead of an ordinary pencil and is practically invisible. The ice requires one round per 10 feet to freeze. The resulting thread is very light, with every 100 feet weighing about 1 pound. The thread is very malleable, able to be coiled, rolled up, etc. It is, however, easily entangled with other threads, as it is lightweight and very difficult to see. Several threads can be joined together, but this is difficult and time consuming, requiring a successful dexterity check (CL 10). Each thread so joined requires one turn to do so. Creating a platform can be a long and arduous task. The threads possess tremendous strength, able to hold up to 20 pounds per foot.

The threads of ice are highly susceptible to heat and exposure to sun light; a single thread must make a saving throw each round it is exposed to any form of heat, including sunlight. Challenge base for the save is 18, CL determined by the CK; the spell caster adds his own level and intelligence attribute bonus to the save. If it fails, the ice dissolves instantly into gas. Ambient light cast by magic items and magical spells such as light do not affect

the thread. However, the magic spells *flame shield* or *fireball* will affect the threads. A *dispel magic* spell can destroy the threads, and the user himself may cancel the spell.



TENSILE (Int) (Roan of Hugrun)

Tensile doubles the strength of rope, chain, string, etc. The rune lasts four rounds +1 round per level of the caster. The rune only affects one item, and the item cannot be more than 100 pounds in weight.

Tensile can be applied to almost any item such as wood and steel, making the item stronger. Any items the spell targets double in strength. Rope is able to hold twice the weight, a wheel is able to carry twice the amount before breaking, etc. Any melee weapon upon which the rune is cast gains a +1 to HP and damage, and armor gains +1 to AC. It can affect magic weapons and other spells such as threads.



THE VOICE (Chr) (Roan of Oethule)

This rune is etched upon the throat, and when done correctly, intones the magic of the voice. It lasts one turn +1 turn per level. It affects all who can hear it.

The wielder's voice becomes deep and measured. It adopts a melodic, almost hypnotic tone for any who can hear it, altering the speaker's normal speech patterns in order to appeal to others, no matter their cultural, social, racial, or linguistic backgrounds, and changing even to account for social nuances such as religion and emotive responses. The wielder of the rune gains a +2 on all charisma checks, and those to whom the voice is directed become calm and very reluctant to attack the wielder. They will only do so if they are attacked by the wielder or any of those who serve him. Furthermore, they become susceptible to mindaltering spells and simple verbal suggestions, suffering a -2 on all charisma, wisdom, or intelligence saving throws or attribute checks. As the rune mark increases in level, the power of the voice does so as well. At 5th level the bonus rises to +4 and the penalty to -4. At 10th level this increases to +8/-8, respectively.



WEIGHTLESSNESS (Roan of Illtut)

Weightlessness reduces the weight of the item upon which the rune is scribed. The weight of the item in question (and any contents within) is reduced by 25 pounds +10 per level per level of the rune mark.

Weightlessness can be inscribed upon a living creature, but if so,

it does not affect the items worn. If, however, it is cast upon the armor the person is wearing, the armor is considered to contain the person and the whole; both armor and person's weight are reduced. An axe in the person's hand would not, however, be affected by the rune. It does not reduce the encumbrance of additional items on the person

WINTER RUNES

The Paths of Umbra

This set of runes allows the master to travel into the realms, those regions beyond the planes referred to as outer dimensions, other planes, the Void, and mystic worlds of the gods, and so on. These realms, often beyond the reach of the mundane, become rich fields of lore for the rune marks, and lead them to an ever greater knowledge of the runes and their translations.

The Winter Runes are not found within the Codex of the Initiate; they are forbidden to novice students. Each rune mark must find them and translate them on his own.



BRIDGING (Int) (Roan ot Tuliuthtalu)

Bridging creates a magical bridge. The bridge is 10 feet wide and can span an area 10 feet long +1 per caster level. It lasts one turn per level unless inscribed with a tethers rune. In this case containment lasts until that particular tethers is unmade.

The bridge is made of liquid fire (or other substance of the rune mark's choosing) and can be walked upon safely by the rune mark or anyone protected by a rune of shielding. Any other creatures attempting to use the bridge suffer 6d10 points of damage for each round of contact with the liquid fire and must make a dexterity save (CL equal to rune mark's level) to avoid catching fire. The intense heat keeps the rune mark safe from attack, and prevents others from using his bridge to cross over. The bridge can be created on the home plane but its effectiveness is reduced, dealing only 6d6 points of damage per round of contact to unprotected travelers.



DIMENSION SIGHT (Int) (Roan ot Rinck-lam)

Dimension sight opens a visual portal into the realms. The rune lasts one turn per level of the rune mark. It has no range; the rune mark can see as far as conditions on the target realm allow.

The rune creates a translucent ball which serves as a focal point to look into the realm of choice. The ball is solid, and the rune mark can take it in hand, moving it with him. In order to see in different directions the rune mark rotates the ball. He can only see into realms with which he has some familiarity; he

must have traveled there, or seen it through some other magical device. The caster is able to see into the realm at the point of familiarity. Conditions in the realm govern the distance and with what clarity he can see.



FOLD SPACE (Int) (Roan ot Erklose)

Fold space allows the rune mark to travel great distances through any one realm. It last only four rounds, at which point the folded space snaps back, leveling into its normal continuum. The rune mark is able to fold a circle of space with a diameter of 10 square feet +1 per level.

Fold space takes hold of a designated point in the realm where the rune mark is located and connects it with another space the the rune mark is able to see. The rune folds space by thrusting the rune mark through time, allowing him to step over onto the designated distant place.

Specifically designed to move quickly across the Void, the spell works anywhere that the user can actually see the desired point. There are no size and weight limits on crossing over, so long as the travelers do so during the duration of the rune and within the area of effect, for the rune moves the "space" through "time" by folding the two points onto one another.

The rune runs a small risk, however, for the contact points of the folded space briefly touche, and even as the rune mark steps over to the other space, other creatures can cross over to his point of embarkation.

NOTE: Fold space is an Arc of Time, the Blood Runes, rune.



MINOR DIMENSION (Int) (Roan ot Charl)

Minor dimension creates a pocket dimension. The dimension is a 30-foot cube, +10 feet per level of the rune mark. It lasts until unmade by the rune mark or destroyed by another entity.

The rune is cast upon an item of the rune mark's choosing and uses an assigned command word, phrase, or action to open the dimension. The rune mark must have the item in hand to access his pocket dimension. He must use the command word to open and close the portal to the dimension. Others are allowed to enter while the portal is open.

The dimension is utterly colorless, shaped in a cube, and has breathable air. It can be used to store items, persons, etc.

If the item is stolen or lost, the rune mark cannot make another pocket dimension until the original is destroyed. Anyone who knows the command word and has the item can access the dimension.

NOTE: It is conceivable that other creatures could access the rune mark's dimension, however unlikely. This could only be done through powerful magic, and knowledge of the realm and all other hurdles that plane travelers must overcome to cross into hidden realms.



MIRRORS (Int) (Roan ot Meur)

Mirrors creates a magical mirror that acts as a portal between the realms. The rune is permanent and can only be destroyed by a *dispel magic* or similar spell. The rune mark must have the rune of unmaking to destroy it himself. The mirror is not portable.

The rune is inscribed upon a place of the rune mark's choosing. Once successful, a mirror appears. The mirrors grows from the point of inscription (usually the ground) to five feet tall and three feet wide. The rune mark must designate a prompt to activate the mirror. The prompt can be a word, a gesture, or an action. The prompt is permanent and is the only key needed to activate the magical mirror and thus open the portal to another realm. When inactive the magical mirror resembles a mirror in all forms, casting a reflection as normal.

To create an avenue to another realm or point on the same realm, the rune mark casts mirrors a second time, inscribing the rune on the mirror or some other object of his choosing, and

designating the point to which the mirrored portal opens. This creates a second mirror, this time on the other realm. The second mirror resembles the original and creates an avenue between the two realms or points on the same realm. The rune mark can now hear, see, and speak through the portal, or pass through to the other realm if desired, anytime that the mirror is activated. The rune mark can do this as many times as he desires, creating as many portals to as many realms as his experience allows.

To create any avenue to another realm, the caster must be familiar with all the realms that the mirror should access.

Entering the mirror is much like entering water; the space is fluid, allowing the traveler to merge with it and pass over to the other realm. The fluid is very reactive and moves constantly, making travel between the realms difficult. Once anyone has entered the fluid space he has entered an extra-dimensional space between the realms. He cannot take any physical action, from speaking to inscribing runes, casting spells, or swinging a sword - he cannot hear or see.

If the mirrors are not bound (see tether below) the rune mark must make a successful intelligence save, CL 12 + 1 per mirrored plane, or become disoriented, losing his way in the fluid space. In Aihrde, this fluid space is the Wall of Worlds. Once lost between realms, he is lost until rescued or the original mirror is destroyed. If the original mirror is destroyed, all the mirrors are destroyed and the lost occupant is cast into one of the connecting realms, potentially the original, determined randomly.



It is possible to tie a rope to a traveler who enters the mirror, and though the traveler can not manipulate the rope, someone on the outside of the mirror could pull him back to the plane of origin.

Mirrors is extraordinarily dangerous, for once activated there is a 5% chance per connecting realm that something on the other side will come through to the rune mark's home plane.

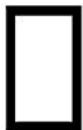
NOTE: the Mirrors of the Witch Queen as found in the A series are activated by a sprinkle of blood.



MYSTIC ORB (Int) (Roan ot Hemelgem)

Mystic orb creates a 10-foot +1 foot per level radius sphere, within which the rune mark can travel. It lasts 1 hour per level of the rune mark. The sphere surrounds the user upon activation, and in the following round it begins to move slowly. If not directed specifically, the sphere moves in a random direction. It picks up speed, beginning at about one foot per round; it gains speed quickly, adding about 10 feet per round until it maxes out at 80 feet per round.

The user can control the speed and direction by will. If the concentration of the user is broken, the rune remains in effect, and the orb continues to hurtle on the course and speed as set by the rune mark when his concentration was broken. The orb does not stop until it meets a solid object, or for the rune's duration. If it meets an object, it bounces off in a random direction and its speed is reduced by half.



RECALL (Int) (Roan ot Althip)

Recall teleports the rune mark back to a pre-determined place on a pre-determined plane. The rune is permanent until unmade by the rune mark or dispelled. It has no range limit.

The rune mark must inscribe the recall rune on the point where he wishes to return. Once done, any time he successfully inscribes the rune again, it instantly teleports him back to that pre-determined place. The recall allows him to cross planes of almost any size and description, unless there is a condition on that plane which prohibits it. In Aihrde for example, unless the Wall of Worlds is breached, the recall cannot overcome the Judgment of Cortain.



TETHER (Int) (Roan ot Pie-et)

This spell binds two realms together with a tether that only the caster can see. The tether is generally used with mirrors and is permanent.

The rune does not open a gate between the realms, it creates a pathway that is easy for the user to follow, allowing other sorcery to open gates. Rune marks use them in order to keep track of where the various dimensions, realms or other realities lie. The rune mark may also use tether to bind himself to a particular plane. Tether is permanent until dispelled or canceled by the rune mark. However, the rune master can only have as many active tethers as he has levels.

The user must be aware of both realms as he moves through the inter-dimensional space between the borders of the realms, binding them together. A rune mark cannot become lost while crossing between two bound planes.



SOMNAMBULATE (Chr) (Roan ot Arthul)

Somnambulate holds the power to place the user or another into a state of semi-hibernation. The rune is inscribed upon the target and lasts as long as the rune mark remains alive.

The rune causes the heart rate and breathing of the recipient to slow, eye lids close, and all tension is removed as the recipient of the spell settles into a state of hibernation. The spell reduces the body's need for nourishment, including water and air. The recipient can survive without food or water for 90 days +1d4 days per level. He must have air; however, he can survive with 10% of the normal amount required, meaning that he can survive at very high altitudes without undo affect. When the rune is no longer able to keep the recipient alive, it expires.

The recipient is not wholly asleep and is aware of what goes on around him as if he were in a deep echo chamber. Sounds, sights, and smells all seem to be at a great distance. The user can break free of the sorcery at will, but it takes 1d4 rounds to become functional again.

The user can be violently knocked out of the somnambulance if he is stricken or otherwise attacked. In such cases he is automatically wrenched from the spell's influence and suffers 1d6 points of damage.



SUMMON PLANAR (Chr) (Roan ot Jmfore)

This rune summons a planar creature. It can be directed at only one target.

The rune mark's plane must be connected to the target's plane, as in the mirrors rune. The rune mark must name the creature summoned. If the creature has a high or greater intelligence, it is able to resist the summons, and it is allowed a primary attribute check, CL equal to the rune mark's level. If it succeeds, nothing happens and the summons fails. However, the creature is allowed a second attribute check, an intelligence check. If

successful, the creature knows that something or someone attempted to summon it. It does not know who or from where, but it is aware of the summoning.

If the creature fails its initial primary attribute check, it is summoned. The summoning is instantaneous as the rune pulls the target through the portal or mirror. The rune mark must have encountered the creature at some point, or have gathered knowledge of it. He can summon up to half his level in HD, rounded up. For example: a 17th level rune mark can summon 9 HD worth of creatures.

Unlike a typical summon monster spell, summon planar does not wholly bind the summoned creature to the user. It is under a very limited *geas*, forced to do simple tasks such as answer questions, cast minor magics, etc. The rune compels it to act honestly and in the best interest of the user. The creature is generally aware of what has happened and views the user as an enemy attempting to enthrall it. It attempts to break free whenever possible. Any sign that the summoner is weakening or is preoccupied with another task encourages the creature to break the connection. Doing so requires a successful intelligence check, CL equal to the level of the rune mark. Failure causes the creature 10 HP of damage; success means freedom. Most intelligent creatures do not attempt to break free, as harming or killing the user leaves them stranded. Summoned creatures may wish to serve the rune master, assuming it serves their own purposes. Very powerful creatures may wish to break free and enslave the summoner.

THE WINTER RUNES IN AIHRDE

In the Days before Days, the All Father set the Wall of Worlds about all of Aihilde. The Wall protected Aihilde from the ravages of the Void, from those creatures of his youth's imaginings that found comfort in Aihilde, for both good and evil. For countless ages the Wall of Worlds bound Aihilde in its protective embrace. All those beasts that dwelt upon the Void looked with envy upon Aihilde, but they would never know that world, unless someone brought them through the wall.

There was one such creature, spawned in the deeps of the Void at the very beginning of time, springing whole and seemingly self-made from the All Father. Called in later ages Unklar, he was in truth, the god's nightmare. In time a magi named Nulak, a rune mark of some power, discovered Unklar and set about opening the Wall of Worlds. Through mastering a set of runes, he opened a mirrored door into the Void and there sought him out. Unklar knew him and his black heart and he feigned to serve him; he needed only to be brought through the Wall. Nulak at first ignored him and plundered the planes through many portals, all tethered to him in one way or the other.

Ever in his mind, Unklar called to him, until at last he cast fire upon the bridge to the void and called to him. He doubted not that his bridge would hold the creature at bay until he could ensorcel him. Unklar, though, was no trifling creature of the Great Empty, but the greatest of the All Father's nightmares, and

he swatted the mage aside and passed to the prime. Using the nexus of portals he accessed the mirrored door that led to the throne room of Al Liosh, and so came war and death to the world.

Unklar destroyed the Wall of Worlds, devouring it from within and casting it back out, making it dark, and men named it the Shroud of Darkness. He locked the world in snow and ice. Thus it stood for a thousand years beneath the Winter Dark. Men called the runes of Nulak "the Winter Runes", for it is with them that he broke the Wall of Worlds and brought Unklar to Aihilde, who in turn brought on the Age of Winter Dark. Nulak, however, called them "the Paths of Umbra", for they led to the Void, and men afterward joined him and were called Umbrians.

In the end he was cast down and the Shroud scattered, and the world knew peace. Men found the Wall of Worlds still held fast. Though most of it was destroyed, some remained, and this wall gave the men of Aihilde some protection and safety in the years that came after.

The Winter Runes remained, though, and men knew that if they mastered them, they too could breach the Wall of Worlds and travel to the Void and beyond. Those who do manage this are referred to as Travelers.

A true rune mark forever quests to become a Traveler and a Master of the Rune Lords, and to Walk the Paths. To do so brings the ultimate power of creation to one's fingertips.



AIHRDIAN RUNES

These are Called the Four Pillars

The Four Pillars are not found within the Codex of the Initiate; they are forbidden to novice students. Each rune mark must find them and translate them on his own.

The Four Pillars consist of the Runes of Creation, Destruction, Entropy and Motion. These are the runes of good and evil and law and chaos. Like all the Codices, the below four runes only represent a few of the scores of runes that are in the Four Pillars.



ENCHANTMENT (*Chr*) (*Roan ot Lau*)

This rune enchants items. The rune mark must physically touch a single target to enchant and inscribe it. There is no verbal or sign form of this rune. The rune may only be used once per day. The enchantment lasts 10 rounds +1 round per level of the rune mark unless made permanent by another rune. There is a base challenge level 10 for this rune to work.

The enchantment can be anything the rune mark imagines. However, the more powerful the enchantment, the more difficult the CL for the rune to succeed. If the rune mark wishes to inscribe an enchantment upon a blade, giving it a +3 bonus, the CL is 13 (base of 10 +3); the challenge class for such an attempt being the challenge base 12 + 13 = 25. Any added magic power adds corresponding CL. Minor powers (those similar to the minor powers listed in *Monsters & Treasure*) add a CL 5; greater powers from the same list add a CL 10.

For any magical power added, the rune mark must have the corresponding rune. To create a flame-tongued sword he must have the fire rune. To create a vorpal blade he must have the unmaking rune.

Example: To create a +3 vorpal sword would require a successful charisma check of 12 (challenge base) +10 (base challenge level) +3 (CL for bonus) +10 (CL for greater power). The rune mark would have to make an attribute check of 35 to succeed.



FIRE (*Int*) (*Roan ot Plum*)

This rune allows the rune mark to create fire. The rune affects a single target or a 5'x5' area of effect +5' per level of the rune mark. If cast upon combustible material, the fire lasts as long as the material burns. If cast upon non-combustible material such as iron, stone, etc., it lasts one round per level of the rune caster.

Fire ignites combustible items such as torches, wood, grass, clothing, etc. A rune mark can also place fire on non-combustible items such as a sword, control fires that are already burning,

extinguish fire, or, when used in conjunction with other runes, create steam, etc. The rune does not create a magical fire; it allows the rune mark to make or work with fire.

If cast upon a torch or fire the flame burns as any normal torch or fire. If cast upon combustible material such as clothing, the clothing must make a saving throw (CL equal to the rune mark's level). If cast upon a weapon it deals an extra 1d6 points of damage, double that against cold-based creatures. If inscribed upon a person, that person catches fire. The fire is not magical however, and it will burn whoever it is cast upon, but it does not receive a magical hit bonus or damage.

The rune mark can extinguish flames in the area of effect if so desired.

Consult the following chart for range, damage to other individuals upon which the rune is cast directly, and area of effect. Always add level to damage. After 12th level, continue to expand range and area of effect, but the damage remains at 8 plus the level.

Lvl	Dmg (+lvl)	Dur (=lvl)	Range (10 x lvl)	Area of Effect (5 x lvl in sq ft)
1	1 (2)	1	10	5x5
2	1d2	2	20	10x10
3	1d2	3	30	15x15
4	1d4	4	40	20x20
5	1d4	5	50	25x25
6	1d4	6	60	30x30
7	1d6	7	70	35x35
8	1d6	8	80	40x40
9	1d6	9	90	45x45
10	1d6	10	100	50x50
11	1d8	11	110	55x55
12+	1d8	12	120	60x60

EXAMPLE 1: Tolvar inscribes fire upon the base of Ki's sword; flame encases the blade he creates, effectively making it a flaming sword for the next four rounds. A flaming sword, as per *Monsters & Treasures*, deals 1d6 points of extra damage upon a successful hit and double that against cold-based creatures.

EXAMPLE 2: Gregor, a 10th level rune mark, enters a long hallway. The hall is dark but he sees torch sconces upon the wall. Being able to vocalize the runes, he speaks the words and the torches light; he is only able to affect an area of 50'x50', so the torches for the first 50 feet of the hallway ignite. It is important to note that Tolvar, from the example above, does not have the ability to vocalize the runes. To ignite the torches he would have to write each rune on the torch itself.



DREAMING (Chr) (Roan to Dogdum)

Dream plays upon the mind of the ensorcelled, forcing them into a dream world of the rune mark's creation. For the target, the transitions seem instant, as if a teleport or similar spell were cast upon them. In reality they remain in their own world. They refuse to believe in the world around them, and see things as the rune mark designed. While under the influence of dreaming, they cannot react to anything happening around them, the environmental conditions, combat etc. However, if they are struck or attacked, they are allowed a wisdom saving throw, CL equal to the rune mark's caster level. If successful the target is able to react to the attack within the dream world. In short, whatever attacks or otherwise seeks to interact with them, that entity enters the dream world joining the target. The target is aware of the intrusion and is able to use all resources they possess in the real world, be they spells, armor, abilities etc, to defend themselves. They cannot speak to those not in the dream world; they cannot in fact see anything beyond the dreaming. Dreaming lasts 1 round per level and it can only affect one person.

The dream itself is as powerful as the rune mark desires. Simple dreams, once cast, can maintain themselves; however, complex, interactive dreams require the rune mark's full attention. For instance, if the dream is a simple sandy beach, with sun and wind, the rune mark need pay no attention to it. Such a dream sustains itself. If however, the rune mark wished the wind to change and a storm to buffet the dreamscape then he would have to maintain control of the rune and its power. They can do nothing else while manipulating such a dream.

The afflicted are not normally affected in a physical manner in the dreaming. A dream is nothing more than that - a dream. However, the rune mark may attempt to cause physical harm or to aid the afflicted through the dreaming. To do this, the rune mark must make a second charisma check to succeed, with the challenge level being equal to the target of the dreaming. He can only use other runes he is familiar with to physically affect the target. For example, Gregor casts dreaming upon Jared the Mad. Gregor makes the necessary charisma check and Jared finds himself standing upon a grassy hill, upon a clear and sunny day. Gregor wishes then to move Jared to another plane, and scribes snare rune, creating a pit trap in front of Jared. The rune mark must make a second successful charisma check for the snare to work and actually cause physical damage.



UNMAKING (Chr) (Roan ot Irakulus)

Unmaking destroys items, kills people, lays waste to land, brings walls to dust, etc. The rune mark's level determines the area of effect and range. The spell is immediate and has no duration.

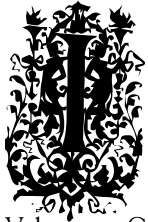
The rune, once inscribed, invokes instant destruction. The rune is difficult and fails more often than it succeeds. For this reason, the base CL is 10 for this rune to succeed; the rune mark must make a base roll of 22 to unmake a mundane item. The base CL for living items is 15, and the base CL for magic items is 20. Once inscribed, the rune's power is unleashed.

If inscribed upon a mundane item, the item is destroyed, assuming the rune mark makes a successful charisma save. If inscribed upon a any type of living creature, flora or fauna, it takes damage as per the chart below. The CL is equal to the target's level or HD. If inscribed upon a magical item, the item's CL is equal to its bonus with +1 for any power it possesses. If used against a magical effect or spell, the CL is equal to the spell caster's level.

Lvl	Dmg (+lvl)	Dur (=lvl)	Range (10 x lvl)	Area of Effect (5 x lvl in sq ft)
1	1(2)	1	10	5x5
2	1d2	2	20	10x10
3	1d2	3	30	15x15
4	1d4	4	40	20x20
5	1d4	5	50	25x25
6	1d4	6	60	30x30
7	1d6	7	70	35x35
8	1d6	8	80	40x40
9	1d6	9	90	45x45
10	1d6	10	100	50x50
11	1d8	11	110	55x55
12+	1d8	12	120	60x60

Some creatures cannot be unmade; specific creatures will be designated by the CK. The god Thor cannot be unmade, for instance.

GOTTLAND-NE



It is often shortened in the vernacular to Gottland, but this is a misnomer, for its rightful name has an altogether different meaning. Named from the Dwarf, Gottland translates to “the Land of Gods” or “The Land Where Gods Rule/Reside”; Ne means “without” or “an absence of”. In the Vulgate or Common Tongues of men, Gottland-Ne translates into “The Land Without Gods” or “Where no God Dwells.”

OF THE LAND WITHOUT GODS

The Gottland is a broken land of stark hills with little vegetation. To the north and west, it borders the Shadow Mountains. To the east lies the Inner Sea and to the south is the Ington River (called the Deep Flow in the Vulgate). It is best known for the bitterly cold winds which blow off the mountains and through the Kleberock Pass. Here, where the Gottland joins the Moravan Plains to the north, the wind is forever whistling as it coils through the clefts and rocks, mimicking the sounds of the dead. This horrible whistling has given birth to the legends of the walking dead. It is said that those who suffered from the depredations of the Wizard Mongroul, known to the histories as Trigal, but more commonly called Nulak-Kiz-Din and the great, hulking troll lords, are forced to wander the land as the damned. This is borne out in the truth of Dunhollow Wood (see below) which straddles the passes’ southern entry.

It is generally cold in the Gottland. The year round average temperature is about 40 degrees. Winter is harsh. In summer, it rarely gets above 70 degrees. The winters are long, and the springs and summers are short. The temperature begins to drop below freezing in the late autumn and remains there for the better part of the winter.

There is not a great of precipitation in the summer and spring, but the Autumn brings its fare share and winter sees the winds shift, bringing moisture off the Inner Sea. This moisture has nowhere to go as it rolls up the mountain slopes so it deposits great heaps of snow in the plains, making life deadly and travel hazardous.

The better part of the Gottland lies between the Sorgon and Ington Rivers. The plains here are cut by a great rise of hills called the Troll Downs and further north by a ridge called the Beormot, or Mammoth Ridge. The plains themselves are harsh lands. Scrub oaks, stinging nettle weeds, blackberry, pampas grass and other bramble are all that grow there. Water is not scarce and is found in many pools and small streams, but much of it is foul and oily. Those who mark travel across the Gottland do so with difficulty. Many have become lost and died in the trackless wilderness. There is a peculiar madness associated with the land. Many have reported that the hills and broken scrub seem to go on forever, that there is no end to the wastes. Some succumb to a madness they call “Seeing the Elephant.” For some, the land becomes so great in the mind’s eye that it drives men mad. This madness is not fatal, but few are cured from it. Those who are overcome generally die horrible deaths in the lonely wastes of the Gottland.



Strange solitary trees dot the countryside, almost always dead, with scant branches and no leaves. Their gnarled husks and spindly limbs make them appear dead, though they are not entirely so, and they remain firmly rooted to the ground. About their roots small flowers grow; these are reputed to have great powers.

The Gottland is a forsaken land where little grows, but monsters abound. It is as inhospitable a place as the world has ever known.

TRAVEL

Travel in the Gottland is difficult for there are no proper roads, only wagon tracks that the Halflings have carved out of the landscape in their constant migrations; but there are many broken trails winding through the twisted rock. The trolls from Nacht hound travelers, as do various orc and hobgoblin bandits. Herds of mammoth wander the wastes from the mountains to the Teifsich river in the south; long fanged “saber toothed” cats, dire wolves and and similar beasts hunt them, and do not hesitate to hunt other creatures, man included, as well. Stone giants come down from the mountains to visit their ancestral home on the Mammoth Ridge; and the snows bring frost giants from their kingdoms beyond the winter.

Consult the following charts for average movement rates. These vary with terrain and weather with the months between Summer and Autumn merging until the snow falls. Use these

for average movement rates in miles per hour. This assumes an 8 hour travel time.

Movement off Trail in the Plains		
MV Rate	Spring/Summer	Autumn/Winter
20	6	3
30	12	6
40	21	12
50	36	16
60	42	24

Movement on Trail in the Plains		
MV Rate	Spring/Summer	Autumn/Winter
20	8	4
30	16	8
40	32	16
50	48	24
60	64	32

HILLS & MOUNTAINS

If traveling in Hills or mountains reduce the rate above

ASCENT HILLS: 60%.

ASCENT MOUNTAINS: 90%

DESCENT HILLS: 20%

DESCENT MOUNTAINS: 50%

LORDS OF THE GOTTLAND

No single prince, nor power, rules the Gottland. There are few towns hospitable to men, only wilderness, where orcs and trolls hunt, where giants walk and other monsters besides. The halfling clans dwell here, far from the reaches of civilization, but they are migratory, moving in their large wagons from one spot to the next. To the north there are the trolls, ruled by Varucks their King. To the south and west are orcs. On the coast some scattered settlements of humans. Beyond that the land is lawless.

THE TROLLS

Though the Troll Lord Varucks lays claim to the whole of the Gottland he has direct control of little beyond Castle Nacht and the valleys that surround his citadel. Even the Kleberock Pass is a wild place. This huge Troll is slow to act, but clever. He uses the threats of pretended power to cajole the unwary into doing his bidding. He wields two large hammers in combat, calling them by their names, Var and Ucks. Varucks commands a powerful but small troop of trolls in battle. When needed, he forces local humanoid tribes to give warriors and material to raise a sizable, if disorganized, army of orcs and hobgoblins.

THE ORCS

In the far west and south of the country, upon the slopes of the Shadow Mountains and around the headwaters of the Ington River, the Olgrack Orcs rule from their fortress of Rackenburg. Their Chief is a thin, wiry orc by the name of Uranoch Scatterskull. His name derives from the split in his skull which is ever visible and forever dribbling puss and blood. Uranoch is very intelligent and rules his orcs by threatening and cajoling them. They resist the overlord of Varucks and the Trolls.

Within the interior, the scattered humanoid tribes are mostly migratory. They feed off of livestock (cattle mostly) and a tough breed of sheep. They are forced to move from one place to the next, for the grazing is sparse. These groups tend to be small and possessed of little wealth. Their greatest sport is the Cleaver Pits. Once in awhile, the smaller bands gather together, dig pits here and there and throw in contestants who fight to the death, often slaves and the unlucky they have captured on the road. In times of turmoil these orcs and hobgoblins turn to the Troll Lords in castle Nacht for protection, though some have recently begun turning to Rackenburg and their cousin orcs. The most powerful of these tribes are the Bonechewers, number a score of bands about 100 or so strong. Lesser tribes move about as well, the Diremonger and Redlup each are smaller, with scattered bands that if totaled, wouldn't exceed 700 each. A fourth notable tribe, the Pikelum ride shaggy ponies; they are the only mounted orcs in the region, and number about 400 tribal members. There are a dozen smaller tribes numbering in the hundreds that roam the wastes and mountains.

BONE CHEWERS: 2000+

WARRIORS: 1100 +/-

WOMEN: 500 +/-

CHILDREN: 200 +/-

ELDERLY: 150 +/-

OVERLORD: Temur, high level fighter

MILITARY: They can send 1100 armored warriors into battle. These are always backed up by about 100 females with slings and javelins.

ECONOMY: They trade in slaves, pelts, and bones.

RELIGION: Unklar

LANGUAGE: Orc, Vulgate

DIREMONGER: 1500+

WARRIORS: 900 +/-

WOMEN: 350 +/-

CHILDREN: 150 +/-

ELDERLY: 100 +/-

OVERLORD: Hobogetur, a Shaman, very high level cleric

MILITARY: They can send 900 lightly armored warriors into

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battle. These are always backed up by about 100 females with slings and javelins.

ECONOMY: They trade in furs, some slaves.

RELIGION: Unklar

LANGUAGE: Orc, vulgate.

REDLUP: 1000+

WARRIORS: 575 +/-

WOMEN: 225 +/-

CHILDREN: 200 +/-

ELDERLY: 100 +/-

OVERLORD: Cha'Ur, Female, Fighter

MILITARY: They can send 525 lightly armored warriors into battle. Cha'Ur's 50 body guards are very heavily armored. These are always backed up by about 100 females with slings and javelins.

ECONOMY: They trade in furs, some slaves.

RELIGION: Unklar

LANGUAGE: Orc, vulgate.

PIKELUM: 800+

WARRIORS: 400 +/-

WOMEN: 200 +/-

CHILDREN: 200 +/-

ELDERLY: +/- (abandon elderly)

OVERLORD: Yadir, high level Fighter (very charismatic as orcs go)

MILITARY: They can send 400 mounted warriors into battle. These carry spears and bows and arrows. They attack from a distance. Their female are never exposed to battle. Their pony heard numbers in several thousand.

ECONOMY: They trade in weapons or gold. Gain their bounty only through raiding.

RELIGION: Unklar

LANGUAGE: Orc, vulgate.

HOBGOBLINS

There are some bands of hobgoblins, but these are the remnants of failed colonies. They are only organized at a local level. Some swear loyalty to the hobgoblin King to the south in Burnevitse, but the majority spends their days raiding.

THE HALFLINGS

The Halflings that dwell in the Gottland are migratory. They travel in wagon trains. Each Clan is broken up into Rings, named after the circled wagon formations they take in camp. There are 3 main halfling Clans in the Gottland and one further

north in the Moravan Plains. The Clan may gather 2 or 3 times in a year to allow marriages, trade, and exchange news. The 3 tribes only gather when called together. Generally, each Ring is about 1/9th the size of the Clan. Several of the main Clans are listed below.

BAUML: 700+

WARRIORS: 210 +/-

WOMEN: 170 +/-

CHILDREN: 240 +/-

ELDERLY: 70 +/-

OVERLORD: Erul Troll Bane

MILITARY: The Baumls can field up to 210 warriors and possess hundreds of kimer steppe devils. The women generally fight as archers and slingers.

ECONOMY: They trade in skins mostly, some treasure they pick up along the way.

RELIGION: Wenafar

LANGUAGE: Vulgate

STAUFENS: 850+

WARRIORS: 350 +/-

WOMEN: 300 +/-

CHILDREN: 250 +/-

ELDERLY: 100 +/-

OVERLORD: France Irontongue

MILITARY: The Staufen Clan can field up to 650 warriors and 50 war dogs. The women generally fight as archers.

ECONOMY: They trade in furs, food, plunder

RELIGION: Wenafar

LANGUAGE: Vulgate

TUMMEL: 650+

WARRIORS: 250 +/-

WOMEN: 150 +/-

CHILDREN: 200 +/-

ELDERLY: 50 +/-

OVERLORD: Derek "Bo-Knuckle" Roder

MILITARY: The Tummels can field up to 350 warriors and 30 war dogs. The women generally fight as archers.

ECONOMY: They trade in raw goods, coal, furs, wild wheats, etc.

RELIGION: Wenafar

LANGUAGE: Vulgate

WULFLING: 550+

WARRIORS: 200+/-

WOMEN: 150 +/-

CHILDREN: 200 +/-

ELDERLY: 50 +/-

OVERLORD: Rienald Stock, high level ranger (related by marriage to Franz Baumel)

MILITARY: The Wulflings can field up to 300 warriors and 25 war dogs. The women generally fight as archers.

ECONOMY: They trade in furs, food, plunder

RELIGION: Wenafar

LANGUAGE: Vulgate

HUMANS

There are scattered human communities in the interior. These are generally small towns, villages or communities nestled in the hills or along river banks. Squalid, lawless places for the most part, they offer refuge for the weary but are not safe. The towns of Most and Ossford lie upon the coast, they are both large. Grandbridge Fort is the only human community in the interior of note.

COMMERCE

At times, the brave or desperate merchants bring caravans into the region. Recently, these merchants have expanded the towns of Most and Ossford. Here goods come from the interior and move on via ship to the realm of the Hobgoblin King of Burnevitse and to the Hanse City States. This has led to some pitched battles with the inhabitants of the Gottland, as the humans and southern Hobgoblins strive to defend their growing trade and the northern Humanoids seek to plunder it. These twin ports do not exercise any real power in the interior, however.

Trade has brought even more disreputable characters to this area. The owners of the trading posts exercise little control over the inhabitants, letting them do as they please so long as the ships sail on time. This, of course, has attracted hosts of would-be adventurers, thieves, bandits, ruffians, explorers and any other breed of man who seeks to leave the perfumed comforts of civilization behind them. The towns are rough affairs where only the strongest survive.

In this thankless place on the edge of the world, nothing is manufactured other than terror and slavery. The creatures here are self sufficient, depending on hunting, fishing and farming. The orcs mine gold from the mountains and have recently begun carting it to the coast for trade of arms. One thing that brings the wary merchant to the Gottland are the flowers found around the roots of the "Gottland Trees." They are reputed to have great healing powers and be the source of the troll's regenerative powers. For a full description of the trees, see below.

PLACES OF INTEREST

The land of Gottland-Ne is an ancient land where many people have dwelt. The dwarves trafficked here, the stone giants made peace with their gods here, wild men from the north trekked through the wastes here and in more recent times, the trolls have occupied its innermost regions. All these peoples have left their marks, so that Gottland-Ne is ripe with ancient dungeons and long-abandoned fortifications.

As noted, Gottland lies between the mountains in the west and north, the sea in the east and the great Ington River to the south. All the lands between are marked by several major features.

AERALUTH WOOD

This forest stands upon the northern banks of the Cealuth River, across from the City of Lynth. It is not a large wood, but its trees are ancient, with gnarled roots embedded deep in the earth. Travel through the wood is difficult, for the ground is much abused and torn by the trees. The trees are tall, 60 to 70 feet in height with broad canopies that hang almost to the ground. There are few trails, as the ground is moved and torn by the trees roots that seem to shift with each storm and over time. Sheep abound as do lesser game, rabbits, squirrels and the like. Fey also occupy the wood, including strange woodland faeries, the pandareen, whose breath invites sleep. Many brave souls have fallen to their swooning calls to never awaken, bound in the webbing of the fey for all time (see New Monsters).

The forest grows right up to and in the river, allowing few sight of the wonderful City of Lynth.



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ASHLAND

North of the town of Ossford lies the small valley of Ashland. A crossroads where the northern trails meet those of the Gray Coast. Some years ago the valley once sported a deep grove of elm and black chestnut. The glade was despoiled during the waning years of the Winter Dark Wars by raiders from the Kleberock; the trolls cut and pulled up the trees and set the land on fire with runes of power. Ever after the Valley was called Ashland.

The Sleepy Steed Inn

At the crossroads stand a small two-story inn, the Sleepy Steed. The owners are a husband, Dustin and his wife, Meg who each had success adventuring before meeting each other. Deciding on a quieter life, they opened the Sleepy Steed.

It's a small inn with a tavern on the first floor and half dozen rooms for hire overhead. This is a familiar stop for travelers looking for safe lodging before passing on to their way. Its floors are well worn from travelers but the structure is as stout and solid as the day it was built.

Dustin, the inn's cook, is a retired mage. He is a 7th level chaotic neutral magic user. His wife, Meg, serves as the innkeeper. She's a retired 9th level cleric.

The prices are fair and the atmosphere warm and friendly. Many, the halflings of the Tummel clan in particular, guard over the Sleepy Steed, for the beer is good and the thick butter of Mrs. Meg is not to be missed.

Slaycrafts Blacksmithy

Shortly after the Sleepy Steed opened, a family of blacksmiths arrived. Deciding to forgo the dangerous life in the town of Most they had begun looking for somewhere else their talents would be of good use. They discovered the Sleepy Steed. Encouraged by the inn's owners, they built their house and shop and soon were blessed with two daughters.

Lawrence is a blacksmith of considerable skill. He is capable of producing weapons with random magical effects at the rate of once a month. He happily repairs equipment, traveling and camping equipment as well as harness, armor, weapons, etc. Lillian, the blacksmith's wife, has an inherit talent for building and carpentry. She designed both their home and the smith's shop as well as the inn's second floor. They are both friendly and helpful.

Their daughters, Lauren and Kelly live with them. Neither parent knows the older daughter, Lauren, is a rune mark of some natural ability. In the ashes of the valley she found the skeletal remains of some human or other. She dug the body up and found a book, The Codex of the Initiate beneath it and another rune, enchantment, written upon a bracelet. Hiding the book away from her parents she studied, slowly over the years translating the runes and mastering a number of them including the enchantment. She is a 3rd level rune mark.

Her father believes her blessed by the gods for he has learned that when she aids him in making items, the items itself is enchanted. Unbeknownst to him, she casts the rune of linking upon the item, then enchantment, granting it some magical power that is released with a conditional rune of her choice. Capidistria

Capidistria sits upon the southern shores of the Inner Sea, its sprawling streets and jumbled houses walled by a 14-foot stone fence, complete with catwalks and towers. The harbor too is protected, a large jetty extending out beyond the quays and into the sea, keeping ships safe from both pirates and surging seas. Here merchants vie for power with one another, waging wars of the pocket book alongside clandestine battles of murder and assassination.

Capidistria is a clean town with cobbled, albeit narrow streets; neighborhoods and districts are divided by frequent archways that are often topped by catwalks, making a virtual second level to the city proper. Much of this construction is the handiwork of the Stone Masons, the most powerful of the guilds in the town.

CAPIDISTRIA

TOTAL POPULATION: 8000+/-

HUMAN: 7000+/-

ORC: 0 +/-

HOBGOBLIN: 0 +/-

GNOME: 450 +/-

HALFLING: 200 +/-

DWARF: 250 +/-

ELF: 50 +/-

GOVERNMENT: Capidistria is ruled by an oligarchy of guilds; the Stone Masons' Guild, the Fishmongers, the Weavers' Guild, the Shipwright Guild, and the Ironmongers' Guild ("Blacksmiths"). The Fishmongers are controlled by Muddles Inc., the Thieves' Guild. Capidistria is also part of the League of Free Cities and as such sends representatives to the League Congress; each guild is afforded one representative.

MILITARY: The city has no standing army, but does employ, through the Guilds, over 200 members of the Cult of the Swords. This warriors' guild supplies sturdy, dependable city guards. Kar "Barrel Chest" Sivch serves as the Captain of the Guard.

ECONOMY: Capidistria has a thriving trade economy, trafficking in goods from the north countries through Anglamay and even to the Hob Goblins realms to the west.

RELIGION: There is no religion here; Temple Row has many temples and churches to varying gods.

MAJOR GUILDS: Stone Masons' Guild, the Fishmongers, the Weavers' Guild, the Shipwright Guild, and the Ironmongers' Guild "Blacksmiths" compose the strongest guilds in the city.

Any and all requests for food and lodging draw the same response, the Mermaid's Rock. Any characters who are familiar with the city or area have heard of it. The tavern sits upon

the harbor and is easy enough to find. It's next door to the Mendlethrone's Rarities.

HARBOR SQUARE

The Harbor of Capidistria is one of the oldest in the region, with trade routes crossing the northern waters and passing through here and on to the well traveled routes to the south. The harbor is clean and orderly, well patrolled by the city and the local guilds. Too much wealth passes this way for it to be any other way. Harbor Square itself is a large square, fronted by a half dozen large docks. Smaller docks line the harbor itself, allowing for smaller craft or smaller firms to traffic in whatever goods they move.

Large buildings front the square, warehouses, counting houses, the stone masons, several small taverns and the large Inn and Tavern, the Mermaid's Rock.

During the daylight hours the harbor is flush with activity. Dock workers load and unload ships, their goods piled in crates and sacks; merchants and their assistants check and recheck inventory; mule-drawn carts pull loads out of the harbor or into it. People mill about, some looking for work, others on their way the Gottland for glory's adventure and gold's reward. Northerners hawk their goods with the the shorter men from the south and so on.

At night Harbor Square takes on a different light. As the mercantile quarter settles down, others come out. It becomes crowded with a different sort. Hard work means hard drink, and men gather to talk the days ills over, tip back brew from The Rock, and fight. Ladies of the evening gather as well, along with minstrels, card sharks, other entertainers, and the like. Of course along with them come all the sorted people who gather about the stench of corruption. It is a favored place to duel and rare is the day that one person or another isn't slain on the cobbles, the stone of which is stained red for the loss of life over the many years. Rumbles too take place in the Square when guilds fight, most commonly the Stone Masons and the Fishmongers; clubs and fists replace swords and magic as the two guilds pummel the devil out of one another.

The Square at night is dangerous; rogues and thieves ply their trade, picking targets and their pockets.

CROWLEY'S RIDGE

This spur of rock juts-out into the Gottland from the Shadow Realms. It has little to offer the world but the barrows of the dead that line its high ridges. In hollowed out caves, some ancient lineage buried their people, sealing them with stones carved like giant wheels. Each stone is fashioned to blend with the rocky wall it guards, but they are noticeable by the holes, 3 inches in diameter driven into the center of the wheel. Inside the barrows are placed, along with the bodies of the dead and their worldly wealth, large iron poles that fit the hole in the wheel. These poles are meant for the dead, to provide a way to leave their resting place. Who they are or who buried them is lost to history. Few travel to the ridge unless in desperate need of wealth or magic.

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DANTE'S PASS

This pass is the only known crossing through this northern portion of the Shadow Mountains. It consists of a high, narrow saddle ridge between the twin Mountains Iseldrim and Gardrim. When not covered in deep snow, it is broken, rocky country. For long years the pass lay hidden, bound in snow and ice, but the recent explorations of Wilson Dante discovered the pass. The eastern trade winds rise from the Inner Sea and cross the uplands of Gottland, to thunder through the pass. This makes traversing the saddle ridge a difficult task. There are no refuges there. There is no water and no vegetation aside from tall, old yellow pines. These offer some firewood to the weary traveler, but little protection from the elements. Large bears and some yeti stalk the high pass. Twice a year, the great mammoths of the Moravan cross over the saddle, traveling north in the spring and south in the fall. It takes a man on foot about 8 days to cross the whole. The wind is always blowing, averaging 20mph. The Pass is very treacherous in the Winter months and snow drifts averaging 8-12 feet.

Dante himself disappeared in the pass during one particularly harsh winter. He and his party came from the north with a great treasure they stole from the Graugusse. Only one of the twelve who set off on that deadly journey came back. The rest died in the frozen tundra and Dante himself was lost (and with him the artifact he bore from the Gray tower). Rumors abound that the artifact lies there still, clutched in his ever frozen hands.

DOOST PRARIE

A broad, flat prairie marked by mountains and hills on three sides. The region is rich in deep grasses in spring and summer and as such a favored feeding ground for many herd animals. This in turn attracts many predators, great and small. The Doost are the favored hunting grounds of several halfling clans.

DORIANNE'S DELVE

A fierce warrior chieftess once ranged the frozen lands. Winning glory, slaying beasts, and garnering fantastic treasures for her tribe. her greatest exploit being the conquering of a frost giant stronghold with her cohort the Seven Suitors. The hold became her throne keep. (See map page 54).

When she and her heroes fell fighting yet more fearsome giants, her people took their remains and placed them in her palace. Hiring dwarven allies to turn the the hold into a crypt. In the top chamber Dorianne Dolan lies, along with her legendary weapons, the Runes Spears of the Seven Suitors, waiting for the worthy to come and claim them, forging new sagas.

THE DRAB SINKS

The Drab Sinks stretch from the walls of Most to roughly 30 miles south of the Ingtton. These are cold moors, filled with strange beasts of wild disposition. Tales relate how that dread lord of Chaos, Thorax, the Red Bull, in the days of his power, sat upon the mouth of the river and drank from the stream. He choked on the water's oily brim and vomited much of it back up. What came from the black tar of his bile were strange

creatures. Wild chaos beasts haunt the Sinks to this day. There are deep tar pits here that trap the unwary.

DUNHOLLOW WOOD

“Dun” is the Dwarven word for deep. Thus the bearded folk named this strange forest many years ago, the deep wood, for it stood at the deeps of the feet of two great Mountain chains. The forest is old beyond reckoning and has survived many thousands of years of turmoil. It has shrunk and grown depending on its usage. Remnants of it can be found as far south as the Ington River. Today its borders straddle the Sorgon River. The forest is filled with creatures of the land of fey and many believe that the planes of Aihrde and Fey cross over in this very wood.

The trees here are a strange mixture of oak, hickory, black locust and beech. The greatest and oldest of the trees grow on the southern bank of the wood near the Dunhollow Pools. These are almost all white oak, towering 120 feet into the air, their shaggy bark easily seen from great distances. In their wide, dome shaped canopies dwell all manner of pixies and sprites. The forest is old, the trees grow spaciouly, and travel is easy. Little underbrush clogs the paths, except where the forest borders the plains and mountains. The Dunhollow serves as a nice wind break for the high passes to the north and the plains to the south. Those who travel through the wood are given some respite from the winds. But the forest is prone to deep fogs and roving mists, which often linger until late in the afternoon. Called the Dunhollow Fog by the locals, the mist is annoying at best and dangerous at the worst. Visibility at such times is often as little as 10-15 feet.

The fog however is not the true danger of Dunhollow. The true danger lies further north upon the slopes of Gardrim Mountain, in the bowels of Castle Nacht. Here the Troll Lords have, for centuries, tortured and murdered countless thousands of folk. The Trolls strip their victims of humanity and drive them mad with pain. Almost all die who enter that dread place and those who live speak little of their sufferings. But the tale does not end in death for these tortured souls; they are bound to Aihrde and leashed to the Trolls. They wander from the Castle, hapless spirits whose souls are wracked with the memories of forgotten happiness. The souls of the dead wander south to the Dunhollow and drift through the forest. In truth, the mists and fogs that bother that wood are often gathered hosts of the dead, not unlike those that haunt the Mistbane River in the far south.

The ghosts are not necessarily malicious. They usually drift-by, often mistaken as a mournful wind carried through the thick fog. Encounters with these dead can be very dangerous, however; some of the ghosts are terrifying and move to slay the living out of rage or jealousy. One in four of these encounters are violent and end in them attacking a party. The level of the ghost encounter corresponds to the number of ghosts in the fog.

25-50 are equal to a 5hd ghost

50-100 are equal to a 10hd ghost

101-150 are equal to a 15hd ghost

150+ are equal to a 20hd ghost

Turning the whole fog is impossible. Turning any ghost that attacks a party is very possible. If a ghost cloud should attack the party, treat it as the level of the overall ghost encounter. It only gets one attack, but those being attacked should be made to feel as if they are all being attacked with the dead flying to and fro, screaming malevolent shouts of pain and rage. Physical combat is against one entity, but again, it appears to be against the roving mob of spiritual nightmares. A successful turn reduces the ghost cloud by 1d8 hit points. The cleric may turn multiple times as if they were turning single entities.

The Maiden of Dunhollow lives in the south-eastern eves of the forest. She wanders that wood looking for her two sisters, both of whom she believes are lost in the mists. These are the Maiden of Winter's Night and Valyana, the Maiden of Sorrow. The Maiden of Dunhollow is kindly and helpful to strangers. She can control the weather, countering the ghost mist while weaving her own fogs that search for her sisters. (See New Monsters.)

EASTERN SPUR

This low range of hills offers travelers a safe haven. The rock here is old, worn and broken. Thousands of caves line the fractured earth, providing refuge for monsters and men alike. The weather can be unforgiving, but the caves ride atop huge aquifers of fresh water. The hills themselves play host to black jack oaks, small gnarled cousins of the greater oaks. These trees are tough and yield to the axe with great reluctance, but their wood burns hot, while putting off little light and less smoke. The abundance of small game makes the Eastern Spur even more attractive. It is a favorite haunt for giants and other monsters.

FAINGASZ RIVER

This river originates at Rodzek's Falls. It is narrow but very swift, tumbling down the mountains until it crashes into the waters of the Sorgon river. The water is clear and clean.

FEADOR PLAINS

Between the Gray Coast and the Holmgrad Mountains lies a broad expanse of open prairie. The land here is flat with little in the way of elevation. In spring and summer the grass grows deep and green in the loamy soil. In the colder months, the grass wilts but clings to earth, offering the large herds of grazing buffalo plenty to eat. Large herds of stocky ponies dwell here also, alongside the buffalo. These creatures are stout, with good stamina. They have long manes and tails and a crown of hair around their hooves. They come from old dwarven stock and are prized by all who live in the north. Mammoths, wooly rhinos and similar beasts, also come upon the Feador to eat and graze.

The wind forever blows here in the warmer months, rising from the south. In the colder months it comes from the north and west, through the Kleberock.

This is a favored hunting ground for pelt traders, but it is a dangerous place, for it is also a favored hunting ground of the

Jolmuen (see Monsters & Treasure of Aihrde) as well. With the bodies of large boars, and the torsos of giants, these massive creatures take great sport in hunting herds of buffalo and the human hunters who follow them.

The Feador Plains sport a few communities on the coast. These are mostly small villages established by the Northmen. They are welcoming communities, though guarded against evil. They generally traffic in pelts and fish taken from the Inner Sea.

GRANDBRIDGE FORT

This stone edifice sits upon the banks of the Ington River, its main gate facing north, its south gate leading to Grandbridge. Any who wish to use the bridge must pass through the castle. It is huge, with four walls and large round towers. The road to the bridge passes through the north gate's barbican, through a walled tunnel in the castle and out the south gate to the bridge itself. The road lies within the castle walls. There are no exits but the north and south gates of the castle proper and one small door that opens into the tunnel. The castle surrounds and hems in the road; if they gates are closed, any in the tunnel are trapped. Murder holes line the roof, allowing knights quick access to those within.

The castle is held by a troop of Knights who call themselves "The Father's Band." They pay homage to the All Father. These knights control the bridge that crosses the Ington. A town of about a thousands stands a mile north of the fort. It houses a number of people, travelers, merchants, some farmers and the like. The Grand Bridge can hold four wagons abreast, and skirts the river by a mere 20 yards.

TOTAL POPULATION: 1300

HUMAN: 800 +/-

ORC: 0 +/-

HOBGOBLIN: 0 +/-

GNOME: 50 +/-

HALFLING: 200 +/-

DWARF: 200 +/-

ELF: 50 +/- (unusually large for this region, but due largely to the proximity to the Mithlon Eves)

GOVERNMENT: The Knight's Marshal, Henry Martinson, rules the castle and the order.

MILITARY: There are 100 mounted knights in the castle and 300 men-at-arms with heavy armor and pole-arms.

ECONOMY: They take tribute from any who pass the bridge, be that orc, dwarf, man or elf.

RELIGION: The All Father.

LANGUAGE: Vulgate, the Common tongue.

MAJOR GUILDS: The Father's Band

GRAY COAST

This stretch of coastland lies upon the north-western Inner Sea, extending from the Black River to the Broken Fingers. Its low-lying beaches make it a favored spot for travelers to pull in their boats. No harborage is needed, at least for the shallow drafted boats of the Northmen. A string of islands guard the better part of the coast from the ravages of the sea, making the region even more desirable. A half dozen small villages line the coast, some on the small islands, others on the actual coast. These are mostly Northmen. The Gray Coast earned its name from the peculiar color of the water adjacent to the land, the cold and earth casting it in a grayish tint.

GROSSENBRÜK

The lands of the King of Grossenbrük lie upon the far reaches of the Gray Coast, where the Hollmgrad Mountains encroach on the Inner Sea. Built upon the banks of the Bru River, this tiny northern realm is known far and wide for its beer. The city of Grossenbrük lies westward of the river, guarding (as its name implies) the northernmost reliable and well-built bridge. Kloster Grossenbrük lies within the city, where the monks brew large amounts of the aforementioned quality beer.

Across the bridge, some leagues to the east, lies the burg of Bechhofen, nigh a wooded highland where some number of wood elves dwell. A small way to the north of Bechhofen lies Kloster Roggenbühl, named for the hill upon which it stands, surrounded thickly with wild rye. The monks there brew a superb roggensbier and weizen. Following the river upstream northward and further to the west, near the mountains in the north, stand the burg of Altenberg, and Kloster Oberstberg further north in the mountains. The monks of Kloster Oberstberg have dealings with the mountain dwarves there, and have thus been instructed in the craft of flavoring their beers with herbs such as yarrow and sweet gale.

The king in Grossenbrük, is opposed to brewing with herbal additives, and with the help and urging of the abbot of Kloster Grossenbrük, the king has ordained that beer contain only three ingredients: water, grain, and hops (yeast is as yet unheard of, to the exception of a certain wizard who will be mentioned later). The folk of Bechhofen and Altenberg, as well as their neighbors the wood elves and mountain dwarves, all have a problem with the king's writ. So stand the lands of Grossenbrük, unsettled over disputes about how to make their well-known brews.

HALMSROOF

The Halmroof is a twisting narrow path that was once a road of some repute. During the great battles of the Horned God's minions, the lords of the land fought grievously against one another. Nulak used his armies of Trolls to hold the Kleberock, but in time these defenses were shattered when a Mogri carved a road through the razor sharp ridges and highlands between the two mountains Skaelin and Eoyotten. Halmsroof became a road that armies used to cross over and besiege the Graugusse, the Gray Tower.

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Halmsroof means "Roof of the World" and is today little more than an abandoned track. The pass never dips below 12,000 feet. Because of snow, ice and time, only one or two can walk abreast. It snakes between the two mountains, across lengthy narrow ridges and hugs the peaks in dangerous places. It is a deadly trail to follow. The booming voices of the white dragons, a nest of which have occupied the heights over the pass, cause many rocks and snow to fall. In winter, the pass is extremely difficult to cross. Only the most seasoned mountain climber even tries, and they must be skilled in weather survival to make it through the unbelievable cold. The giants Umyard and Skleeome make their home there. (See Adventures On the Roof of the World.)

HODEN VALLEY

The Hoden Valley is a long, narrow valley beneath the Halmsroof Pass, marked by steep walls and scores of waters falls.

HRALAND FOOTHILLS

The Hraland are named for the ruins of an ancient city that lies upon their southern slopes. The city of Hraland is an ancient monolith, its halls of alabaster stone and cobbled streets crumble. Here a great people dwelt and flew dragons for steeds, or so the tales relate. The hills themselves are low and easily crossed. There are several villages of Jolmuen spread throughout. The hills adjacent to the Holmgrads, are rich in marble.

HUNDRED FALLS

See Naebar River.

INGTON RIVER

This foul mess flows from the Shadow Mountains. Its origin is unknown, but many surmise it flows from deep pits carved by Trigal (Nulak) in days of old. This lumbering giant of a river winds its way through the Shadow Mountains, passing foul orc, hobgoblin and troll holes and dens, collecting refuse as it goes. When it spills into the plains of Gottland, it gains in width what it loses in speed, averaging 150 yards across. Several hundred miles into its course, the Teifsich River joins its run to the sea. That clean water does little to dilute the Ington's foulness. After this juncture, the river widens, deepens, and gains speed. From here to the sea, it is generally 250 yards wide, possessed of deadly currents and tide pools. It dumps its impurities into the Drab Sinks near the Inner Sea.

Nothing but foul creatures live in the river. Yet, the orcs, unger, hobgoblins and others live close to its banks, fishing out dead animals and muck dwellers for food. They fear not the seasonal flooding, and have houses and small towns built behind great river walls or upon high stilts.

The river is not easily crossed. From the mountains to where the Teifsich joins it, there are only two bridges. Their names are lost to history but the orcs call them the Grand Bridge and the Urlpalls. Both are stone and in decent shape. The Grand Bridge in the west can hold four wagons abreast, skirting the river by a mere 20 yards, while the Urlpalls is far more narrow and high.

This span, with its huge abutments, towers 60 yards above the water, but only two may walk abreast.

There are no easy crossings after the juncture of the two rivers. However, travelers relate tales of a ferryman of the Ington Woods who crosses its course. There is also some river traffic from Most, but these are folk of ill repute who lust for gold. They are often aligned with the orcs on the banks and they charge a great deal for any services they grant.

KALOGREANT CASTLE

Kalogreant castle stands upon a long narrow finger of a ridge overlooking the Winter Wood. Looking up one can see the white walls of the tower itself. The castle consists of a high curtain wall, 22 feet high and 15 feet wide at the base, and large gates, beyond are the keep and three towers, each taller than its neighbor. The walls and towers are white, the double gates and shingled canonical roofs are blue. A single pennant flies from the high tower. It is blue with three stars emblazoned upon it.

Visitors must travel up a long, winding road, roughly three miles in length, that coils back on itself three times. Those further up the road can easily see travelers coming up, and those in the tall white main tower of the castle can see much of the whole road. The path is open on both sides, though steep and narrow.

It is the home of the Maiden of Winter's Blight, Ainoja, one of the three sisters. She is devoted to the Winter Dark and the grip of winter. She possesses the Winter Rune (see adventures below). She welcomes, cautiously, most to Kaleogreant Castle but the place is sparsely decorated with few furnishings. In the mountains about she has a small army of unger, a few hundred strong, who she calls upon in need. She also employs many invisible stalkers as she is a magi of no mean ability.

KLEBEROCK PASS AND CASTLE NACHT

Where the fingers of the Shadow Mountains and the Holmgrads meet, lies Kleberock Pass. The pass is narrow and deep and offers a passage through the mountains safe from mountain weather. Upon the northern side of the pass are towering cliffs, high ridges, and narrow gulches. These overlook the water-logged Wolf Runs, fens that bridge the mountains with the Great Northern Forest. The mountains rise in staggered layers of such heights that they defy the imagination. They eventually give way to the sheer, ice bound rock faces and the jagged steep cliffs of Mount Eoyollen. In the south, the terrain is only slightly better. The Shadow Mountains end in a host of long, narrow ridges splayed out in a circular pattern from the heights of Gardrim Mountain. These narrow capped ridges are cut by deep gulches. Those who are so unfortunate to fall into one of these gulches rarely return. The southern end of the pass enters the Dunhollow Wood, a haunted forest.

The pass itself is wide, about three quarters of a mile at its widest, and extends roughly 40 miles. The pass is crowded by the Sorgon River. The Sorgon is dammed in three places, heaps of stone and earth tossed into the current by the trolls, and these dams have



created two small lakes. These lakes narrow the passage even further so that it can only hold two wagons abreast.

Few travel the Pass for the Orcs of Gardrim and the Trolls of Nacht watch over it and the plains to the north and south. They hunger for war and desire treasure. Little passes this way and few adventurers travel into these lands. Some rangers know the lands and some hunters as well. They pass through to the north and back again, but only at great hazard. The last of name to do so was a grim faced Gnome who slew present Troll Lord's ancestor with his hammer in vengeance for his fallen comrades.

Overlooking the Pass sits the great burg of Castle Nacht. It stands upon the slopes of Mount Gardrim like its own hill. The giant, squat, flat-roofed building looms over the countryside. Here the Troll Lord Varucks dwells and rules his small kingdom. His castle, like a northman's great hall, is long, rectangular, and filled with a host of rooms, halls, tunnels and the like. Much of this fortress is empty, as the power of the Trolls was broken years ago when the Dragon Malikor broke the Mountain of Thangondrim and the rubble fell upon the hosts of the Troll Lords. In addition, the killing of a Troll Lord by a Gnome has done much to diminish the reputation of the Trolls. So today, Varucks commands only 60 heavily armored trolls. He can call on a further 300 from the surrounding mountains. In truth, there are several thousands more in the valleys to the south and north, but these heed him little and he would need a power of the old world to gather them.

The Gardrim orcs war with the trolls and frequently hound those folk who dwell in the Dunhollow. They are not in any way as organized as their cousins to the south (in Rackenberg) and only gather in small bands. They are hounded by the trolls, giants, and other monsters that climb from up from the dark crevices of Gardrim's feet.

LAKE TEIFSICH

Lake Teifsich is a broad, deep lake fed by the massive Teifsich river the glacier waters of the distant Rhodope Mountains. The water is clear blue and deep enough that it is often still. Fish dwell in the lake in great abundance, supplying the town of Maidensburg with all their needs. The waters are cool and are home to a number of nymphs. 'Tis rumored that a large bronze dragon dwells beneath the waters, surfacing from time to time to hunt or sport with the humans of the town. This broad deep lake plays home to the village of Maidensburg, a human community built on stone giant pillars out on the water.

LIFORINNI

TOTAL POPULATION: 168 +/- 15 (peak population)

HUMAN: 137 +/- 3 (peak population)

GNOME: 8 +/- 3 (peak population)

HALFLING: 4 +/- 3 (peak population)

DWARF: 12 +/- 3 (peak population)

ELF: 7 +/- 3 (peak population)

GOVERNMENT: Communal with elected Head of Community

MILITARY: Volunteer Militia with all able-bodied males serving, except trade house members and Head of Community

ECONOMY: Predominately trade

RELIGION: Wenafar

LANGUAGE: Vulgate with a sprinkle of orc for everyday usage

MAJOR GUILDS: Trade houses run by emissaries from various communities in the surrounding area

PERSONS/HOUSES OF NOTE: J.C. Icanpur (elected Head of Community), Laveau Household (halfling trade house), Gerdini Household (human trade house), Fly Household (gnome trade house), Blackwater Household (elf trade house), Mardin Household (dwarven trade house).

Liforinni was originally settled by a clan of humans during the Age of Heroes. These original settlers developed a close-knit commune that prospered for some time. During the beginning of the Winter Dark, Liforinni's community structure began to fracture with the arrival of the Icanpur's clan.

The collapse was gradual at first, but continued over successive generations. A pivotal point was reached in the waning years of the Winter Dark, when J.C. Icanpur was elected town regent. After his election, J.C. began an aggressive campaign for town expansion which was prosperous for a few years. This expansion included the establishment of trade houses run by hand-picked emissaries from various communities in the surrounding area. This strategy was initially successful, despite the effects of the harsh conditions of the Winter Dark.

However, the Lords of the Gottland took special pleasure in ensuring the demise of Liforinni as a result of its resistance to their influence. Ultimately the expansion turned into the bane of Liforinni, by leading to the slow and gradual collapse of the original clans' commune principles.

Successive generations began to abandon Liforinni along with the established trade houses, upon which the community became ever more reliant during the prolonged years of the Winter Dark to help defend their home communities. This, coupled with the slow death of older generations, has resulted in the almost total abandonment of Liforinni.

Over the last century, nature has reclaimed the much of the town, and people have by and large forgotten it. Stories surrounding Liforinni are handed down by the few remaining decedents of the commune. These stories went unquestioned until the coming of Fable Laveau (bard). Fable, born some 23 years ago, has recently formed an adventuring band with the priest S. C. Gerdini, the roguish Tur the Sly Fly, a magi of some repute, Manuel Blackwater, and the paladin Victor Mardin, in the hope of separating fact from fiction in the stories of Liforinni.

LYNTH & THE WHITE TOWER

Lynth is home to an Elven Lord of the Fontenouq. These Elves are well known for their warlike tendencies; they revel in the destruction of evil. Haralyth of the White Tower is just such

a Lord. She is tall with unusually dark hair for her kind. She is forever girded for war, in chain and plate and carries a great shield in combat. She prefers the lance and sword to other weapons as she rides her warhorse into battle. Her steed is armored in chain and plate barding as well.

The town of Lynth is built upon a bluff of the banks of the Caeluth River. It is shielded by the forests in the south and the Aeraluth wood across the river. No road leads to Lynth; the forests block all but river traffic. A traveler can enter the woods but the maze of growth directs them far and away from the town. The town is walled with thick blocks, standing 18 feet high and twice as thick at the base. Inside the buildings are stone and wood with shingled roofs. The town is paved throughout (an oddity in these regions). People who travel to Lynth must surrender their weapons upon entry, or else they are barred from the town. Otherwise, the town is open and friendly with a thriving market place.

The White Tower, the home of the Lady Haralyth, is a refuge for the elves and their allies. It is built upon a high spur of the Shadow Mountain, overlooking the valley below and the town of Lynth, which lies under Haralyth's protection. The Tower is built in the fashion of the Fontenouq, the walls are thin, tall, and magically enhanced. The golden-colored keep surrounds a high silver tower with a minaret. Haralyth welcomes visitors and aids those in great discomfort. If they are not filled with a desire to destroy evil, however, then she treats with them only a little.

She can raise an army of 400 elves from the Mithlon Eves (a mixed bag of Wood Elves and High Elves) and about 800 woodsmen from the same area. Her House Guard from the White Tower consists of 12 powerful Knights. She takes great pleasure in hounding the orcs of Rackenberg.

TOTAL POPULATION: 3400

HUMAN: 2000

GNOME: 50 +/-

HALFLING: 250 +/-

DWARF: 15 +/-

ELF: 1000 +/-

GOVERNMENT: The Lady Haralyth rules as Lord, 17th level, female, knight

MILITARY: The township can field up to 400 elves and 800 woodsmen

ECONOMY: Lynth produces arms and armor of masterwork perfection as well as finely worked art in silver and platinum. A number of powerful magic items come from Lynth as well. They do not openly trade on any market.

RELIGION: They pay homage to the god Aenouth.

LANGUAGE: Elvin, Vulgate.

MAJOR GUILDS: No guilds operate here.

PERSONS OF NOTE: Shaydazar in LYNNTH (He is a lawful good, 7th level human ranger. His vital stats are HP 45, AC 16, HD 7. His primary attributes are strength, dexterity, and

wisdom. His significant attributes are strength 17, dexterity 18, constitution 12, intelligence 15, wisdom 17 and charisma 16. He has a 14 comeliness. He pays homage to the house deities, whom he calls the Four (Son/Wife/Father/Mother), of which he's read little but heard much from a companion who taught him. He wears a suit of studded leather armor in battle and carries a long sword and composite bow. He has a hatred of the drow, or at the very least, they are his favored enemy. He fights as a normal 7th level ranger, except when balance on his left leg is needed, at which point he loses 5 points of dexterity.)

Description: At age 54, his hair is beginning to thin and grey. His eyes are hazel, if one gets close enough to look into them, and he stands around 5'11" and looks to weigh about 170 pounds. He does have a small scar under his left eye, but you'd need to get pretty close to see it, and he doesn't like most people to get that close. He plays the mandolin – not badly, but not good enough to consider it professionally. When he travels, he carries a home-made first aid kit, some fishing tackle, oil, a sewing kit, a whetstone, and the ever-present mandolin.

His frequent companion is his dog, named Dog. Dog is not owned by Shaydazar, but considers himself partners with the ranger.

HISTORY: Try not to stare at the stump which is all that's left of Shaydazar's left leg. He'll tell you how it was lopped off by a drow princess when he refused her amorous attentions. Most folks in the village just smile and humor him, but Shaydazar really did enjoy epic adventures until his disability pretty much grounded him here at the edge of a forest around a rustic village, not far from the town of Lynnth. His needs being simple, he only brings in the occasional pelt for what little he needs to buy. The woods provide for him, and he protects them from abuse, whether by man or by beast.

He has only one prize to show for his adventures, and that's the silver-looking ring on his right hand, third finger. He was told it was a ring with one wish, but he's never used it, never tested it. It does respond to a detect magic, but no more information than that is forthcoming – and Shaydazar never talks about it. If pressed, he'll tell that it was a gift from the drow princess who took his leg. (Somewhere, though he doesn't know it, the drow princess who loved him has survived. She made a lamp from his leg, and she wears a glove to hide the third finger on her right hand, which was lopped off by Shaydazar in that same fight – and which once wore her ring of wishes, with one wish left.)

Now, he's content where he is, living among the creatures (even a "monster" or two) and coming into the village from time to time, where the children surround him and beg for a story of his adventuring days. "The chaos is gone now," he tells them after each story, "and I don't think it will be coming back." He is, foolishly, too optimistic.

If one comes upon him in the woods, he is usually whittling a stick or peeling an apple with his knife.

It's a quiet life, and he knows he's missed out on love and raising a family. He considers these things to have passed him by, though he still dreams about that drow princess.

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MAENLUTH PLAINS

The Maenluth are fertile prairies. They encompass the southern lands of the Gottland and border the Tar-Kiln Forest in the south, and the Mithlon Eves in the west. The many rivers and their tributaries invite hosts of animals and their predators to stalk the deep grasses. Hunting is good, though dangerous. Wolves, bears, and other creatures hunt these grasslands.

There are few towns and villages in the Maenluth. The City of Lynth and Twin Rivers are here in addition to a few frontier communities.

There are, however, several tribes of wild elves. These tribes hunt the prairie, paying heed to no king or lord. They travel in small bands, mounted on small, long-legged, swift horses. The wild elves here use the bow and lance, long sword, and long-hafted axes. They wear no armor, but have a litany of magical charms and spells that give them protection against the ravages of battle. The wild elves trade at Twin Rivers and the City of Lynth. The halflings count them as their friends and many goods are bartered between those two peoples. They have no central organization, though they have an affiliation with the elves of the Mithlon Eves. The Lady of the White Tower calls them friends as well.

MAIDENSBURG

The town of Maidensburg, built upon the waters of Lake Teifsich, stands a refuge in the wilderness. Long before, during the wild and dangerous years of the Winter Dark Wars, the people who dwelt along the banks of the lake found themselves the targets of repeated raids by both their overlords in the north, and raiders from the lands to south. Abandoned by all, they lived in dismal despair. But one, Cornelius, whose family fell to the blades of orcs, was taken by a dream. In the dream Tefnut, the Hand Maiden of the All Father, came to him and instructed him to swim out upon the lake and wait. So Cornelius did, despite the calls of his comrades that he would surely freeze or drown in the cold waters. He cast aside their doubts and swam out into the frigid waters and there awaited his fate. For hours he floated in the freezing water until at last his strength gave out and he slipped beneath the waves.

As he slipped beneath the waters, his feet set upon a pillar of stone, arresting his motion. Revitalized, he swam about, slipping beneath the waves and discovered a host of giant pillars. Constructed of stones, stacked on top of the other, they proved to be the ancient homes of stone giants, lost to time and the deep waters of the lake. Cornelius returned to his people with the news and they set about constructing a town upon the pillars. With great labor they brought in stone from the Bleached Hills and extended the stones, lifting them a dozen feet above the water. They connected the pillars with stone arches and floors, creating a huge platform upon the lake. This they walled with a 12-foot stone buttress and within they constructed their town. In the town center they left a large circle opening so that the waters were there exposed for all to see. Here Cornelius built an altar to Tefnut and the people named him the Hierophant and he served as their Master Druid until his passage. They called the town Maidensburg in honor Tefnut.

The town has flourished since the Winter Dark Wars. Trade in raw materials, animal pelts, gems and silver comes up from the southwest on the Teifsich River; from the south comes iron ore from the Bleached Hills, and from the north come hides, halfling brews, and the spoils of the Gottland. All these serve to make Maidensburg a wealthy community.

The people here are friendly and welcome strangers and willingly buy and sell their items. It is not unheard of to find some minor magics for sale in the town's merchant quarter. They worship the goddess Tefnut here and in respect for her keep the town clean of debris and filth. All the families have boats; some small, others large and they use them to fish the waters. Two large galleys and several transports help to move their soldiery in time of need.

TOTAL POPULATION: 4,000

HUMAN: 3,000

GNOME: 200 +/-

HALFLING: 50 +/-

DWARF: 100 +/-

ELF: 300 +/-

GOVERNMENT: A Council governs the town. The council consists of 4 human oligarchs and one chosen representative of the gnomes, halflings, dwarves and elves. It is headed by the Hierophant — the Master Druid — though he does not have a controlling power.

MILITARY: In times of need, the town raises a levy of 450 militiamen and roughly 75 warriors or knights; the dwarves and halflings field a further 150 infantry and the elves about 75 highly skilled bowmen.

ECONOMY: The town deals in cross country trade and the river trade. They produce a great deal of fishing. They regularly traffic with the coast and the towns of Most and Ossford.

RELIGION: Tefnut, small tower of the Knights of Haven here.

LANGUAGE: Vulgate and all.

MAJOR GUILDS: There is the merchant guild and Muddles Inc. There are a few elven Vale Knights who dwell here as well as a small contingent of the Knights of Haven.

MAMMOTH RIDGE “THE BEORMOT”

This wide, low ridge is known by many names. The Halflings call it “Mammoth,” the orcs “Klugtak”, the Northmen the “Beormot”. But it is best known as Mammoth Ridge, for here is where the great Troll Lord, Hasyrick fell to a tusked mammoth that he sought to slay. The ridge stretches from the sea to the mountains, and divides the Gottland in two. There is little wealth here, just some scattered orc and hobgoblin villages and small ramshackle human communities. There are a few farmsteads. Most of the humans who live here are drifters and homeless who have found themselves at the end of the world and at the end of their tether. They are generally rough, but sometimes friendly to strangers.

A large group of Halflings live here as well. They are nomadic, traveling in large covered or box wagons; they welcome strangers and give them refuge in their tall wagons. There are three bands, all belonging to the Staufens family. Their chief is Franz Baumel. When pressed, Baumel calls his cousins to him and in about three weeks they can field a small army of about 350 men, 500 women and children. The Halflings employ war dogs and use specially trained red tailed hawks to communicate with each other.

Travel on the Mammoth Ridge is only slightly more difficult than in the lowlands. The ground is broken into small hills, and there is grass for grazing and enough scrub and underbrush for camp fires and the like. The Halflings rarely follow the same paths in order to keep their enemies from tracking them.

The greatest danger on the Mammoth Ridge lies in the winter months. The Mammoths who migrate from the Moravan come across the Dante Pass and down into the lowlands. They work their way to the Ridge where the bulls vie for the attention of the cows. These great lumbering beasts are often worked into a fury and attack at the slightest provocation. To make matters worse, the trolls of the Kleberock gather from time to time to avenge their long dead master, Hasyrick. They come to the Ridge to hunt the giant beasts. During the winter, it is not uncommon for a raging Woolly Mammoth to be locked in combat with a dozen, thick-bodied trolls. Neither the trolls nor Mammoths pay attention to what gets in their way and many a party of adventurers have been trampled to death when they are caught up in these titanic struggles.

MAMMOTH SPRINGS

This large lake rides the plains south of Mammoth Ridge. In the north and west the lake possesses no shallows, the water hemmed in against steep rocks. Around the east and south, the lake shoals are normal, sliding gracefully into ever deeper water. Large fish abound in the lake and the Halflings use small flat bottom boats to fish. The center of the lake is warm, fed by hot springs beneath the lake, so that steam rises several dozen feet above the lake's surface. Legends speak of the lake's bottom being ripped open, tearing a gash between this world and one of fire. In any case, the warm waters offer bathing opportunities for those so inclined.

During the deep winter the lake freezes over (except for the heated center of the lake). Sometimes, travelers camp on the ice and use the central water for fishing and swimming.

MÖNCHKREUZUNG

TOTAL POPULATION: 1200 in peak seasons, 800 otherwise

HUMAN: 900 +/-

GNOME: 50 +/-

HALFLING: 100 +/-

DWARF: 200 +/-

ELF: 50 +/-

GOVERNMENT: Town Council

MILITARY: Militia, 300 in peak

ECONOMY: Trade and barter

RELIGION: Corthain

LANGUAGE: Vulgate, Northmen

MAJOR GUILDS: None

The little town of Mönchkreuzung is situated on the Gray Coast at the mouth of the Rieselfähiges river. Although small, the town is well-stocked due to its prime location. In fact, it boasts two large inns because many ships choose to stop here overnight before continuing on toward the Sorgon River in the morning.

The first inn is the renowned Aalenkorb, owned and run by Heinlich Aalen with the help of his wife and two daughters. The second inn, whilst of better quality, finds itself playing second fiddle to the Aalenkorb. The Schweindecke is run by the redoubtable Frau Hette and her three sons.

Dominating the landscape of the town is the imposing edifice of the local abbey, dedicated to Corthain. Heading the ecclesiastical staff is the Abbot, Vater Süßeslicht. A stout man of middling height, the Abbot shows his years readily in the generous mop of grey hair and fine wrinkles. One thing that becomes apparent through talking to him is that the good Vater would rather be knocking heads in service to Corthain than running an abbey.

In running the abbey, he is ably assisted by Frater Gerrit. As Brother Porter, Frater Gerrit is responsible for the safety of the abbey and its brothers, and he is rarely seen without a simple yet hefty cudgel that he refers to as "Türklopfer".

The local smithy is run by a taciturn dwarf known only as Master Schmutzstellig, on account of his coke-blackened hands. Although he is not the most approachable to begin with, once he warms to you then he will offer fine prices on arms and armor. Occasionally he may have finely-worked and magical weapons or armor for sale, but this is pretty rare as he makes them himself.

MOST

This town sits on the edge of the Drab Sinks, next to those pestilent, chaotic pools. Most is slightly larger than its northern neighbor, Ossford, boasting a population of some 5,000 people, and a remarkable 18,000 during the high trading season. These are mostly men, a smattering of women, some, often orphaned, children. There is generally a 10 to 1 ratio in men to women. It is walled, 18 feet of stone keeping it safe from the marshlands and raiders from the interior. In resembles Ossford in many respects, with narrow twisting lanes fronted by the host of ill gotten establishments. Sin is the trade of the day and many come from far and wide to partake of "the Most" as it is generally known.

The town is run by two competing barmen, William of Webb and The Gray Giant. These two run bars appropriately named William's Bar and the Gray Counter. William commands a small army of ruffians and the Gray Giant is known for his size. The

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Inns face each other across the city's main square, and are both large, three story establishments. They decorate themselves in bright colors (William's in Green and the Giant's in Orange) and frequently fight it out in the streets. Getting caught-up in one of these brawls is dangerous and often deadly. The winner, whether William or the Gray Giant, takes the loot and divides it up amongst his follows, after keeping a healthy portion for himself.

NOTE: What few know is that both William and the Giant are in business together and frequently meet in a secret chamber beneath the square to drink and count up their combined loot. Only their inner circles know of this; the mass of ruffians and citizens are wholly in the dark. Both know that if word got out, it could cause a riot of such proportions that "the Most" would become the least, so they guard the secret well.

When threatened by outsiders, William and the Giant have a 'public' truce, combine their armies and defend the walls. They have no ships of their own, but can put an impressive 850 men in the field. In the campaigning season they can call up volunteers and a number of adventurers take to the walls.

The balance of power in Most has shifted recently as a gnome, Deakin Thunderstruck, utterly unaware of the arrangement between William and the Giant, has taken up residence. He has opened a dry goods store called Deakins. The shop serves as a front for his quite dealings in antiquities.

TOTAL POPULATION: 4,500

HUMAN: 3350

ORC: 300 +/-

HOBGOBLIN: 200 +/-

GNOME: 150 +/-

HALFLING: 250 +/-

DWARF: 175 +/-

ELF: 175 +/- (unusually large for this region, but due to the proximity to the Mithlon Eves)

GOVERNMENT: There is a very loose government Council in Most. It consists of 15 "elected" officials. All of them are hired by either The Grey Giant or William. The officials do not know that the two are in cahoots. They try to run the town, but generally the chaos caused by the gangs is too much for them.

MILITARY: An army of 850 is generally fielded in times of trouble. These men are poorly armed with leather, scale and shields, wielding spears, forks and the like.

ECONOMY: Generally long range trade of industrial goods though very little is made here. Like its northern neighbor, there are extraordinary items for sale once in awhile.

RELIGION: There is no official religion or church.

LANGUAGE: All languages, generally Vulgate, or Common.

MAJOR GUILDS: No guilds operate open houses. Though, a number of Thieves Houses, the mercenary order the Cult of the Swords and the wizard order, the Paths of Umbra.

MOUNT BREGA

Deep in the Shadow Mountains looms Mount Brega. It is a massive, squat mountain that sprawls across the western slopes of the range. Though it only stands 10000 feet high, it is imposing as it is capped in snow and glacial ice, remnants of the Winter Dark. Brega is home to a small kingdom of dwarves, the Brega. The Brega dwarves have dwelt here for many thousands of years, and their halls, though poor compared to their cousins, are deep and tangle far beneath the mountain slopes. The Brega are generally friendly, and traffic with the wild tribesmen of the west. They occasionally enter Gottland though high mountain trails to regions north of the Rackenberg Fortress (near the Naebar River) to raid and battle.

MOUNTS EOYOTTEN AND SKAELIN AND THE HALMSROOF

The peaks of Mount Eoyotten and Mount Skaelin are covered in snow year round. They are two of the tallest mountains in the Lands of Ursal and flank the Halmsroof Pass (see Halmsroof above).

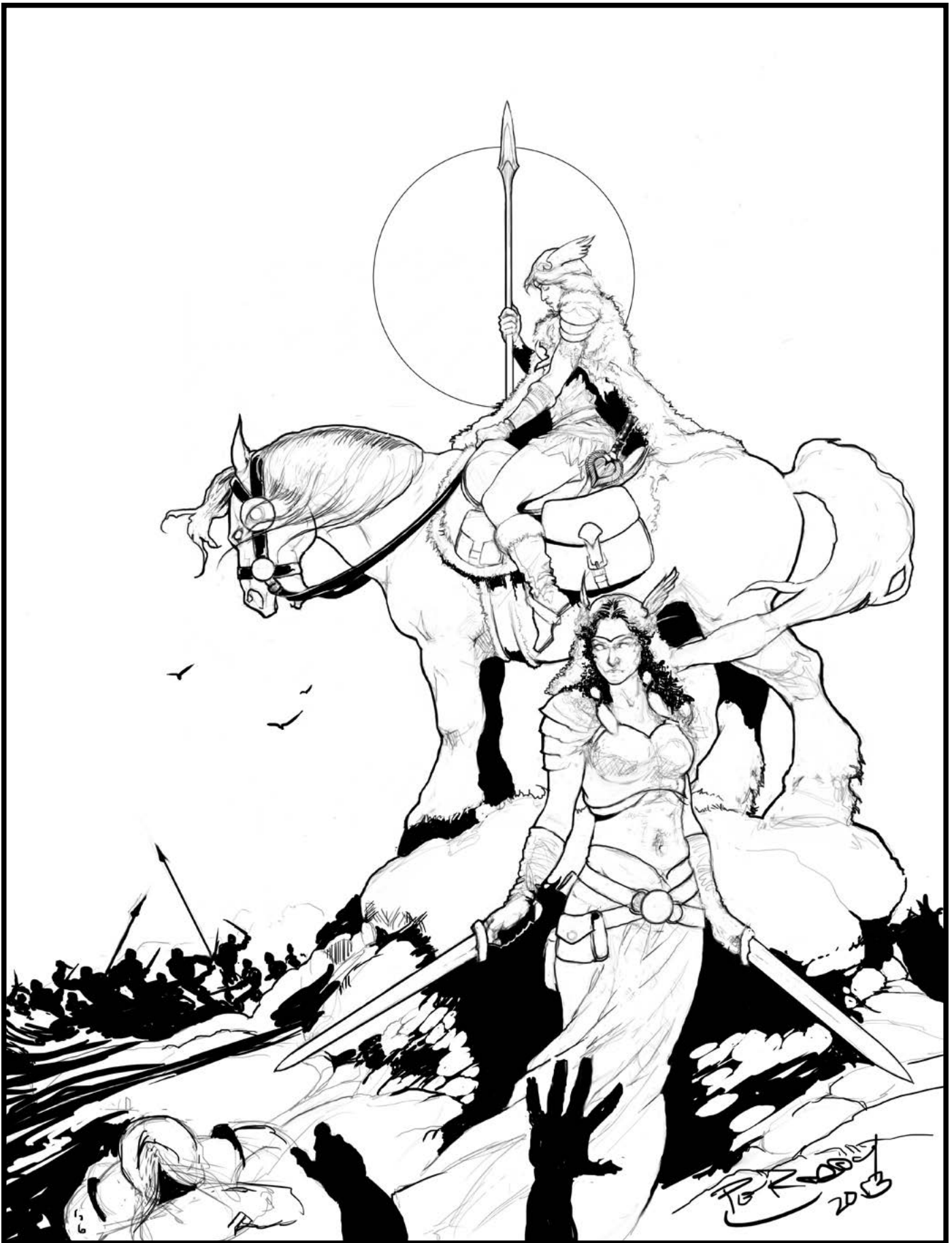
At 26,000 feet, Mount Eoyotten lords over the Kleberock Pass. Her bulk marks the end of the Holmgrad Mountains. The Faingasz River finds its source from the glaciers on the mountain. The jagged slopes and tumbling cliffs of the mountain are not impossible to climb, but very difficult. Snow clings to the upper elevations year round and a large glacier clings to the deep valleys of its southern face. There is little life in the upper reaches, but Sentients (see Monsters & Treasure of Aihrde) grow there, some foul minded and bent more toward their trollish kin. Other creatures live in the deep and dark crevices and broken cliffs.

Skaelin is a little shorter than her southern cousin, standing 23,000 feet high. Her slopes are stark however, and climbing is extremely difficult. Long cliffs with clinging frost and ice tower into the skies. Few dwell at these heights except for some foul minded Sentients, trolls, and a brood of white dragons. The dragons are seen once in awhile in the heavens spouting blanketing clouds of mist and frost upon the snow covered slopes. On clear days, their thundering voices can be heard far away in the valleys of the pass. They have dwelt here for many centuries. They do not relish leaving their mountain homes, and only hunt in the lowlands once every few years.

MOUNTS ISELDRIM AND GARDRIM

Both the peaks of these mountains are covered in snow year round. Iseldrim is 14,000 feet high and Gardrim slightly taller at 16,000 feet. Because of their shape the mountains are frequently called the "Shoulders of God." They are inhospitable slopes inhabited by a few rhemoraz, cave bears, and yetti.

Gardrim itself is a huge mountain that squats upon the edge of the Shadow Mountains. It rises from the broken ridge lines of the pass, and Castle Nacht, in several large slopes. Her lower slopes are covered with thick pine forests, where orcs dwell; the forests break apart at about 8000 feet, thinning the higher one



goes. The mountain becomes a long gentle series of slopes after that, easy enough to climb but unforgiving in their height.

Upon its upper most reaches, lost in the heaps of frozen ice and snow lies the ancient abode of the Father of the Trolls, Ineng. His tale is a long one, but this first of trolls built a great smithy in the caverns upon the slopes and housed it with all manner of his creations. He made war on the dwarves from these heights and thus began the long hatred of those folks for each other. The caves are hard to find, tucked upon a broad ledge that overlooks the southern mountains. Upon that ledge is mounted the greatest of the Troll Lord's creations, what men call Ineng's Wind, a large horn. The Troll Lord poured wondrous magic into the horn. He blew mournful notes, sounding the world's doom. He placed it upon a stand before the gates of his realm and there it remains, or so men say.

NACHT, CASTLE

See Kleberock Pass.

NAEBAR RIVER

The Naebar is named after a Dwarf King of the western realms. The legends speak of his crossing the Shadow Mountain at the head of a large party of his kin. He was old, fourth in his line, and beyond his years. Upon the eastern cliffs of the Shadow Mountains, he heard the tumbling noise of the many sparkling water falls that serve as the river's source. He saw then the Hundred Falls, where clear water fell many times, many hundreds of feet into frothing pools. Step by step these falls led the ice melt to the plains below. Naebar never left the land, climbing down the treacherous cliffs to the pools below. None of his guard could immediately follow him, so nimble were his steps. When at last they came to the pools, their King was gone, never seen on Aihrde again. They set a guard there, 100 of his kin who had volunteered, to watch for their King. There they stayed until they passed from the world and returned to stone (as the dwarves are wont to say).

So they named the water the Hundred Falls and the river took the King's name. Its waters move swiftly and are clean and clear until they spill into the ruin that is Ingtun River.

NGOLINGA

See Rodzek's Falls.

OSSFORD

Ossford is a trading post built upon the remains of an abandoned city, laid waste in earlier wars. It sports an 18 foot-high stone wall around the whole of the township, a port facility which can hold up to 40 merchant ships, and a whole nest of warehouses, taverns, brothels, and trading establishments. The most populated town in the region, its regular population consists of 6,000 people, but can swell to four times that number in the spring and summer. Many of these are traders, explorers, and adventurers set to plunder the 'hidden' wealth of the Gottland. They trek off into the wastes continually, many never returning. The town is rough, filled with

pirates, ruffians, thieves and the like. Many come to Ossford to hide from crimes committed in far-off lands.

A great host of warrens and sewers lie under Ossford, remnants of the old city. These are dangerous places that only the hapless or daring enter. Monsters of the old world dwell here, creatures of law and evil. Some tales relate of a great Mogrl dwelling in the halls far beneath the town. Why a greater devil of Aufstrag would choose to dwell here is beyond anyone's understanding.

The town is ruled by the Constable Leopold Ducket. Leopold keeps the peace and is paid for by the wealthy merchants. He answers only to them. He has a small army of thugs ranging from 20 to 150, depending on his needs, the seasons and circumstances. He is a big fellow, well liked by all, and is fair but resolute. He is famous for raising an army from the ruffians of Ossford and defeating an Orc raiding party at the battle of Two Forks bend. Some 40 of the orcs were drawn, quartered, and hanged about the town's walls and gates.

Anything goes in Ossford so long as the gold is good. The town's epicenter is Clark's Bar, where two businessmen, both named Clark, bother each other and their clients with their drunken debauchery. Clark the Tall is, tall, dark-haired and meticulously clean. Clark the Stout is shorter, wild haired with a great beard to match. Both are friendly unless roused and helpful to those passing through.

TOTAL POPULATION: 4,000

HUMAN: 3,000

ORC: 200 +/-

HOBGOBLIN: 200 +/-

GNOME: 100 +/-

HALFLING: 350 +/-

DWARF: 150 +/-

ELF: 10 +/-

GOVERNMENT: The town has no government but is ruled by Constable Leopold Ducket.

MILITARY: The town calls upon up to 500 men, all outfitted by the town with scale and pole arms to defend the city in time of need. They are not well organized but serve under a single Captain, Eric the Tall (14th level fighter), a northman and ex-pirate. They have three small men-of-war that carry roughly 20 sailors apiece. The largest ship has a small 4 pound canon.

ECONOMY: The economy of Ossford varies. Generally it is a trading community. Little is actually made here, but on an occasion, extraordinary things surface for sale in the town.

RELIGION: No religion. There is a small church to Ore-Tsar the god of peace, nature and agriculture.

LANGUAGE: All Languages, most commonly the Vulgate or Common.

MAJOR GUILDS: No guilds operate open houses. Though, any number of Thieves Houses, the mercenary order the Cult of the Swords and the wizard order, the Paths of Umbra.

PERSONS OF NOTE: Haldimar Nernfar

Haldimar was born in what is now Outremer, in the years of the Winter Dark Wars. He served as an apprentice to a mage named Raven in the armies of Empress Pryzmira, as they sought to break the might of Aufstrag in those years. He learned as much at Raven's side as she could teach him.

However, early in his apprenticeship, he witnessed the power of Nulak-kiz-din and sought to find the secrets of traveling the paths of the Umbra. For many years after being released from his apprenticeship, while fulfilling his duties as an adviser in the various duchies of Outremer, he constantly searched for knowledge of Nulak-kiz-din and his fortress, the tower of Graugusse on the Moravan Plains, beyond the Kleberock Pass in Gottland, far to the northwest. Finally after many years, he traveled to the Hanse City States and sought passage across the Inner Sea to the mouth of the Sorgon River.

He got as far as Ossford, and has spent the last few years there selling magical trinkets and trying to forge friendships with various adventurers willing to brave the dangers of the Moravan Plains to seek Nulak's secrets in Graugusse.

While having made contact with a few groups going north, he has yet to travel any farther himself, as few survive the journey and Haldimar wishes to gain the knowledge and live to use it rather than perish in the undertaking. Now, though, as he reaches the twilight of his years, he seeks a group of adventurers to go with him through the Pass and across the Plains to the tower, so that he might see the wonders of Graugusse and delve its depths for the secrets of Nulak's power.

RACKENBERG FORTRESS

Uranoch Scatterskull rules here. He is the chieftain of the Olgrack Orcs and bares the title of Sanjak, the same title which his forefathers bore when they ruled as Lords of the Empire of Winter's Dark. He is known as Sanjak Uranoch, or more commonly as Scatterskull, due to the bleeding, puss filled wound on his head that defies healing. Uranoch commands the whole of the Olgrack tribe who dwell in a dozen or so small towns and villages around Rackenberg Fortress, in the lowlands between two of the Ington's tributaries. This area, the rivers as well, are collectively referred to as the "Horns of Unklar" or the Valley of Stone.

The orc numbers vary with the season and fortunes of war. But generally there are 12,000 living in the valleys of the Horns of Unklar. At any time, Uranoch can field an army of three to four thousand well-armed and dedicated infantry, though they can call on many of the inner tribes to swell their numbers. Aside from the Trolls in the Kleberock, the Olgrack Orcs are the most powerful folk in all the Gottland.

They are held in check by the few stone giants who still stalk the upper heights of the Shadow Mountains and the small bands of elves who come north from the Mithlon Eves (particularly by the Elven Lord of Lynth).

Rackenberg itself houses about 6,000 orcs. It is a huge fortress carved into the flanks of the mountains. Its tall, spired, towers jut

into dark skies above. Its walls are thick and high. The fortress is a layered monstrosity and its dungeons stretch to the very roots of the mountains. The walls are shaped in a great half circle encompassing the fortress. It is well defended against incursions from the mountains by a series of walls and battlements. It is well maintained, with sources of water in the fortress itself and winter crops in the guarded highlands above.

Some few come here to trade, but they are very brave and very foolish, for the orcs hate the world. They long for the days of the Winter Dark when they ruled as Lords over men. Their oldest members remember the glorious days of the Horned God. That said, Uranoch is wise and will treat with almost anyone, if he feels he can gain some measure of power from it.

TOTAL POPULATION: 18,000 +/-

HUMAN: 100 +/-

ORC: 300 +/-

HOBGOBLIN: 200 +/-

GOBLIN: 500 +/-

SLAVES: 2000 +/- (mixed races)

GOVERNMENT: Uranoch rules as a king here. His house guard, 200 heavily armed orcs, keep the peace.

MILITARY: Orc men outnumber women by 4-1 and they can therefore field a larger percentage of their people as warriors. Generally Rackenburg fields 3,500 heavily armored warriors from the fortress and these combine with roughly 7,000 from the valleys and mountains around them. In times of trouble, Uranoch can call upon orcs dwelling on the Ington and up into plains.

ECONOMY: Rackenburg is self-sustaining; it trades iron and gold for items from the outside world. They are in constant need of slaves.

RELIGION: The orcs worship Unklar. There are several temples built to the horned god here.

LANGUAGE: Vulgate, the Common tongue, orc.

MAJOR GUILDS: The Crna Ruk assassins have a house here as do the wizards of the Paths of Umbra.

REDLICH

This squalid dump of a town sits upon the Ington River, trafficking in goods carted from west and south. The town is walled in stone with one large gate. It once served the Aenocians in the Empire, but no longer. It attracts the worst of all peoples, and resting so close to the bleached hills, it is routinely sacked and burned by hobgoblins.

It is ruled by a Lord Mayor and his stalwart "Worthies," armored mercenaries. The town is rough and filled with frontier types, its population rising and falling like the tide. A host of taverns line the streets, adding local brew to a mix of anger and desperation. Breaking the law brings a sentence of death. Rarely does a day pass that someone is not beheaded, and their head set to upon a river front spike.

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TOTAL POPULATION: 2,000-10,000 (seasonal)

HUMAN: Mostly Human

GNOME: 1-200 +/-

HALFLING: 1-200 +/-

DWARF: 1-200 +/-

ELF: 1-100 +/-

GOVERNMENT: Mayor, King of the Red Hill

MILITARY: The town's standing army lies in the Mayor's Worthies, 400 mercenaries. A militia can be called up but it is utterly useless and collapses at the first sign of battle.

ECONOMY: This is a boom trade town. Anything can be had, nothing is made.

RELIGION: Any and all

LANGUAGE: All

MAJOR GUILDS: Cult of Swords, Path of Umbra, Demeter, most guilds.

RODZEK'S FALLS

This gigantic waterfall marks the beginning of the Faingasz River. High up in the mountains, the glacial ice of Mount Eoyotten melts, pooling into a glacial lake that is in turn fed by many underground streams. The water of the lake overflows down a long steep divide before it plunges over a cliff 120 feet high. The water falls thunder into a narrow river basin where it then hurtles down the mountain slopes until it finally spills into the Kleberock Pass.

Goblins dwell in the deep places of the earth here. Their great love of moving water drew them here long ago and they have tunneled a small kingdom for themselves beneath the falls. They call their realm Ngolinga. Their numbers are unknown, but suspected to be vast. They are ruled by an eldritch goblin, Maideya.

SOLNEGANGHAVN, "SUNSET HARBOR"

TOTAL POPULATION: 700

HUMAN: 700 +/-

GNOME: 0 +/-

HALFLING: 10 +/-

DWARF: 10 +/-

ELF: 0 +/-

GOVERNMENT: The Ring-giver

MILITARY: Militia, 300 in peak

ECONOMY: Raiding

RELIGION: The Northern Gods

LANGUAGE: Vulgate, Northmen

MAJOR GUILDS: None

Solneganghavn, or "Sunset Harbor" in the speech of the Northmen, is a small harbor and fort on the coast of Gottland-

Ne used by northmen from Haltland as a base for exploration and raids into the interior of

Gottland. The harbor lies north of Ossford. It is protected from the open sea by a narrow headland that extends from the northern limit of the harbor. The channel and anchorage are too shallow for any but the smallest conventional sailing vessels, but the shallow-draft dragonships can navigate them without issue.

Four or five ships are typically pulled up on the broad, pebble-strewn beach, but as many as 40 can be brought ashore safely. Another hundred could anchor in the harbor if need arose.

The northmen have built halls and a stronghold called Grønnfort, or "The Green fort", on the low ridge that guards the harbor from the west. (A spur of this ridge forms the headland that shelters the anchorage.) The fort consists of an oblong wooden palisade, 15 feet tall, with three wooden watch towers - one overlooking the harbor, while two more anchor the northern and southern ends of the western wall. An extension at the southern end of the western wall encircles a freshwater spring which provides water to the occupants.

A number of small halls built within the palisade house the majority of the occupants; typically 40-60 warriors (one ship's crew) garrison the fort, along with the women, children and a handful of skilled tradesmen (including the smith). The remainder of the northmen, about 200 or so, are usually off raiding or exploring inland.

The current ring-giver of Grønnfort and Solneganghavn is Gyrffich Dragonbane, a chieftain and shipmaster who made his reputation both from raiding the lands across the Inner Sea, and slaying a nearly full-grown ch-crup dragon as a young man. Gyrffich leads six crews (about 300 men).

GYRFFICH DRAGONBANE (*He is a 9th level human barbarian with vital stats of AC 17 (20), HP 82. His primary attributes are constitution, intelligence, and charisma. His significant attributes are strength 16, dexterity 13, constitution 17, intelligence 15, wisdom 12, charisma 15. Gyrffich wears a +2 brigandine of mottled blue and black dragonhide, made from the dragon he slew. In battle he wields either a +3 two-handed longsword, or a +2 shortsword (saxe) fashioned from the dragon's claw, and a +2 wooden shield covered with dragonhide. He wears a Ring of the Ram with 24 charges and carries two potions of cure critical wounds.*)

Gyrffich is a tall and powerfully-built man in his early 30s with long, golden hair. He has a commanding presence and at the CK's option may inspire or embolden his allies as a 4th level knight. Gyrffich is a

cunning shipmaster, and can apply his level to any sort of tactical or surprise checks for all ships within 100 feet in sea combat.

SORGON RIVER AND THE POOLS OF DUNHOLLOW

The Sorgon is a broad shallow river originating in the Great Northern Forest. It cuts through the Kleberock pass and marks the boundary of the Troll Lord's realm.

This river tumbles down from the pass with great speed, but rapidly loses much of its force in the pools of the eastern Dunhollow. These pools are deep, carefully crafted by the stone giants in the days of yore. They were built as great reservoirs for fish, but have since become entangled in the horrors of the Dunhollow Wood. They are strange and are stained a dark blue. Fey dwell in them (particularly sirens and dryads) and they are known to be dangerous to travel through.

The river passes through this haunted forest, breaks free in the west, and then spills out across northern Gottland. Here it winds its way down to the Inner Sea. The waters are dark and cool. Years of filth have made the Dunhollow Wood an ugly place and the river reflects this. Many orcs and trolls make their home upon its banks.

After the pools, the river ranges from 60 to 120 yards wide with a gentle current. Though there are places where deep clefts of rock have made the river difficult to pass over, the whole of it is fairly easy to ford until it widens and spills into the Inner Sea upon the Gray Coast.

STONE BAND

This ancient site was built by the stone giants several thousand years ago. It is huge, consisting of 12 large rectangular stones set in a semi-circle; the open end faces the mountains in the west and a small, crystal clear pond, lies at its center. It was here in times long past that a giant found the ring-stone; a stone shaped by time that resembled a crown. He shaped it and set diamonds into it and cast into those jewels the powers of many giants. To commemorate the discovery the giants created Stone Band and ever after their Kings, when they chose to have them, were crowned here upon the Band. With the stones and pond stand one large boulder, laced with red and black veins and a gnarled tree.

The tree and rock upon the hill are the fallen bodies of the Stone Giant King and a great warrior troll of the old world. After a long and brutal contest, the troll slew the stone giant and left him where he fell. It time the giant's body melded with the earth. The troll marveled at his own feat of arms and stood fast by the body of his fallen foe. So long did he glower upon his foe that time passed him by; he aged and as with all his folk, his feet became rooted to the world (see *Gottland Trees* below) and he slowly passed into stasis. His feet rooted to the ground and eventually he became like a tree, as is the fate of all the trolls of this world.

Stone Band is the place of their greatest defeat; during the Troll-Giant Wars, the stone giant King fell here in the final battle against the Troll Lords of Nacht. The last of their lords died in where the center of the stone hedge now stands. Though the crown was spirited away by those giants who survived, only to be lost in later wars, the body of the giant lies there still, a misshapen monument of red laced stone. The place is a holy site for both stone giants and the servants of Unklar. They are encountered there from time to time.

A great magic settled upon Stone Band, it seeped from the very rocks of the earth, derived (or so the wise reason) from the blood of so many trolls and giants. But this is not the case. The stone giants

set the ring of stone around a Ring of Brass, one of the magical gates built by the dwarves in ages past. The Rings of Brass serve as gateways to the planes. So Stone Band became a place where powerful magi could step from this world to another. This ring lies at the bottom of the pond and is visible only for a few minutes when the light of the early afternoon sun spills upon it. Below the water appears to be a large flat stone, runes and glyphs carved upon it.

It is a gateway to the tunnels called the Ring Paths (see *Appendix C*) for more. To open the gate one must first swim to the bottom and know the command word.

But that is not all, one of the mirror runes from Nulak's rune work lies here, carved into the stone of one of the hedge. If the command word is used, or the Winter Rune touches the rune the mirror opens, inviting one to follow the path to the Nexus mirror that sends the traveler to Unklar's Iron far to the north. It is from Stone Band that Nulak guided The Lord of Sorrow (a Captain in Unklar's armies), activating the Paths of Umbra, to move his armies into the far-east during the Winter Dark Wars.

TROLL DOWNS

These low hills lie upon the eastern flanks of the Shadow Mountains, in a great depression between Umbraga's Spire in the south and Mount Gardrim in the north. They are broken, with little vegetation but stunted pines and the Gottland Trees. Scattered amidst the hills are a number of small orc encampments, but no true towns or villages. It is held to be a cursed place and is holy ground to the stone giants. In the eastern portion of the hills stands Stone Band (see below, *Encounters with Giants*) where the greatest of their Chieftains fell to the trolls of Kleberock.

There are the occasional trolls here and stone giants as well. The giants are likely to befriend any who are actively at war with the trolls. They also hate the orcs of Rackenberg and slay them on sight. Enterprising parties can gain some very powerful allies if they work with these tired, brooding folk. In any case, there are not many giants here and they do not possess much wealth. Large packs of dire-wolves also come to the Troll Downs to mate and raise their pups.

TROLL TONGUE RIVER

This slow moving plains river's origins lie in the Eastern Spur, rising from the many deep aquifers that lie beneath that range of hills. It serves as the border for the Dunhollow Wood in the south. Before it spills into the unclear waters of the Sorgon River the water of the Tongue, is clear and good to drink.

TWIN RIVERS

TOTAL POPULATION: 12,000

HUMAN: 9,000

GNOME: 400 +/-

HALFLING: 1,000 +/-

50 CASTLES & CRUSADES

DWARF: 700 +/-

ELF: 900 +/-

GOVERNMENT: None

MILITARY: In time of need all citizens are required to take up arms. Twin Rivers can field a motley army of about 2,000, of which about 500 have decent arms and weapons. However the Captain commands a force of well trained men-at-arms that numbers 180 strong.

ECONOMY: This is a boom trade town.

RELIGION: Any and all

LANGUAGE: All

MAJOR GUILDS: Cult of Swords, Path of Umbra, Demeter.

The largest town in the region, Twin Rivers attracts travelers from the Gottland and the Wilds to the south. It serves as the only safe refuge in the region and sits upon the confluence of the Big Mud and Teifsich Rivers. It is a frontier town however, rough and unpredictable. There are no laws but those set by the Master Isaldrum, a young man, who rules from the town's citadel. His force is commanded by Captain Radzjek, a grizzled veteran of many adventures. The town has only one law, disturb the peace and suffer death.

Twin Rivers possesses a huge market place, attracting adventurers as well as tradesmen. Almost anything can be bought at a price in Twin Rivers.

The town itself is walled, sitting between the two rivers, upon a bluff that rises to 60 above the water. The largest wall spans the space between the two rivers. The other two stand with feet firmly planted in the water. Some of the town is paved. It has only one main gate that faces to the south. A second, smaller gate, leads to a series of lifts on the north side overlooking the river. River traffic must disembark and enter through one the main gate. Outside the walls, crowded against the stonework like so much mud, are a host of small houses of waddle and dab. Here a vast array of people make a living through one manner or the other.

Twin Falls plays host to a number of people, two of the most colorful are the bounty hunters Anderson Bartlesby, the self styled Rooftop Dancer, known to his close associates as Tylermo and Satnite his mercenary companion. Satnite hales from the island realm of Tagea, he sports a bronze breast plate, a thick shafted spear and a xiphos sword. He uses this double-edged magical feather-edged, blade, thicker at the end than the hilt, with wicked proficiency; severing the limbs of many a foe. Anderson, a halfling from the south kingdoms who is proficient in the art of acrobatics, climbing, dagger throwing, marksmanship, and other feats of dexterity considers himself an entertainer first. But despite his talent, the lack of regular work forced him to the open road. He and Satnite have long adventured together, hunting notorious villains, plundering dungeons and the like. They often hire themselves out as guides.

Persons of Note: Weaponsmith, Zulbry Tanium or Zul is a master Weaponsmith known for his ability to take a customer's

idea and forge it even better. He is said to have the blood of an Effreet Prince from the city of Brass in his veins and has been seen using his bare hands in the hot coals of the forge. These rumors are of course are true.

TWIN TOWNS

TOTAL POPULATION: 150 +

HUMAN: 135 +

GNOME: 0

HALFLING: 2 +/-

DWARF: 3 +/-

ELF: 10 +/-

GOVERNMENT: The villages have no formal government. A small council of elders meets semiannually to discuss serious issues, usually of a judicial nature. Most often, these issues deal with offenses stemming from some implied offense imparted from the resident of one town against a resident of the other.

MILITARY: Jyväsklär and Vaäsa have only a loosely-organized militia of about 30 men. They rely on their skills at bow- and trap-making, acting as 1st level rangers when defending the town. There are currently three townspeople with enough skill to act as 4th level rangers, and these three will lead the rest in times of trouble.

ECONOMY: The people of Jyväsklär and Vaäsa make a living by farming, fishing the main river that divides their town(s), and by hunting and trapping. There is occasional trade from the Gray Coast as well as the surrounding plains. Gaar Sludge Maker's Inn and Trading Post (known for its very thick stout) usually has most common goods in stock, several rooms to let, and a fairly clean kitchen.

RELIGION: The people of Jyväsklär and Vaäsa worship Utumno, although they are not a devout people, worshipping more frequently only when Kedru is expected in town.

LANGUAGE: Vulgate or Common.

MAJOR GUILDS: There are no active guilds.

PERSONS OF NOTE: Gaerik the Sage is a human hermit living a few miles out of town, deep in a swamp. He knows the tale of the sisters and the founding of the twin towns.

Kedru is a dwarven priest who visits occasionally, passing through town to minister to the sick and bring blessings to worshippers of Utumno.

This is the tale that Gaerik the Sage knows about the founding of the twin towns:

The twin towns of Jyväsklär and Vaäsa are divided not only by the river that runs between them, but by the blood that might otherwise have bound them together.

Legend has it that the towns were each founded by a namesake. Two women, twins separated at birth, had feuded for years – long enough that neither could remember just how the feud

began. It would seem that nature had intended for them to be separated. Although both had been gifted powers derived of nature, the sisters could venture no nearer to each other than 10 paces, for when they did, they became feeble and sick, falling to the ground in unbearable pain.

As their feud wore on, they took up residence on opposite sides of the same river, giving each the opportunity to spy on the other and plot each other's doom, freeing them from their oppressive curse. Their attempts on each other's lives never bore fruit, until they each devised separate but similar plans. Jyväsklär, the redhead, prepared a gift for her sister. She wove a cloak of darkest hues against a moonlit sky. As she labored, she whispered and channeled spells of darkness and the void. She named this cloak "Night Sky" and bound into it an enchantment that would grant the wearer invisibility to all but herself, Jyväsklär. She hoped that Vaäsa, fooled into thinking she could move about unseen by anyone, would let down her guard, giving Jyväsklär the opportunity to strike. Likewise, Vaäsa made a gift for her sister, knitting leggings of fine wool. She too whispered and sang as she knit, imbuing the fibers with magic and malicious intent. These leggings, known as "Warmth of Spring", gave the wearer great speed and warmth against even the coldest winter storm, but the leggings would also take commands from Vaäsa, freezing the wearer in place at a single word. She planned to use the leggings to trap her sister, making Jyväsklär vulnerable.

The day came when the sisters had finished their gifts and, with all pretense and ceremony, and always at a 10-pace distance, they exchanged the presents. The exchange went so well that Vaäsa proposed they meet again soon. Jyväsklär saw this as her opportunity and, having discovered the magical properties of her new leggings and knowing the weakness of Vaäsa's cloak, challenged her sister to a game of hide and seek. For their meeting place, they chose a dry, dusty ravine where a tiny muddy creek trickled. Vaäsa believed she would have the advantage over her sister, as she would only need to find Jyväsklär's hiding place to stop her cold in her tracks. Jyväsklär believed she would come out on top, by being able to see her sister when Vaäsa believed herself to be invisible.

No one knows who struck first. When their bodies were found, each had a single mortal wound. Where their blood spilled, the soil became fertile. The muddy creek grew larger and fed the region with fresh water, giving rise to lush native flora and excellent land for farming. Friends of the sisters settled the region, naming the towns for Jyväsklär on the side of the river where she fell, and Vaäsa on the other.

TWR ISLAND

The Teifsich River marks the southern boundary of the Gottland. It is a long river, originating in the Shadow Mountains to the west. Its course is wide and its current is brisk. Deep in the Maenluth Plains the river widens into a broad lake, at the center of which is Twr Island. The island once served as a crossroads and the remnants of bridges lie in ruins leading north and south of the island. Several ruined castles crown it as well.

Little or no traffic crosses here, only the wild elves of the plains.

UMBRAGA'S SPIRE

When Nulak Kiz Din set himself the task to master the rune lore he had many apprentices. Umbraga was one of the most dedicated. But Umbraga, a warrior woman from the south, turned on Nulak and took knowledge of the runes to the mountains. There, in a great hollow of a mountain, she cast her sorcery, attempting to fashion creatures of her own design. She failed utterly and the magic went awry, consuming her. Where she attempted to create life, she managed only to merge hers with a phase spider. Part spider, part woman she raged in her madness. In time, her webs came to blanket the long slopes of the mountain and the deep hollow. Her children came to occupy the hollow, beastly creatures with 8 legs, massive hairy bulbous bodies, and with the heads and arms of men.

Umbraga's Spire is a deep, dark hollow in the Shadow Mountains. Webs cover the cliffs, hanging like ruined curtains in some stone dwarf's hall. She haunts the land still, destroying all that enter her realm.

UNKLAR'S IRON

Unklar Iron lies in a small cleft at the feet of the Holmgrad Mountains. The cleft is flat, roughly a half mile in diameter, and grows a thick loamy grass in the spring and summer; in fall and winter it is protected from the wind coming off the planes and warmer for it. It is surrounded by broken rocks and jumbled cliffs. A horse path leads from the south into the cleft; an old dwarven trail climbs the jumbled rocks on the north side winding its way in the Holmgradsd In the middle sits Unklar's Iron.

Unklar's Iron is a large iron pedestal that stands about 12 feet high. It marks the spot where Nulak Kiz Din first etched his rune of Mirrors, the nexus of all his planar sorcery. This primary rune opened a mirror through which he could travel to other destinations. As his power grew he constructed a pedestal over it and around it, a pylon that is square and tall.

The square pillar is 12 feet high, 4 wide at the base, and enormously heavy. It is black, covered in 110 glyphs (not magical runes, but glyphs). It is immovable and radiates magic. The original rune, the Nexus lies upon the ground beneath it. Every new mirror rune he inscribed upon the pillar represented a new portal that he could access, there are 110.

In order to activate the primary rune, the nexus, that opens the portals one must know the command word: *hiega is eh tu* or one must touch the pillar with the Winter Rune. The Winter Rune does not require a command word, it automatically opens the portal. Once the mirror is opened all the runes carved on the side of the pillar begin to glow, starting at the top and working their way down. An orange light lances from each rune until the whole pillar is surrounded by a warm glow. The pillar itself takes on a translucent look. One can see through the pillar, beyond the runes, even to the grass and rocks on the far side. Simultaneously

within the center of the pillar a mirror materializes, from the ground it stands 6 feet high, and four feet wide. The mirror is opaque. Looking at the whole the viewer can see the mirror, the pillar, the runes and the ground around it all at the same time.

If one enters the pillar their view changes; once they pass through the pillar they can step through the mirror where they find themselves standing on a ledge, somewhere in the inside of a long dark tube. Looking up or down there are scores of similar mirrors in the tube, some far off some closer to hand. There are 110 in all. But one dominates their view, it is directly in front of the viewer and is connected to the mirror they just passed through by a bridge of flames. On the far side is an identical mirror.

Furthermore small reddish, flat tethers rise from the ledge, snaking through the inky blackness to the various mirrors in the tube.

This is heart of Nulak's mirror runes and from where he traveled the planes. They all go to similar mirrors on other planes, set there by the arch magi. Each mirror is a gateway to another plane or a spot on the material plane, connected to this primary mirror/portal by a tether. From within the pillar, surrounding the viewer on four sides one can see all 110 runes on the pillar. To operate the planes one simply reaches up and touches a glyph and pulls it to the position in front of them, the tether then becomes a path to that plane. Only one has a flaming bridge, that is the one that leads to the Void. For more see runes, *mirrors*.

URIPALS

This deep depression on the northern regions of the Maenluth Plains is blessed with exceedingly rich soil. The grass here is deep, green, and full of nutrients during the warm months. The winter sees it blanketed in snow, but it is the first of the area to bloom again in spring. The wild elves (see Maenluth) hunt here, this being the furthest north they travel.

The land is held sacred by those who pay homage to Wenefar for it is believed that when her brother slew her, that a great portion of her blood soaked into the Uripals. Under the Winter Dark, however the Uripals suffered when the Lords of Darkness made the fertile fields a land of slaughter. Many prisoners were taken here and slain. They erected stone alters in later years, and brought all those of the old religions that they captured, to sacrifice them. Many of these alters remain, standing abandoned now in the empty grass, haunted only by the ghosts of their past horrors.

USTASKIAN COAST

The coastal waters here are rich in fish and shipwrecks. Multitudes of islands and reefs make the waters here difficult to navigate and only the most experienced captains brave these waters. The wealth in fish and crab drawn from these waters pulls many fishermen closer to the rocks than ever they should go. The islands are also a haven for pirates who raid the shipping lanes to the east and who also prey on the growing traffic between the towns of Ossford and Most. These pirates are not the northern breed of Viking warriors, but rather foul minded desperate mercenaries who seek nothing beyond worldly gain.

To make the Ustaskian waters worse, a small cove of sirens ply the waters in search of slaves. Their songs often follow a wreck when they lull men into the Deep Quiet where they strangle some and enslave others.

VALLEY OF STONE

The Valley of Stone sit upon the doorsteps of the Rackenberg fortress and lies between it and the Winter Wood. It is a long, wide valley and houses a great host of orcs. They dwell deep beneath the ground in hollowed-out tunnels and caverns. The valley itself is dangerous to cross and is covered in a short bladed, tough grass. The orcs have hundreds of openings that they crawl from in times of need. It is haunted by other creatures as well; huge beasts tread from beneath the eaves of the Winter Wood and others come down from the mountains.

A large remnant of a wall, cuts the valley from north to south, connecting the two spurs of mountains that mark the Valley of Stone. The orcs of Rackenburg built the wall, though in recent years it has suffered from a large earthquake (the dragon shook her scales so they say), and much of it fallen into ruin. These lands are called The Horns of Unklar by the orcs.

WARDEN PLAINS

These plains are similar to the Feador and possess the same deep grasses, wild pony and buffalo herds. They are far more haunted by the traffic from the Kleberock Pass however, and also the dire wolves of the Troll Downs. The lands here begin to break up as well, rolling into long, broad valleys. Further south they break up even more, the prairie split into washed-out gulches with a low brush. These areas offer plenty of room for ambush and most travel here with caution.

WEBB ISLE

This large, narrow island runs a great length of the coast between Ossford and Most. It offers ship traffic refuge from the battering waves of the Inner Sea. It is largely flat, rising from the waters in gentle slopes to only a few hundred feet at its highest point. In the warm months, the grass here grows deep and long. There is plenty of water from small streams. Webb Isle is home to several large herds of very stout ponies, the same as found on the Feador Plains (see above). These beasts have no natural predators but for dragons and other flying creatures.

WINTER WOOD

In the foothills of the Shadow Mountains lies the Winter Wood, a strange forest from a bygone era. The wood and the land about it are locked in a world of winter. Here the sun never shines, and snowy clouds hang over the land as a constant curtain of cold. The forest itself consists of peculiar pines, the Winter Larch, that thrived in the Winter Dark and still do in higher climes and forgotten places of the world. These tall, thick trees stand well over a hundred and eighty feet high, have thick bark, and wide spreading canopies. They are spacious, requiring a great deal of room to grow, so that passage through the forest is easy. The needles of these trees are generally green, but turn yellow in the late winter. They are edible as well, and when cooked, make a fine, nutritious stew. The orcs and

trolls routinely make bread from these needles and both peoples are often found in the Winter Woods harvesting these foodstuffs.

Few openly live here, for the Maiden of Winter's Blight has her abode upon the high slopes of the hills that overlook the wood. She is feared far and wide. Her lands are commonly referred to as the White Kingdom. It is well known that she often comes to the wood to ride her mighty steed beneath the eves. What she dreams, few can say. But she snares the unwary and takes them to the deeps of her castle where certain death awaits them.

Strange creatures haunt the forest. Many of them are refugees from Aufstrag or the Winter's Dark. It is sometimes occupied by Dark Ungern, Eldritch Goblins and powerful beasts. In all, the wide, expansive, and snow-covered floors of the forest are dangerous for those of good intent. The beauty of the wintry world masks a sorrow which only death can encompass.

WHITE TOWER

See Lynth.



ENCOUNTERS IN THE GOTTLAND

The Gottland-ne is a wilderness. It is the frontier of the lands of Ursal, a wild place where brigands, orcs, mercenaries and adventurers mingle with giant mammals, monsters of nightmare, and all manner of sundry beast, all in the shadow of the mountains and upon the wind swept flats of the Maenluth Plains. As with any eco-system encounters are based on habitat, which includes the terrain, weather, available resources such as grass, water or prey animals as well as the presence of habitable land, etc.

Seven separate encounter tables are provided. Each ranked roughly by Challenge Level. Tier One lists encounters for CLs of 1-3, Tier Two for CLs of 4-6 and so forth. Choose which encounter table is desired and roll a percentile dice. Locate the terrain the adventure is taking place in and cross reference the number, the result is the

creature encountered. If a lesser dragon is rolled consult the lesser dragon table for the terrain and roll a d10.

Encounters in the Gottland usually occur on a 1 in 12; roll d12 six times each day and another six times each night, if a one is rolled, an encounter occurs.

Monsters on the list are taken from the Monsters & Treasure, Monsters & treasure of Aihrde and the Rune Lore book. If the monster is listed without an asterisk it is from the M&T; if it is listed with an asterisk it is from the M&T of Aihrde; if it is listed with two asterisks it is from Rune Lore.

Some encounters may require tailoring to specific situations, such as an encounter with a demon; the CK may wish to create a reason the demon is randomly encountered.

TIER I

CHALLENGE LEVEL 1-3	PLAINS	RIVER VALLEY	FOREST	MOUNTAIN
Amnug*	1-3	1-2		
Arrowhawk, Sm.	4-6	3		1-2
Barghest (1-3 HD)	7-8	4	1-3	
Bear, Black		5	4-6	3-6
Bird of Prey, Sm.	9-10	6		7-8
Bletuk**	11-12	7-8		
Blink Dog	13	9	7-8	
Boar, Wild	14	10-11	9-10	
Bogtilt*		12-13		
Bugbear	15	14		9-10
Caribou*	16-17	15		
Chimera, Lessar*	18	16	11-13	11-13
Coblynau*			14-15	
Dragon		17	16	14-15
Dragon, Lesser*	19-21	18-19	17-19	16-18
Dryad			20-22	
Dwarf*		20		19-23
Elemental, Sm	22-23	21-23	23-24	24-26
Elf, Wild	24-26	24-25	25-26	
Elf, Mist*	27	26		
Epihippus*	28-29	27-29		27-28
Fleshcrawler			27-28	
Fungus, Violet			29-30	
Gnome	30	30	31-32	29-31
Goblin	31-33	31-32	33-34	32-35
Gulup-Ther*		33-34	35-37	
Halfling*	34-38	35-38	38-39	
Harpy	39-40	39-40	40-42	36-38
Herd Animal	41-45	41-43		

Hippogriff	46-48	44		39-42
Hobgoblin	49-51	45-46	43-44	43-44
Horse, Light	52-54	47-49		
Human	56-56	50-52	45-47	45-47
Jackal	57-59	53-54		
Jaculus	60-62	55-56	48	48-49
Kuthis*	63-64	57-58	49	
Lama*				
Lizardfolk		59-61	50	
Wererat	65-66	62-63	51	
Lynx, Giant			52	50-53
Ogre, Frost				54-57
Ooze, Gray				
Orc	67-69	64-66	53	58-60
Pandareen**			54-55	
Pony, Any	70-72	67		
Pseudodragon			56	61-62
Quil*		68-69	57-58	
Ram*				63-66
Rat, Giant	73-74	70-71	59-60	
Raven	75-77	72-73	61-62	67-70
Satyr		74-75	63-66	
Skeleton	78-79	76-77	67-69	71-72
Snake, Venomous			70-72	
Spider, Sm/Md			73-75	73-74
Sprite, Any		78-79	76-78	75-77
Stirge			79-80	78-79
Tavis Wyrm	80-81	80	81	80-82
Troglodyte				83-84
Undine*	82-83	81-83	82-83	85-86
Ungern*	84-86	84-85	84-85	87-88
Ur-Suk*		86-87	86-88	
Wolf	87-92	88-92	89-92	89-91
Wolverine		93	93-94	92-93
Yeth Hound	93-95	94-95	95-96	94-95
Zombie	97-97	96-97	97-98	96-97
NPC	98-100	98-100	99-100	99-100

TIER II

CHALLENGE LEVEL 4-6	PLAINS	RIVER VALLEY	FOREST	MOUNTAIN
Achaierai	1-4	1-2		
Alkonoth*		3-4	1-4	1-2
Allip	5-8	5-6	5-7	3-4
Ankheg	9-11			

56 CASTLES & CRUSADES

Anu Beast**	12	7-8		
Arrowhawk (Medium)	13-14	9		5-6
Assassin Vine			8-11	
Barghest (4-6 HD)	15-16	10-11	12-15	7-8
Basilisk			16-17	9-10
Bear, Brown (Grizzly)		12-14	18-19	11-13
Bird of Prey, Large	17	15		114-15
Centaur			20-22	
Charon Fiend*	18-20	16-18	23-25	16-17
Cloaker				18-19
Cockatrice			26-27	
Cunalrur*	21-23	19-20	28-30	20-23
Dakmour Wyrn*	24-26	21-22	31-33	24-26
Demon, Succubus*	27	23	34	27
Devil, Mongrel*	28	24	35	28
Devil, Saul*	29	25	36	29
Doppelganger				30-32
Dragon, Black (Age 1 or 2)		26		
Dragon, Green (Age 1)		27		
Dragon, White (Age 2)				33
Dragon, Brass (Age 1)				34
Dragon, Bronze (Age 1)			37	35
Dragon, Copper (Age 1)		28-29		
Dragon, Lesser*	30-32	30-32	38-40	36-38
Eagle, Giant				39-40
Elemental, M	33	33	41	41-43
Ettercap			42	44
Erder Wyrn*	34-35			
Gargoyle				45-47
Ghast	36-37			
Gibbering Mouter	38	34	43	48
Hellhound (4 HD)	39-40	35-36	44-45	
Hulen*	41-42	37-38	46-48	49-50
Hydra (5-6 HD)			49-50	51-52
Ibar*	43-44	39-41		
Jarhdel*	45-47	42-44	51-52	53-55
Jung-Mule*	48-50	45-47		
Julnoch**	51-52	48-50		
Kavroun Hound*				56-58
Kimer Steppe Devil*	53-54	51-54		
Laumeun*	55-56	55-56	53-54	59-60
Lion				61-62
Lycanthrope, Wereboar	57	57-58	55-56	
Lycanthrope, Weretiger	58	59	57-58	

Lycanthrope, Werewolf	59	60	59-60	
Manticore		61-62	61	63-64
Naga, Frost*		63-64		65-66
Naga, Ghost		65-66		67-68
Ogre	60-63	67-69	62-64	69-70
Ogre Mage	64	70	65	71
Otyugh				72
Owlbear	65-68	71-73	66-68	
Pegasus				73-74
Phase Spider	69	74-75	69-70	75-76
Red Cap*	70-72	76-77	71-73	77
Rhino, Wooly*	71-72	78-79		
Sarab Pool*		80	74-75	
Shadow Mastiff	73-74	81	76-77	78-89
Sphierlex*	75-78	82-83	78-80	80
Snake, Giant Constrictor		84	81-82	
Spider, Large			83-84	81-84
Troll, River	79-80	85-86	85-86	
Unicorn		87		
Vimnel*	81-82	88-89	87	
Walrus*		90		85
Wight				86-87
Wolf, Worg or Winter	83-84	91-93	88-89	88-89
Wraith	85-88	94-95	90-91	90-91
Yufelun*	89-90	96-97	92-94	92-95
NPC/Demi Human/Human	91-93		96-97	96-7
Roll on Tier I	94-95	98	98	98
Roll on Tier III	96-97	99	99	99
Roll twice on Tier II	98-100	100	100	100

TIER III

CHALLENGE LEVEL 7-9	PLAINS	RIVER VALLEY	FOREST	MOUNTAIN
Aboleth		1-2		
Afkarn*	1-4	3-5		
Banshee	5-6	6-7	1-2	1-2
Barghest (7-9 HD)	7-9	8-9	3-5	3-4
Bear, Cave				5-7
Behir	10-12	10-11	6-7	8-9
Belker	13-15	12-13	8-10	10-11
Bodak	16-18	14-15	11-12	
Bulette	19-22	16-17		
Chimera	23-24	18-19		12-13
Couatl			13-15	
Demon, Aru*	25	20	16	14

Demon, Ulthal*	26	21	17	15
Devil, Aghul*	27	22	18	16
Devil, Kain's Henchman*	28	23	19	17
Dragon, Black (Age 3)		24	20	
Dragon, Green (Age 2)		25	21-22	
Dragon, Red (Age 1)				18-19
Dragon, White (Age 3)				20-21
Dragon, Brass (Age 2)		26		22
Dragon, Bronze (Age 2)		27		23
Dragon, Copper (Age 2 or 3)		28	23-24	
Dragon, Gold (Age 1)				24
Dragon, Silver (Age 1)				25
Dragon, Lesser*	29-32	29-31	25-26	26
Dragonne	33-35			
Drider				27-29
Elemental, Any, Large	36-38	32-34	27-29	30-32
Elethu*	39-41	35-36	30-32	33
Fiedoth Shovel Mouth*	42-44	37-39		34-36
Forsaken*	45-47	40-41	33-34	37-38
Gampede*	48-50	42-44	35-37	39-40
Giant, Hill	51-52	45-47	38-40	41-42
Gorgon			41-42	
Griffon	53-55	48-50		43-46
Grindlwere*	56-58	51-51	43-45	47-48
Hag, Any		53-54	46-48	
Hellhound (8 HD)	59-61	55-56	49-50	49
Hydra (7-9 HD)			51-53	50-51
Ice Rounder*	62-63	57-58	54-55	52-55
Invisible Stalker				56
Jolmuen*	64-66	59-60		
Kuthite	67-68	61-62		
Lamia			56-57	57-58
Lammasu				59-61
Lycanthrope, Werebear	69-70	63-64	58-60	62-64
Mammoth**	71-74	65-67		
Minotaur		68-69	61-62	65-66
Moundule*			63-67	
Naga, Water		70-71		
Nightmare				
Questing Beast*		72	68	
Rakshasa				67-69
Remorhaz				70-73
Rochun Fiend	75-78	73-75	69-71	74-76
Rune Maid*	79	76	72	77

Sabor Tooth Tiger**	80-81	77-78	73-74	78-79
Shambling Mound		79-80	75-77	
Snow Steed*	82-85	81-83		
Spectre	86-87	84-85	78	80-81
Sphinx, Gynosphinx				82-84
Sphinx, Hieracosphinx				85-87
Suk Tree*			79	
Treant			80-82	
Troll	88-90	86-87	83-86	88-89
Troll Lord	91-92	88-89	87-88	90-92
Will-o'-Wisp		90-91	89-93	
Wyvern	93-95	92-95	94-95	93-95
NPC/Demi Human/Human	86-97	96-97	96-97	96-97
Roll on Tier II	98	98	98	98
Roll on Tier IV	99	99	99	99
Roll twice on Tier II	100	100	100	100

TIER IV

CHALLENGE LEVEL 10-12	PLAINS	RIVER VALLEY	FOREST	MOUNTAIN
Arrowhawk, Large	1-6	1-6	1-7	1-7
Devourer	7-10	7-11	8-11	8-11
Demon, Nacuravand (river)*		12		
Dragon, Black (Age 4-6)		13-14	12-14	
Dragon, Green (Age 3-6)				12-14
Dragon, Red (Age 2)	11-12	15-16	15-17	15-17
Dragon, White (Age 4-6)	13-14	17-18		18-20
Dragon, Brass (Age 3-6)		19-20		21-23
Dragon, Bronze (Age 3)		21-22	18-20	
Dragon, Copper (Age 4-6)				24-26
Dragon, Gold (Age 2)				27-29
Dragon, Silver (Age 2 or 3)	15-16	23-24	21-23	30-32
Dragon, Lesser*	17-21	25-29	24-28	33-37
Elf Bane*	22-26	30-35	29-33	
Ettin			34-38	38-41
Feulk*			39-40	
Ghost	27-31	36-41	41-44	42-44
Giant, Fire	32-37	42-50		45-52
Giant, Frost	38-43	51-58	45-51	53-60
Giant, Stone	44-47	59-62	52-58	61-64
Hydra (10-12 HD)			59-62	65-70
Lauk*	48-53	63-67		
Mison Men*	54-59	68-70	63-65	71-74
Naga, Guardian	60-62	71-73	66-68	75-77
Sphinx, Androsphinx	63-66			78-80

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Sphinx, Criosphinx				81-83
Tomt*	67-71	74-79	69-73	84-86
Undine*	71-77	80-82	74-78	87-88
Yrthak	78-82	83-85	79-83	
NPC/Demi Human/Human	83-88	86-89	84-88	89-91
Roll on Tier III	89-93	90-93	89-93	92-94
Roll on Tier V	94-97	94-97	94-97	95-97
Roll twice on Tier IV	98-100	98-100	98-10	98-100

TIER V

CHALLENGE LEVEL 13-15	PLAINS	RIVER VALLEY	FOREST	MOUNTAIN
Devil, Cull*	1-10	1-7	1-9	1-8
Devil, Seere	11-20	8-14	10-17	9-16
Dragon, Red (Age 3)	21-27	15-19		17-25
Dragon, White (Age 7-9)	28-36	20-27	18-33	26-33
Dragon, Brass (Age 7-9)		28-32	34-45	
Dragon, Copper (Age 7-9)		33-40		34-41
Dragon, Gold (Age 3)	37-44	41-48	46-49	42-50
Frost Worm	45-55	49-60	50-61	51-62
Giant, Cloud	56-66	61-65	62-78	63-77
Luvandgaurn*		66-72		
Prysmal Eye (Nonocculus)	67-77	73-84	79-82	78-87
Purple Worm	78-90	85-90	83-90	88-90
NPC/Demi Human/Human	91-94	91-94	91-94	91-94
Roll on Tier IV	95-97	95-97	95-97	95-97
Roll on Tier VI	98-100	95-97	95-97	95-97

TIER VI

CHALLENGE LEVEL 16-18	PLAINS	RIVER VALLEY	FOREST	MOUNTAIN
Dinosaur, Triceratops	1-6	1-6	1-6	
Dinosaur, Tyrannosaurus	7-11	7-11	7-11	
Dragon, Black (Age 7-9)	12-14	12-14	12-14	
Dragon, Green (Age 7-10)	15-17	15-17	15-17	1-4
Dragon, Red (Age 4-6)	18-20	18-20	18-20	5-8
Dragon, Brass (Age 10)	21-23	21-23	21-23	9-12
Dragon, Bronze (Age 4-6)	24-26	24-26	24-26	13-16
Dragon, Gold (Age 4-6)	27-29	27-29	27-29	
Dragon, Silver (Age 4-6)	30-32	30-32	30-32	17-20
Dragon, White (Age 4-6)	33-40	33-40	33-40	21-30
Elemental, Any, Large	41-48	41-48	41-48	31-37
Giant, Storm	49-54	49-54	49-54	38-47
Giant, True*	55-60	55-60	55-60	48-57
Lich	61-64	61-64	61-64	58-63
Roc	65-71	65-71	65-71	64-71

Sentient*

Titan	72-75	72-75	72-75	72-75
Witch Stalk*	76-79	76-79	76-79	76-79
Yedae*	80-83	80-83	80-83	80-84
NPC/Demi Human/Human	84-87	84-87	84-87	85-87
Roll on Tier V	88-92	88-92	88-92	88-92
Roll on Tier VII	93-96	93-96	93-96	93-96
Roll twice on Tier VI	97-100	97-100	97-100	97-100

TIER VII

CHALLENGE LEVEL 19+	PLAINS	RIVER VALLEY	FOREST	MOUNTAIN
Devil, Vonlatot*	1-5	1-5	1-10	1-5
Dragon, Black (Age 10-12)	6-10	6-8	11-15	
Dragon, Green (Age 11 or 12)	11-15	9-11	16-19	6-10
Dragon, Red (Age 7-12)	16-21	12-17	20-26	11-19
Dragon, White (Age 10-12)	22-38	18-34	27-44	21-39
Dragon, Brass (Age 11 or 12)	39-44	35-37	45-49	40-43
Dragon, Bronze (Age 7-12)		37-41	50-53	
Dragon, Copper (Age 10-12)	45-49	42-45	54-58	44-50
Dragon, Silver (Age 7-12)	50-54	46-50	59-64	51-55
Lakarn*	55-69	51-65		
Mogrl*	70-72	66-68	65-67	56-59
Oonlulth*				60-69
Puala Beast*		69-71		
Tuoth Dragon*	73-79	72-79	68-77	70-79
NPC/Demi Human/Human	80-86	80-86	78-85	80-86
Roll on Tier VI	87-92	87-93	86-93	87-93
Roll twice on Tier VII	93-100	94-100	94-100	94-100

LESSER DRAGONS

CHALLENGE LEVEL	PLAIN	RIVER VALLEY	FOREST	MOUNTAIN
Beaked	1	1	1	
Ch-Crup				1
Flying	2-3	2	2	2
Frilled			3	
Iahneal				3
Irs Wyrn	4	3	4	4
Kurlet Boned				5
Lial Feathered	5	4	5	
Maegle	6	5	6	6
Musk		6		7
Nakal		7	7	
Ring	7	8	8	8
Spike Tail (Talmut)	8	9	9	9
Unk	9-10	10	10	10

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INTRODUCTION – THE GOTTLAND -NE



Rune Lore presents over a dozen adventures and encounter areas to help introduce the rune mark and the runes into your game. The adventures are loosely connected in order to allow the Castle Keeper the freedom to use them in the order presented, or to use them as desired in their own order. The adventures are scalable, meaning with a simple change in numbers, hit dice or CL, the CK can make them harder or easier. They are designed for use with a mid-level party. The runic theme is intentionally kept at a minimum in the adventures to allow those who do not desire to use the rune mark free access to the content supplied.

Using a 1st level rune mark poses a few problems; the adventures are designed such that it is easier for an existing character to switch to the rune mark class using the multi-classing rules as presented in the *Players Handbook*. However, if a character begins play as a rune mark the CK may want to accelerate their level gain to allow them to gain a few levels before embarking on the bulk of the adventures. Keep in mind that translating a rune brings experience points; so allowing the characters to find a few more runes would do the trick. The easiest way to do this is to reduce the number of runes in their Codex of the Initiate from the suggested 30 by 10 or so; allow them then to find the 10 and gain the experience points.

The adventures begin with *Harbor's Foul*, a short city adventure that kick off the whole series. The encounter occurs in the town of Capistria in the Hanse City states. It ends with the prospects of a sea voyage that takes the characters across the Inner Sea to the edge of the Gray Coast and into the Gottland. If there is no rune mark in the party, but someone desires to switch classes the mage here freely gives them the Codex of the Initiate. During the sea voyage that leads up to the next adventure, *Rage of Vandeya*, the character can study the Codex; translating and mastering four runes. Allow enough time to pass through storm or laying up and the realism of the game is easy to maintain. The *Rage of Vandeya* is simply an island adventure designed to break up the monotony of the sea voyage.

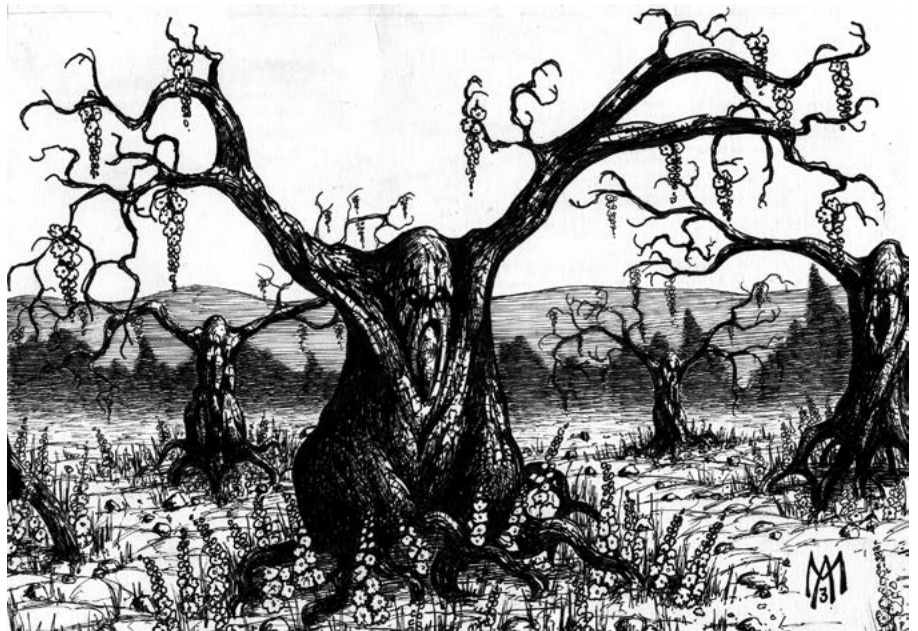
The ship travels across the Inner Sea to the Gray Coast where it hugs the land for a time, here the during a routine water stop, the characters stumble on *Holfgar's Howe* and Dwarves in the Sand. In this latter adventure the characters are exposed to the Prophecy of the rune mark. This plays only in to any greater adventures about plane travel that the Winter Runes, scattered throughout the adventures, may portend.

Izarian's Paramour is a stand-alone adventure that simply introduces some of the back-story of Aihrde and the runes to the characters, but it also introduce the characters to the next series of

adventures that begins with *Heigar's Way*. *Heigar's Way* is the introduction to the series of adventures that take the characters into the mountains and back down again. It sets up the quest for the fabled Winter Rune. The next series of adventures, *Barren Stone*, *Golden Threads*, *Junluth's House* and *Over Chasms Deep* are all simple adventure that familiarize the characters with the lands of the Gottland. *Barren Stone* brings the characters into contact with Unklar's Iron, that gateway to the outer planes that requires the use of the Codex of Winter or the winter rune. *Junluth's House* however offers the characters the opportunity to learn more of the ways of the rune mark for Junluth himself is a rune mark.

The Long Stair brings the characters to the *Halmsroof Pass* where they battle giants and become familiar with the tale of the Mordius druids after they meet the first of the three sisters; this leads them to *Into the Dunhollow*, the second sister and back into the heart of the Gottland. From there they learn of the third and begin the long trek down the *Wernher Road* which allows them a second opportunity to become rune marks if so desired when they meet the Mouth of the Gods. From these adventures into the *Doost Steppes* and the lands of the halflings and finally to the end of the adventure where the encounter the third sister in *Of the Horned God's Winter* and have the chance to acquire the fabled Winter Rune.

The Castle Keeper may have to flesh out various portions of the adventure as befits their campaign; alteration may improve certain aspects of the adventure depending on how the rune mark is introduced, or even allowed.



HARBORS FOUL (# 1 ON MAP)



The encounter takes place in the busy port city of Capidistria. In the world of Ahrde Capidistria lies upon the southern shores of the Inner Sea, in the Hanse City States. If used independently place Capidistria on any coastal region in your world. Harbors Foul serves as a kick-off for the overall Rune Lore adventures, leading the characters into the wilds of the Gottland. If the CK desires, the adventure can be moved to any locale, including the towns of Most and Ossford in the Gottland. Otherwise, it ends with a sea voyage that brings them to the Gottland.

NOTE: The sea voyage is designed to allow some passage of time in order for the characters to study the codex and or rune of enchantment.

Brewel, a seasoned halfling rogue and thief, slips a rune stone into the pocket of one of the characters; his goal is to get the stone into the town secretly. Once there his compatriot, watching from the wall above, attempts to steal it from the pocket to sell it to Mendlethrone, a sage who lives on the Harbor. The rune stone is one of the Four Pillars. Their hope is to use the characters as mules, knowing that they themselves will be thoroughly searched as they enter the town, as both Brewel and his companion Sal are being watched by the local thieves' guild, Muddles Inc.

True to form, Muddles is watching the two would-be rogues and the item is seen being slipped into the character's pocket. They naturally assume the party is in cahoots with the two rogue thieves and set up to get the item back. On sudden, the party finds itself in a war with a powerful rogues' guild and little hope but to fly north.



The city gates stand open before you, and before them a great press of people and livestock jam the cobbled way, attempting to get into the city before the portcullis drops and evening sets in. Braying mules, barking dogs, grumbling traders, layabouts, and bums all try to squeeze past the guards and walls to the safety of the city. In the midst of the chaos are the city guards. Hard bitten men, wearing a variety of armor and carrying different arms. Several sport a tattoo of a sword upon their forearm, marking them as members of the Cult of the Swords. Capidistria opens her arms to you, welcoming you to her bosom.

OPENING GATES

As the party approaches the main gate, they may notice a small figure (CL 8) wrapped in a loose-fitting, faded blue cloak. His small stature is lost in the folds of the garment and he leans heavily upon what appears to be a wooden staff. He stands out from the crowd of tradesmen, farmers, and shop keepers; his posture is stout and his face bares deep furrows of a man well-versed in the windy steppes.

The man is a halfling by the name of Brewel. He is an outcast and well-known thief; he lingers here upon the edge of town because he has been targeted by the local thieves' guild, Muddles Inc., and cannot easily enter the town, something he desperately desires, for he has stumbled upon a *rune stone* and wishes to sell it to a local sage, Mendlethrone. To do this he has placed his trusted companion, Sal, upon the wall and instructed him to watch out, for he intends to make a 'mule' of some passing strangers. Once the mule has been chosen, Brewel drops the rune stone in one of the pockets; it is Sal's task to steal the stone back and sell it. Sal is stationed on the wall above, watching carefully.

No fools, the local guild, Muddles Inc. watches both Sal and the halfling. They control the gate guards and the Captain is on their payroll; this is why Brewel and his henchman are always being searched.

When the party finds itself in the crush of people moving to get into the gate, and it is always a crush with the guards hurrying people through, Brewel moves past them. He chooses one with an obvious pocket, pouch, back pack, satchel, or anything else where he can drop the stone and Sal might have a decent change to pull back out.

It will be difficult for the party to notice the fellow in the crush, but if they are keeping careful watch on those around them they might single him out with a successful wisdom check (CL 7). Once Brewel has marked his target, he drops the stone in the pocket. The unsuspecting victim might notice the slight move (CL 9), but Brewel is a skilled and seasoned rogue.

If they succeed and notice him attempting to do something they might search but will find nothing stolen. Brewel apologizes for the bump and moves on with them to the gates, helping to push them through. If they talk to him he is very friendly, telling them where they should go to drink, etc.

It will be extremely difficult to stop and search their packs; doing so will interrupt the crowd and many people around the party push back, shout, and call for the characters to move out of the way. This draws the attention of the guards who wade through the crowd and order the characters off the road or to move forward.

If they break from the line and find the stone, the gates soon close. Brewel has vanished and Sal is forced to hang out on the walls and watch them a little longer. In short, nothing changes. If they discover the stone Sal still attempts to steal it back after they enter the town.

Sal makes his move as soon as he sees the party pass through the gate. He clambers down and begins following them.

Long shadows cast by the buildings and setting sun greet the character's entry. Beyond the gate the city opens up to a broad, cobbled thoroughfare, where stone houses line the street. People crowd the way on both sides, a long run of filthy liquid flows down the street's center. Shops hang their wares out and people lean out of doors or windows watching the busy traffic, shouting at passers-by, hanging out laundry, dumping latrine buckets, etc.

UNFORTUNATE SAL

Sal attempts to pick-pocket the characters, stealing back the stone. Muddles Inc. strikes at the same time, fearing if he gets the stone they will lose him in the crowd. A well-thrown knife strikes Sal in the back and he lurches into whichever party member carries the stone.

With a gurgle he stumbles forward, dying in that character's arms, mumbling the name Mendlethron. He says it three times.

"MURDER!" screams the Muddles man. **"GUARDS! GUARDS! COME QUICK! MURDER!"**

Men and women scramble from you, fleeing to doors and sidewalks. Guards from the gate look up, scanning through the crowd, attempting no doubt to see who has done what. In the midst of the chaos someone moves in front of you. "Follow me now if you wish to live!" He slips into the crowd and up a side street, beckoning the characters to follow.

In the utter chaos, no one knows who has done what. The body hits the ground and guards begin shouting. People are running to and fro, pulling carts and whatnots from the street. Shouts, curses, slamming doors, and all manner of bedlam cascade down upon the street. Whether the characters follow the man into the side street or await the guards, it makes no difference to the Muddles people. The man trying to lure the party off the street is a Muddles Man and the local constable is controlled by Muddles.

Regardless of what the characters do, they are in for a fight.

The man leading them down a side street brings them down several winding streets and into an courtyard where four toughs stand.

NOTE: If the characters wait in the street for the guards they are escorted, with weapons, down this same street, told that they are going to talk to the local constable. They are led to the same court yard.

If the party flees and attempts escape into the city, they should wind up in the courtyard.

ROGUES, 5 (These chaotic evil men are 1st level rogues whose vital statistics are LV 1, HP 5, AC 15. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with swords and clubs for 1d6 points of damage. They can attack from behind with a +4 to attack and doing double damage. They have leather armor, swords, or clubs. They may also have daggers, 4 gp a piece.)

Three of the rogues fight to the death, or until only one is left and he attempts to flee or surrenders. He is more than willing to talk in exchange for his life, and tells the characters that he and his fellow rogues were told to kill them and take some "magical stone" from them. He doesn't know what the stone does, but if pressed about it he mentions that a sage down at the Harbor has dealings with such stones. He runs a shop called Mendlethron's Rarities.

A search of the packs reveals the loose rune stone, a small piece of talc with a rune emblazoned upon it. It is clearly magical, reeking of it.

Meanwhile, the rogue who slew Sal follows the pack of characters from the rooftops. He watches the fight. If it goes badly for his men, he attempts to figure out what the characters are going to do.

ALL ROADS TO THE HARBOR

Now it is up to the characters to figure out what to do. They have not been spotted or singled out, nor are they under any threat of being seized for Sal's murder.

They can go to Mendlethron to see what he might know, or they can move out and about in the town or find some other track to follow.

MERMAID'S ROCK

On the waterfront is the tavern, a square building of two floors, stone throughout. A broad wooden veranda overlooks the gray-blue waters of the harbor and the sign that hangs over the cobbled street portrays a mermaid alone upon a rock. It is always open and always lively.

The Mermaid's Rock is a tavern and eatery with one great dining hall and several large and small private chambers that offer the establishment's patrons a safe environment within which to conduct their business. The Great Hall has a floor of slate, but the walls are covered in fine oak planks. Here a central fire pit, 12 feet in diameter, offers patrons warmth and comradeship. The Mermaid usually has some type of musical act playing, bards and the like plying their trade in the great hall.

It is here where all who come to Capidistria end up, and the tavern is often crowded, smoke-filled, and loud. It is particularly loud on those nights when several bards contend with each other for the crowd's favor. The food is good, the company warm and the Mermaid's Rock the only place to be.

It is here that the sage, Mendlethrone, spends many a waking hour. He is a heavy drinker and though he can handle his liquor, he often drinks to excess. If the characters have arrived without going to his shop, he will be on the look out for them as Brewel alerted him through messengers that the stone went awry.

If the characters are coming from *A Lion in the Ropes*, they are likely to find the sage here or in his shop.

MENDLETHRONE'S RARITIES

Mendlethrone is a young man with a great deal of knowledge about a great many things. He is a voracious reader, spending much of his time pouring over books that he has ordered, purchased, or scrounged up. He is notorious for offering high pay for books, texts, parchments, scrolls, and even scraps of paper that might contain some knowledge of the world around, old and new. He is wealthy, though few know where he acquires his money, for he never seems to charge for his services. His pockets fund many journeys for would-be adventurers; sending them on quests for more items to flesh out his library.

Entering his shop is a wonder.

The door opens to the sound of a small chime. The room consumes the tender voice. All about are books: stacks of books, rows of books on shelves, books piled upon books, books laying across the floor. Scrolls, some cased, some open, stand amidst the thick leather-backed volumes; sheaves of paper scattered about the room mingle with its debris. A book-walled hallway reveals a deeper recess, this too lined with books as far as the eye must roam. Over it all float several lamps; unattached to wire or wall, they hang in the air, spilling a gentle light across the whole scene.

Mendlethrone may or may not be present. He has been alerted to the rune stone and is on the look out for the party, though they may track him down in the The Rock. Either way, he greets them pleasantly, apologizing for his poor hospitality and inviting them instead to a discussion over fresh brewed mead at The Rock.

He asks for no money, and offers to pay for the food and drink.

If the stone, whether planted by Brewel or picked up in Lion in the Ropes, is presented to the sage it takes him only a minute to determine that it is indeed a *rune stone*. He knows too that this particular rune stone was made by a human Rune Mage. If asked what a *rune stone* is, he will explain the following:

Read or paraphrase the following:

Long ago the dwarves mastered the language of creation, taught to them by the All Father. They could speak it, though in practical application it failed them. Its subtleties escaped the hard minded dwarves and their craft suffered for it. The Little All Fathers, the magi of their realm, managed it better; but even they suffered in its use. Their creations require the hammer to shape and the mind to mold; the language draws its power from the everlasting Void.

Long ago the dwarves understood their limitations and set to crafting the words of the language into constructs. The power of the language was captured in a complicated and vast set of written characters, the runes also called the *ondlucheroan*. The runes contained power, often one power layered upon another; these runes the dwarves used, crafting them into items and objects of their own desire. In the end they found the runes largely unstable, losing their potency after a short while, or worse, never holding the power envisioned for them. Long study and much trial and error revealed to them the best vessels for each word, for each phrase, for each understanding; minerals of the natural world proved the proper host. Thus the rune stones came to be.

If the characters desire he offers them use of his library to research the stones further. He goes on to explain to them that there are rune marks, a class of warrior wizards who devote themselves to the mastery of the sorcery of the runes themselves, deriving magic from use of the runes, much as a wizard does his spell.

Mendlethrone always allows the knowledge (and it is common throughout the area) that if he dies, the door to his library closes permanently, and any within the dimension will remain trapped there until the wizard who created his athenaeum returns to open it. He, of course, would not be amused at his fallen sage.

THE LIBRARY

His library is well known to those with whom he works. It is large, one of the largest in the world, and kept in an extra-dimensional space constructed for him by a rune mark using the rune *minor dimension*. A series of mental tones, known only to



himself and the constructing wizard, open the gate to the library and allow Mendlethron access.

One enters the library from wherever the sage is located and if he desires to allow admission; Mendlethron has but to open the gate and a stairwell materializes in front of him, allowing for travel up and into the small dimension. Here there is a tall room, about 60 feet in height, lined with shelves filled with an uncountable number of books and scrolls. The room is comfortably carpeted in blue, well lit with more of the floating lamps (which come at his call), and offers a host of chairs and seats to occupy.

Here any amount of mundane knowledge can be found, including the history of the rune stones, the rune marks, the coming of Unklar, etc. Any and all knowledge the characters desire about the rune mark is available allowing any player the option to begin their career as a rune mark if they are not already one.

OPPORTUNITIES

Mendlethron offers the party a job. A ship is leaving harbor in the next day or so. It is traveling north, across the Inner Sea with trade goods bound for Gottland-Ne. There is a dungeon there, which houses a series of Imperial Annals scribed by the Sanjaks of those provinces during the early days of the Empire. The sage desires them and will pay 500 crown per party member for their safe return; he will further grant a party fund of 500 crown to supply, equip, and cover the cost of the passage across the sea. Futhermore he offers the a copy of the *Codex of the Innitiate* to any wishing to become a rune mark. If there is a rune mark in the

party he advises them to keep the stone that the rogue dropped in their packs. On it is written a *rune of enchantment* (worth 5000gp).

To give them added incentive, Mendlethron explains that he has it on good authority that the Muddles Guild is hunting them.

Assuming the characters take the job, they are told to see the Captain Beritod of the Red Make and he will take them to the Ossford, with directions on how to get to the stronghold of Izarian.

LIVING HAS A PRICE

The Muddles Guild has not been inactive since the deaths of their several compatriots. They have tracked the party's movements and are planning revenge. They send several low level rogues to rough up the characters, and if these are dispatched the guild will become a little more devilish.

The guild is extremely wealthy and possesses many strange and exotic magics and beasts. One such beast is an ettercap, trained to serve the guild's masters. The Muddles wait until the party is moving at night and they unleash the foul tempered beast upon them.

ETTERCAP (*This neutral evil creature's vital stats are HD 5d8, AC 14, HP 37. Its primary attributes are physical. It attacks with 2 claws for 1d4 points of damage and 1 bite for 1d8 points of damage. It has improved grab that allows it a +4 to hit with poison attacks. They are able to web their victims from glands in their forearms. Their poison causes temporary paralysis.*)

The boat lies in the harbor and the Captain is ready to depart.

RAGE OF VANDEYA (#2 ON MAP)



he sea voyage to the dungeon can take up to a month, allowing the rune mark time to translate the rune stone acquired in the previous adventure. If a character is just becoming a rune mark, extend the voyage by several months.

Rage of Vandeya is designed to break up the monotony of the sea voyage across the Inner Sea. It can follow directly after Harbors Foul, or can be one of several adventures on the water. The island should be placed where convenient for the CK, or altered to a castle on the land if need be. If in the Aihrde Setting, the Isle of Vandeya lies about 175 miles north and west of the Hanse City States, midway between them and the lands of Gottland-Ne to the west.

The adventure takes place upon a small island dominated by a ruined castle. The island is haunted by the enraged spirit of a northman King, Holfgar, who drowned while attempting to swim to the isle from his homeland, far to the Broken Fingers. When challenged by one of his followers to swim the 20 leagues, he took to the waters, somewhat inebriated, and attempted the trek. He was never seen alive again.

His tale however, is a strange one. Holfgar swam many many miles out to sea where he encountered a beautiful woman, a caradulz, the Lady of the Deeps. She promised to bear him to his destination if he promised her a child. Making the pact, the caradulz changed herself into a horse and he leapt upon her back. She rode upon the crests of waves, bearing him across the wide expanse of the ocean deeps. After only a few days he sighted the island. There she stopped and compelled him to live up to his end of the bargain. Holfgar swore at her, saying he would not do so until the island was under his bare feet. She would not carry him further without pay, for she did not trust the northman's word. With the island in sight, Holfgar cursed her as an unfaithful sea witch, and leaping from her back he made to swim the distance to the island on his own. The maid became enraged and called the waters forth to batter him, but he broke through them and pushed on. She hounded him with fish summoned from the deeps, but these too he knocked aside so that at last she shifted her shape again, assuming the form of the long kelp that grows along the sea bottom. In rage she took his feet in her tentacles and pulled him under. Deep into the water she towed him, clouding his vision with her form until Holfgar drowned and died.

His ghost however would not give up the trek and crossed the remaining distance, but even his spectral feet remained caught in the tangle of kelp, preventing him from ever leaving the water. There he remains, a haunt upon the edge of the sea, looking at the beach he'll never cross.

WHEN WATER RUNS DRY

A longboat carries the party north. Built to carry trade goods rather than men, it is deep and wide. The waves lap the sides of the ship, often sending spray over the gunwales. The crew and characters must sleep on the running boards and benches where



the oarsmen sit. The ship's goods, water, and food are all kept beneath canvas tarps in the middle of the boat.

On the fourth night of the journey one of the characters, chosen randomly, awakens to a tittering noise sounding much like a child's laugh. Looking about the boat he spies one of the canvas tarps has been pulled up and staked back, exposing the goods beneath. Small figures, naked in the moonlight, cluster around the edges of several barrels that they have obviously opened. Some swim in the water barrels.

These are sea nymphs and they have opened the barrels of fresh water to bath and play in it. Upon being spotted they flee immediately, leaping over the sides of the ship to vanish into the water below. If cornered they fight; if they make it to the open water they follow the boat, swimming through the waters. If watched or bothered they try to cajole someone to jump in. Anyone so foolish is attacked immediately.

SEA NYMPHS, 14 *(These chaotic neutral creatures have HD 1d4, AC 12, and HP 2 each. Their primary abilities are mental. They attack with small darts that deal 1 point of damage. The darts are poisonous, however, taken from the spines of the lion fish. Unless a successful constitution save is made, they cause the victim to hallucinate for 1d6 rounds. The*

nymph is able to shape shift into any type of fish it desires 3/day. They often transform into barracudas or similar fish and are able to do 1 point of damage upon a successful bite.)

The Captain wakes up from the commotion, and upon learning what happened he investigates the water barrels. In a moment he reports that the ship is without fresh water as the nymphs broke the seals and befouled the water in every barrel. Anyone looking at them clearly sees the slime upon the surfaces; the water is undrinkable.

“These creatures haunt all the waters of the Inner Sea, a constant nuisance, but no matter; we have no water and must put in to the Isle of Vandeya and fetch some.”

Anyone familiar with the area may have heard of the haunted isle. Upon a successful intelligence roll (CL 3) the character remembers the story behind the island. Regardless, the Captain relates the tale as noted above.

He asks the party if they would go ashore to fetch the water. He offers four of his men to carry the water, and leaves it up to the party whether they want to dig a hole to tap the ground water or to use the well in the castle. If the party proves reluctant he tries to entice them with the rumor of the master of the castle’s lost treasure, which men say sits beneath the a flagstone decorated with the map of the world before his high chair in the great hall.

THE ISLAND

Vandeya is a long, narrow island dominated by one large hill. Roughly 10 miles from end to end and not more than a half mile wide, a man could walk around it in a single day. There are many open and sandy beaches, though they are strewn with rocks and ocean debris. They give way almost immediately, however, to a thick tangle of deciduous trees. Upon the hill, overlooking it all, stands a castle.

The island fades in comparison to the massive stone structure that commands its one hill. A polyglot of stone walls, 50 feet high, push out from the hill, clinging to the cliff’s edge, giving the viewer to think that the walls are pushing the tumble of boulders that surround its base down the rocky slope. Despite the imposing structure, it is in a state of ruin; the central ceiling has collapsed and the debris of it pushes out through the front gate and wall, making the center of the place a jumbled heap of masonry and wood standing naked to skies above.

The Captain explains that he cannot stay on shore long, he’ll drop them and the barrels of water on the beach with his men to port it.

As soon as the landing party is on the beach the Captain puts out to sea and heads into the deep waters, well away from the haunts of the ghost of the Viking King.

THE LANDING

The barrels are stacked high on the beach and the porters gathered with 10-foot poles, off the each ends of which hang huge water bladders.

If the party attempts to dig into the ground, their first four attempts to reach water fail. Each attempt consumes about 30 minutes of daylight. On the fifth attempt they tap into a small flow of water. It takes a good 15 minutes to fill up one of the bladders. Each barrel takes about five bladders to fill, and it becomes painfully obvious to all that it will be dark before the task is done.

A number of trails lead up from the beaches to the stonework of the castle.

THE FOREST TREK

The party enters the tangled forest following a path beaten by other sailors who have no doubt suffered a similar fate as that of the Red Make. The going is slow and difficult, pushing up through the thick brush, though the trail leads steadily up toward the castle.

Upon a successful wisdom check (CL 3) the characters begin to notice odds and ends laying about the trail. An old broken bow lays beneath some leaf fall; a satchel is torn and emptied. Here lies a bedroll, wet and bedraggled; there three arrows protrude from a tree. Upon closer investigation more items are found, old, torn, and rotted away; a careful look by a ranger (CL 3) reveals signs of battle, some older than others, throughout the length of the trail. If this knowledge is imparted to the porters, they begin to grow fearful.

THE CASTLE

The castle is in ruins, all its floors collapsed into a heap. This debris clogs the front of the place. Only two things survived. The well just inside the castle, to which a trail has been dug, and in the central hall, the high stone chair of the castle’s one-time master. Before it, the floor is open, and etched into the cobbles is a map of the Cradle of the World. The forest gives way to stone steps that climb up the slope only to vanish into the heap of ruin that is the castle front. The only way in is over that heap.

Huge stones tangle with beams of rotted wood that once comprised the front wall and ceiling. A pale haze hangs over it all, but standing on top of the mountain of debris affords you a perfect vantage of the forest behind you, the sea to the north, east, and west, and the inner sanctuary. Upon the waters to the west you see the Red Make wrestling with huge green-foam capped waves, its single sail unfurled as it breaks for smoother water. The forest is dark behind you, and in front of you the inner hall is exposed. There a great chair made of stone looms over the hollowed-out chamber, allowing the occupant to view a map of some design upon the hall’s floor.

As the characters decide what is going on, the Red Make is under attack by the caradulz. She has risen from the deeps and slammed the boat with wave after wave, attempting to drive it into deeper water, which she successfully does. Anyone watching the boat for several minutes is able, upon a successful intelligence check (CL 4), to realize that the ship is being driven out to deeper water and cannot return before nightfall.

THE WELL

The well is situated within the debris of the ceiling, cleared by sailors who found themselves in a similar predicament. It takes roughly two hours of filling bladders and carting them back to the beach to get the barrels of the Red Make full and ready for pick up.

THE THRONE

The stone chair is wide, built to impress the onlooker. Its back is plain, round and smooth, but it is a seat that connotes power and strength. It overlooks a detailed map carved into the floor that depicts the Cradle of the World and all the lands of man and dwarf (swap this with any world map if not in Aihilde). The bottom of the map is at the foot of the throne.

Around the map are carved the following words: *“When the throne’s feet stand upon the top of the world, the treasure of the world’s feet is revealed.”*

The map is a cover for a secret door. If examined the character notice a groove around the whole map about three inches deep and an inch wide. Looking very closely reveals four separate holes in the groove, evenly spaced about the map. The holes are slightly smaller than one inch. To open the door, four poles, or anything that will fit into the holes, must be inserted and the map rotated counter-clockwise until the top of the world is at the throne’s feet. This is followed by a large metallic click.

A gentle push on the door swings it open on two hinges in the center, revealing a set of steps that leads down into a treasure vault.

The vault has not been disturbed for many years. Weapons line the walls along with several suits of armor. Shields, helms, some polearms, crossbows and the like are neatly arranged about the room. In the center of the room is a chest, roughly four feet long, two feet wide and two feet tall. It is closed and locked (CL 3). Within the trunk are the following items: 500gp in gold and platinum; a silver necklace with a lion pendant worth 25gp, a +1 dagger in a finely worked scabbard, a +1 morning star; a small buckler of defense which allows the user to gain +2 to either AC or hit to hit attack with the shield, a scroll with 3 wizard/illusionist spells on it, and a candle of invocation. One of the armor racks has a suit of +1 chainmail hanging on it, and a +1 shield at its feet with a horn woven in flowers emblazoned upon it.

THE RAGE OF VANDEYA

When the sun sets, dusk begins and the ghost of Holfgar rises from the deeps. He stalks the beaches of the island, passing through the surf, cursing the dry land and all that live upon it. His curses, unlike those of mortal man, carry weight in the halls

of the Wretched Plains. Every night he howls for what he cannot have, and every night the dead that lay scattered all about the island - testaments to the battles of lonely sailors against the undead - rise from grave and stalk the island, seeking anything living upon which to meet their vengeance.

The howling mingles with the surf and few can detect it. However anyone with sharp ears does have a chance; on a successful wisdom check (CL 5) a character can discern the howling of the doomed ghost.

The island is inhabited with scores of zombies and skeletons, and when they rise they wander through the brush, down the beaches and to the castle. They move in groups of one to two, two to eight, and one to twelve. They have no order, nor any ability to communicate with the viking ghost. They detect the motions of the living and follow them; when they see them they attack.

NOTE ON THE BATTLE: The CK should throw a zombie or skeleton at the party just after dusk. Start the encounter with one. Add to that another two or three after a few minutes. Wait a few more minutes and hit them again. In this way, create a running battle all through the night.

SKELETON (*This neutral creature’s vital statistics are HD 1d8, AC 13, and HP 3. They have no primary attributes. They attack with weapons for 1d6 points of damage. They carry nothing of value unless it is the weapon, which has a 5% chance of being magical.*)

ZOMBIES (*This neutral creature’s vital statistics are HD 1d8, AC 14, and HP 5. They have no primary attributes. They attack with one slam attack for 1d6 points of damage. They carry nothing of value normally, though there is a 5% chance per zombie that it has a valuable piece of jewelry worth 25-50gp.*)

MEETING THE GHOST OF HOLFGAR

The ghost of Holfgar is plain to see from the castle upon the hill. He moves slowly through the surf, glowing an eerie green, shuffling along, howling his pain. If the characters approach him he stops his endless walking and calls to them for aid. He is able to talk to them, and in halting, relates his heroic deed of crossing the sea only to be drowned by the same sea witch that hounds the Red Make out into the surf.

He ends his tale with the following: *“In the north my beloved built a tomb for me, but within it there are no bones that are mine. My rest can only come from going home to lay in the land I called my own.”*

There is no comfort for the lost soul unless his bones can be retrieved from the sea and carted to the far north and buried in his Howe. For more on Holfgar’s Howe, see that adventure in this book.

ADVENTURE HOOK

The characters may attempt to retrieve the bones of the viking. They lay in about 15 feet of water to the north of the island, wrapped still in kelp. To retrieve them they must fight the undead that rise every night and the caradulz (for more on her see New Monsters: Caradulz).

HOLFGAR'S HOWE (#3 ON MAP)

Holfgar's Howe is an encounter set for 3-4 characters of middling level. The CK should adjust the adventure as needed, adding or subtracting monsters, or ratchet hit points and armor class up or down, depending on the size and level of the party. The Howe sits just upon the Gray Coast. Place as needed. It ties in with the previous adventure, Rage of Vandeya, where the characters met the ghost of Holfgar. The Captain has sailed across the Inner Sea to the Gray Coast, which he will follow to the mouth of the Sorgon River so the characters can conduct the task set before them.

Many years gone, the northman Holfgar rode the waves of the Deep Quiet, plundering towns and villages; Holfgar proved the terror of the Inner Sea for many years. In his raids he gathered a small army of stalwart followers and they amassed a treasure worth a King's envy. In time Holfgar built himself a kingdom upon the southern slopes of the Holmgrad Mountains. His wooden hall stood 100 feet long and 40 feet high, fashioned of timbers as thick as a giant's leg. There he settled his men and they made merry after each raid.

In time Holfgar's power waxed great and he took to wife the daughter of a King of Trondheim, Barahul by name. Upon the birth of his son, Dan, Holfgar made himself lord of all the lands between the Stovnet and Nosejuen Rivers, which men called the Gresselrun, and he took for himself the title of King and his named his kingdom the Holfmark. It was a boisterous land, filled with men of violent nature and built upon the conquests of many raids. Much drinking and boasting went on; fighting amongst his thanes was common and Holfgar encouraged it all.

During the third year of his reign, amidst a feast that shook the great hall, one of Holfgar's closest Thanes, Earagon, boasted to a visiting dignitary that his lord was the greatest swimmer the world had ever seen and that if need pressed he could swim from his hall overlooking the sea to the Isle of the Neidelung. Now truth be told, this isle lay over 40 leagues out to sea, that being over 100 miles as the fish might swim. The act being doubted and the strength of his lord questioned, many blades raised until the King himself, more in bed with drink than reason, shouted that such a swim was like a dip for him and he would prove it to any man who dared doubt. Barahul, horrified at the boasting, attempted to calm her lord's rash temper to no avail. Stripping to his dagger and a loin cloth, the King dove from the cliff beneath his hall and vanished into the turbulent waters of the Inner Sea.

He was never seen again.

Several weeks passed and those in the hall looked for their Master's return, but their drunken boasts soon turned to bouts of anger, and fights erupted. Over them all Barahul brooded; bereft of her husband and her son's father, she raged a hate upon all those in the hall. After many more days, when all had given up hope and many began to squabble over who would take the mantle of Kingship, she called for a feast. "Let all those who loved Holfgar in life, honor his memory with a feast. Though not



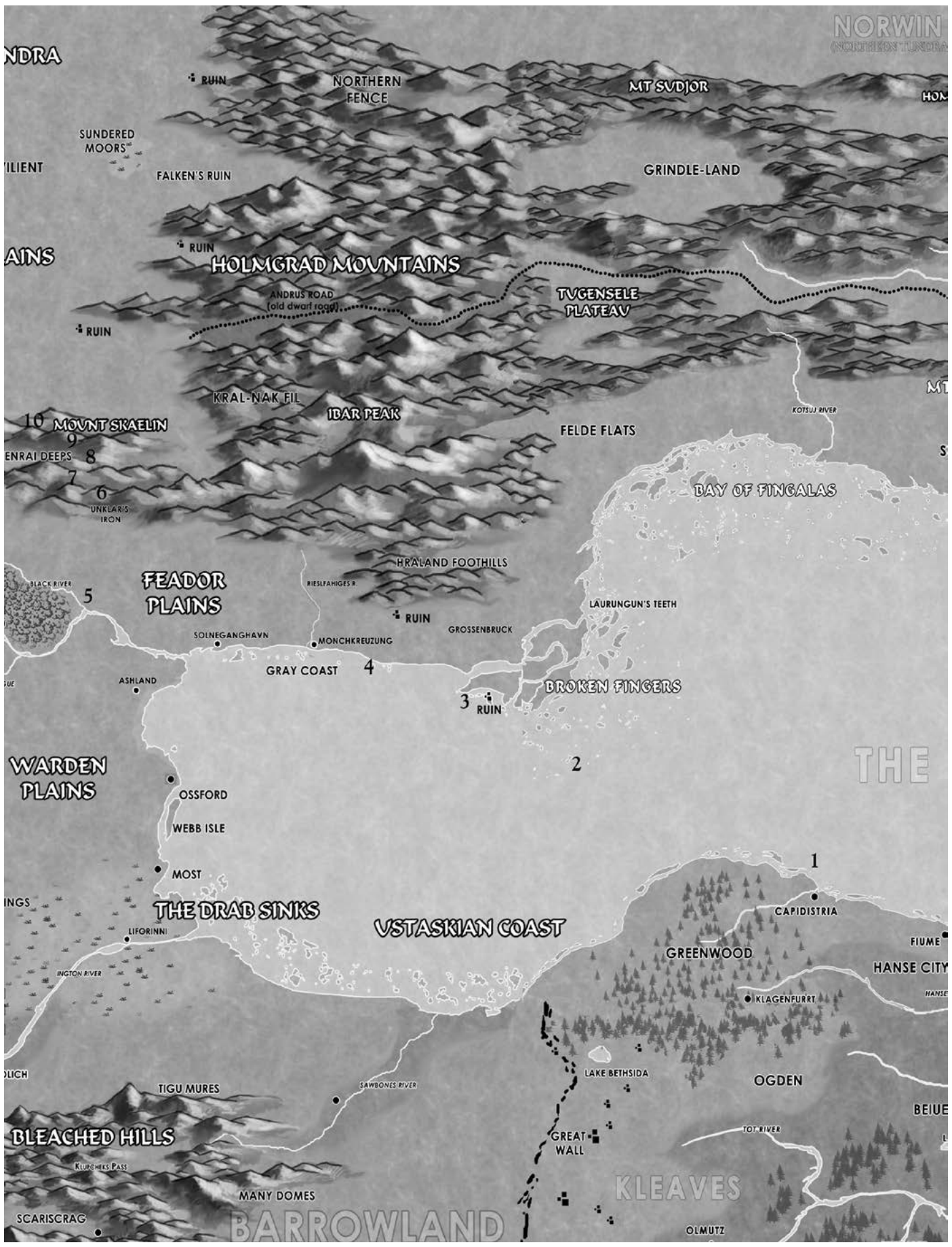
you Earagon, as you brought his life to an untimely end. When next you boast, boast of your own prowess and not another's."

All in the hall readily agreed, and gathered again in the Great Hall, except for Earagon whom they drove out into the cold. In the hall Barahul delivered each and every one a draught of mead. "Drink my Lords. Taste the generosity of your King's wife." So they did and toasted the fallen King as well. Unbeknownst to them, the drink was poisoned with a sleeping draught so that within a few hours all in the hall had swooned and fell to deep slumber.

Barahul left the hall and called upon the earth gods to deliver to her a mountain of dirt to cover the hall and make a tomb for all those within. Angletor, the master of earth, heard her pleas and came in answer. "What would you give me for wereward to bury this hall of your king and husband."

"My life is passed now and I have no love of it. Take me as your bride if you will," she replied, and so the lord of earth and rock moved a small mountain of earth to cover the Great Hall and make of it a Howe wherein the men of Holfgar's hall were entombed. He fashioned a single entrance to the Howe overlooking the sea, but this he bound with magics from within. "May you all rot until your Lord and King returns. As for you, Earagon, take your Lord's son far from this place and keep him until such





time as he may make his own path in the world.” With that, she gave over to him her son Dan, for she knew so great was Earagon’s guilt that he would do this last service for his lost King.

So the Great Howe of Holfgar came to be, overlooking the northern shores of the Inner Sea, though Holfgar himself never lay his head within his own tomb.

It is said by those who dare the Isle of Neidelung that there dwells a shadow of great body and strength there, and he rages against the sea and curses all those who would boast of it.

The Howe and the Promontory are either covered with thick grass or snow, depending upon the season.

Yurn’s Path gives over to a winding ledge that snakes along the length of a great cliff. The cliff itself overlooks a wide promontory of land that juts out into the sea. It rises from the foot of the cliff until it stands equally as high as the dwarven Path. Upon this rise stands a great mound of earth, shaped like a perfect dome. Even the most unobservant realize that it is not a natural landmark, but must have been made by the hands of men or gods. It appears to be a Howe, a burial chamber for some great chieftain.

A trail of smoke rises from the far side of the Howe, winding its way into the heavens above.

The cliff is steep, about 120 feet high, but a quick observation reveals a stone stair built into it, crisscrossing up the height of it to merge with the Path. It is very negotiable and the travelers quickly learn that it is built in a cup of the cliff, shielding them from the worst that the weather has to offer. In a few quick minutes they are at the bottom of the cliff and at the beginning of a foot path that winds its way up to the Howe.

The ground is open, with little more than scrub and grass, mingled in the rocks and gravel of the rise. The Howe dominates the view. The approach is easy and without incident.

The flames of a large bonfire built by a sailor whose small craft has suffered a broken mast comes into view. Unable to repair the craft on his own, he climbed the long stairs from the beach to the Howe and built there a bonfire made of scrap wood to signal any passing boats. He has made no attempt to hide his camp, of course, and welcomes the newcomers. If they attack him, he does defend himself but attempts to flee down the path to the boat below.

Egil of Skon by name, he hails from Holmgald and was traveling east to the lands of his cousin Grundier to visit his kin. He is a big fellow, six feet tall and broad of shoulder. His hair is dark blonde and his eyes a burning blue. He wears four-in-one ring mail with a battle axe at his belt. A huge wolf skin cloak drapes over his shoulders and covers the thick woolen pants and shirt he wears. His seal skin boots are tough and water proof. Egil is friendly, but also able to defend himself.

74 CASTLES & CRUSADES

EGIL OF SKON (*This chaotic good 4th level barbarian’s vital statistics are HD 4, AC 17, HP 52. His primary attributes are strength, constitution, and wisdom. His significant attributes are dexterity 18. He fights with a +1 battle axe and normal shield. He also carries a sax sword and has a bow and arrows. In his leather wallet he carries 42gp and a gem worth 100gp.*)

On his journey, his mast broke and he put in here. Unable to fix it on his own, he was attempting to signal passing boats. Barring that, he was going to walk down the coast to his cousin’s house. He has plenty to eat and offers the party the fire and food, mostly salted fish and beer.

Egil is well versed in these coastlands and freely tells the characters anything they want to know. In the course of the conversation he offers them supplies from his boat here and from the village of Skon (that is on their way) if they will help him fix his boat. They need only climb the mountains to find a suitable tree, cut it, limb it, and bring it down to the coast. He does mention that the Howe would no doubt have timber in it big enough to use, if not masts he could use, but he himself will not enter.

He then tells them the story of Holfgar’s Howe.

If the characters do not aid him he enjoys their company and their westward journey can continue. If the characters do offer they should be aware that it is a two-day hike to the nearest forest and at least four days back carrying the tree. The weather is bad and the trip dangerous. The Howe, on the other hand, offers booty as well timber for the boat.

If they opt to climb the mountain path to cut fresh timber, roll normal random encounters and carry on the adventure as normal. If they decide to enter the Howe, continue below.

HOLFGAR’S HOWE: ENTRANCE

Egil shows them a low indentation in the ground that leads underneath the Howe. It was made by the elemental lord when the Howe was created.

The entrance follows a low run that dips beneath the bottom of the Howe. Stone walls line the run until they come to an entryway fashioned of many flat stones, one stacked atop the other. This opens into a short five-foot corridor and ends in a huge flat stone that serves as a door. There are runes marked upon the door.

The Runes read: “*I Earagon waited here. May the dead find peace.*”

The stone blocks the entry way and is impossible to move from the inside. However, from the outside it can be rolled aside on a successful strength check (CL 12). It is heavy and defies easy movement. Any number of normal spells may open it, a *knock* spell or similar. A *charm of opening* serves as well of course; one was found in Izarian’s Paramour, Area 8E, the Chimera’s lair.

GREAT HALL

Once the door opens, a foul air spills out across the party. It reeks of decay and rot. The stench is overpowering and after two rounds, everyone with the exception of half-orcs has to make a successful constitution check (CL 5) or risk nausea for two to four rounds.

The hall consists of one huge room and one side room. The hall has several Areas that warrant their own exploration. The side room was the King's Chamber.

It is completely dark in the Howe, the only light being that which spill in through the door. The ceiling is over 100 feet high. Once within the hall, it looks much as it would in normal times with wooden walls fashioned from huge beams, a ceiling of similar beams crisscrossed for support. Several shuttered windows dot the walls here and there. The floor, however, is dirt.

AREA 1 GREAT HALL: The hall is dominated by a huge pillar that rises from the center of the room and spreads out in a many-fingered web of what appears to be timbers in the ceiling. These are in fact bones, and this is the boneraker, the collection of cursed souls that occupy the space.

Your light chases ancient shadows into the corners and crannies of this once opulent room; over a hundred feet long and half again as wide, the hall is walled in thick, round timbers. It is dominated by a misshapen pillar that looks more like an old tree than anything else with many finger-like roots snaking across the floor until they combine into tight cords, rise up from the floor, and scatter again, web-like, across the room. The tree, held together by mud and clay, glistens white here and there. All about the place lies debris of what was once furniture.

If the party inspect the pillar they notice that it consists of a very hard, white bark. Most will recognize this bark as looking very similar to bones; a successful wisdom check CL 2 reveals this, a successful check CL5 reveals they are actually bones wrapped in mud and clay.

Upon entering the room the boneraker begins to animate, though it takes a few rounds before it comes to life. When it does, it immediately attacks, pulling itself off the ceiling, winding itself up into a ball and attacking the characters.

BONERAKER (This evil creature's vital statistics are HD 6d8, AC 16, and HP 48. Its primary attributes are mental. It attacks with a slam attack for 1-10 points of damage. The boneraker is able to rejuvenate hit points at the rate of 1-8 hit points per round for 8 rounds of combat.)

AREA 2 THRONE: The throne sits on the far side of the room and has long since been destroyed, bits and pieces of it scattered throughout the back of the hall. The dais upon which it sat remains, sitting about four feet higher than the rest of the hall. There are more pieces of treasure and armor here than anywhere else in the room.

AREA 3 FLOOR: The room served as the sleeping quarters, kitchens, and eatery of an army of 50-75 men. Many tables and benches, now ruined, lie about as do a host of iron cooking utensils. These have sunk into the mud, though are easy enough to salvage. Everything one would need to set up large living quarters is here. There are also several choice timbers that would serve Egil for a mast.

Treasure: Scattered throughout the great hall are all manner of pieces of armor, shields, swords, axes, spears, helms, and the like. If the characters are careful and spend a great deal of time they can piece together four suits of good armor with shields and the like: chain/shield/helm, chain shirt/shield/helm, 4-in-1 ring mail/shield/helm and ring mail/shield/helm. They can also gather 1-8 axes, swords, and spears. They also find the following magic: +2 giant slayer longsword, handy haversack, bashing shield, a stone of alarm, and a sash of comprehend languages (see new magic items). They also find 1000gp in assorted coins and gems.

AREA 4 KINGS ROOM: This room is set aside, to the back and left. The door is open and within are the remains of an old bed, chest, a closet of sorts and other bric-a-brac. Earagon took all the Kings possessions to give to his son Dan when the time came. Where they went or if they were ever used is beyond the scope of this tale.

Egil thanks the party profusely for their aid and grants them small tokens of his appreciation. Each are given a hammer pendant with a rune on it. "Show these to the men of Skon and they will house you properly as friends and allies." He also promises to bring the tale of their deeds to the people of Holmgald so that their songs will be sung for years to come.

His word is true; if the characters should ever travel to Skon (a small land that lies in their line of march), and show the hammers, they are given free housing and food for up to a week. After that they begin to wear on their hosts. For more see Skon below.



DWARVES IN THE SAND (#4 ON MAP)



his encounter can occur from the sea or the land. If following the landward trail, the below description should be modified to accommodate the new approach. If coming from the previous adventure, Holfgar's Howe, the Captain of the Red Make must once again put in for water. He puts in for 2 days, allowing the characters to take a jaunt about and stretch their legs.

Before you, a short narrow peninsula juts out into the sea; a creek of fresh water cuts through the sand, spilling its precious wealth into the salty sea. Here, low sandy beaches give way to a small ridge where thick grass grows, which in turn gives way to broken, low-lying hills where giant larch mingle with thick barked yellow pines. All this lies at the very feet of the mighty Holmgrad Mountains, the snow-capped peaks of which vanish into heaven's clouds above. The air is clear and crisp and cool as it blows from the heights. It is truly the land of the gods, unspoiled by man or elf.

It is spoiled, however, by the Dwarf, Igundale, who lives in a small cave protected by a wooden palisade beneath the eaves of the larch and pine trees. Igundale is an elderly Dwarf who has lived in these inhospitable mountains for the better part of a century. Born a slave in the mines of Aufstrag he followed the indomitable Dolgon the Dwarf King in war and rebellion, gaining his freedom in the Trench Wars of those ancient days. Unlike many of his kin who came to people the halls of Grundliche Hohle Igundale swore off the world and all of its folk. With little but his armor, pack and weapons he set off to find himself a home far from the paths of the civilized world. After long days that stretched into years and many adventures the Dwarf came at last to the Holmgrad Mountains, and the small jutting peninsula he named Dun'sHolm, which is "Darkhome" in the Vulgate.

Igundale travels about the area, panning for gold- and the like. He spends a great deal of time in the palisade, where his main mine lies. When the party approaches he crawls up on the catwalk and greets them with guarded friendship. If they are threatening or act dangerous he waits his chance and slips out the back of the palisade with his treasure and flees up the coast. He keeps a small fishing boat for use in time of need. If the party treats with him he invites them in, offering them food, drink, and shelter. He is a little hungry for news from the outside world. He lets them stay for a week or so before he begins grumbling. At some point he offers them the deal below.

IGUNDALE (This chaotic good 8th level fighter's vital statistics are HD 8d10, HP 76, and AC 22. His primary attributes are strength and constitution. His significant attributes are strength 16, dexterity 14, constitution 16. In battle he wears full plate with a shield and carries a +2 battle axe. At times he wields a +1 bearded axe two handed. He possesses a heavy crossbow but is down to 15 bolts. His mining has been somewhat successful and he struck a vein of silver. He has extracted 16 bars of silver over the years. Each bar is worth 500gp.)



Inside the palisade are several simple stone structures: his one-floor house, the entrance to the mine, a forge, and a small covered store room. All these structures are connected by tunnels cleverly concealed beneath. There are several escape tunnels as well.

Igundale is well versed in the Lore of the runes for his father's father was a rune mark of the forge. He has picked up a bit of rune magic and practices the runeds on his armor and weapons. More importantly he keeps a small piece of parchment in a small cylinder around his neck. The scroll has the first stanzas of the Prophecy of the Rune Mark scribbled on it.

*And the Rune Mark shall come
Who with courage born of man
Must walk the tide of worlds
Entering the Great Empty
Speaking words of Power.*

*The Rune Mark must long endure
The suffering of Squandered words
For to rise above the Vulgate
Entering the Great Empty
A master of the Language of Gods*

From the will of Unklar's Iron



Here the parchment is torn away. The Dwarf knows of the parchment's value and is not adverse to parting with it. If he learns or suspects there is a rune mark in the party, he offers them a deal. His language is broken as he rarely speaks to people of any race.

“Hear me out and see what for wisdom is used. I’ve a treasure worth more than gold to the likes of you, but there be mountains above with monsters o-lore. I needs but them slain and the treasure is yours.”

For the past several years the old Dwarf has fought an ongoing battle with a rhemoraz worm, as they feed upon the same food source, the herds of yak and mountain goats. The worm itself is nestled in the mountains above and the Dwarf wishes for the party to hunt it down and kill it. He explains all this to the party and points them to the track the worm uses to cross the mountains. It leads, he explains, to a series of overhangs that house the beast.

REMORHAZ (This neutral creature’s vital statistics are HD 7d10, AC 20, and HP 48. Its primary attributes are mental. It attacks with a bite for 6d6 points of damage. It is able to swallow its victims whole. The worm radiates heat that can cause up to 5d8 points of damage and melt normal weapons.)

Treasure: The remorhaz has little in the way of treasure, for his hunting on the Roof of the World brought him little but goats and yak. However, some victims have fallen to his fangs. In his cave lies a +1 longsword, +2 chainmail, a blinding shield, as well as restorative ointment, a holy symbol to the Cobbler (god of courage and travelers, whose symbol is an elaborate X, narrow at the crossing, but flaring out upon each arm) that grants a +1 to any who wear it on all attribute checks, and a small box that contains a band of amber threads bound together. These *threads of law*.

If the party succeeds in killing the remorhaz, Igundale awards them the parchment with the prophecy. Also, he grants them each a necklace of bone links, finely crafted to resemble interlocking geometric shapes. Each holds a golden brooch with an emerald in it. They are his greatest creations, worth 1000gp apiece and granting the wearers an unusual amount of luck (+1 to all constitution saves).

IZARIAN'S PARAMOUR (#5 ON MAP)



zarian's Paramour is a much longer adventure, but picks up during the ocean voyage along the Gray Coast, after Dwarves in the Sand. It takes place in and around the delta of the Sorgon River and the town of Patradl. The Red Make continues her voyage, putting in at the town where the adventure begins.

A DIVINE BOAST

"At last the power becomes mine! I have searched for so long to have it. Now not only the Troll Lord will have the power to manipulate the powers on this plane! It is said that once you have acquired any of the runes, the power draws you towards the others!"

"I shall play my hand slowly, not to draw any attention too soon, but, I will succeed where others have failed. I will be patient and my powers will grow. Then will the great Unklar reward me when I return him to the world to confront his enemies."

"I need to pay homage to the horned one. I must have a pure blood sacrifice. Nothing would please him more than to give as sacrifice the blood of Ore-Tsar's finest, the young priestess Miradona. She is young and pure; we must have her."

The wizard's vile servant stretched his neck and scratched his hairline absentmindedly. "Alas, yes, my dread lord, now you will drink of the blood of the innocent, and laugh in the face of those who oppose you!"

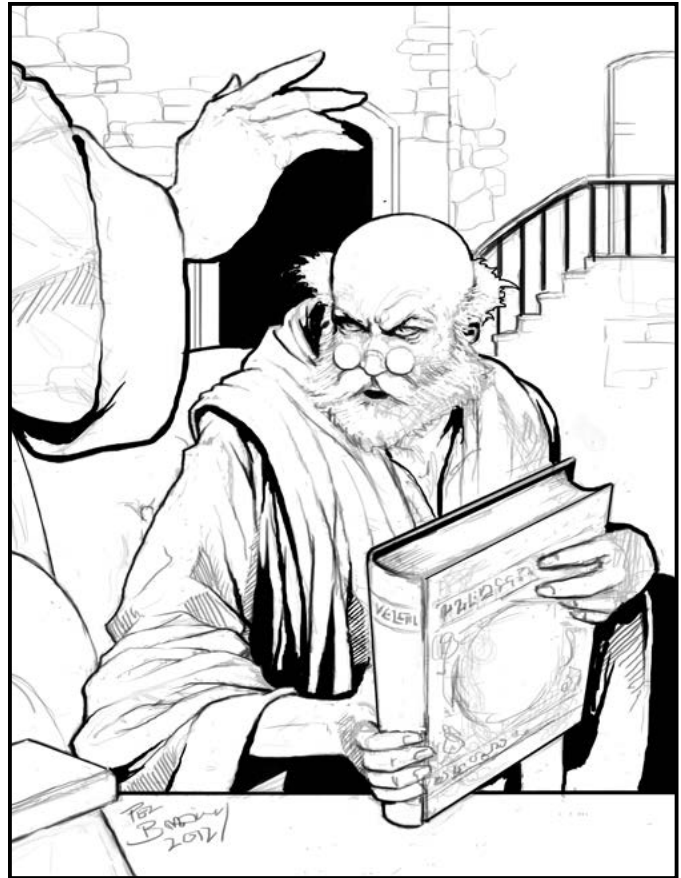
"Unklar shall soon return!"

BACKGROUND

A FOLLOWER'S ANSWER

After the fall of Unklar's reign, Izarian the wizard still held fast in the Gottland. He was a devout follower of the Horned God, and was grief stricken at Unklar's fall. He governed his land with an iron hand and managed to keep law within his domain. However, after years of brooding upon his reduced realm and fallen lord, Izarian grew angry. There must be something done to avenge his fallen lord and bring law back to the plane. He spent much time in study, bent over tombs of the ancients, scrying the stars, and pouring over scrolls and manuscripts, all in an attempt to find his long lost lord.

It was during these years that Izarian discovered the rune lore, the the spells crafted from the Language of Creation that allowed the wielder to command the magic of the All Father's creation. With these, Izarian would be able to return both law and his beloved lord to the land, and his dream would then be fulfilled. Using every bit of power and ability he possessed, Izarian found some of the runes in the mountains, far north in the Tenrai Deeps. These he treasured above all things, almost to the point of madness. The finding of these runes marked the beginning of the return of his dark lord, or so he hoped and believed.



THE FITTING SACRIFICE

Now that the power seemed to be in Izarian's grasp, he sought to pay homage to Unklar. No petty sacrifice for the Horned God would do; he needed something to gain his Lord's attention. The sacrifice must be a statement to the world itself, and be as monumental as the runes that had been recovered as well as the many others that time would deliver. The sacrifice should be of a divine nature.

The answer soon came to him. His spies in Ossford stated that a cleric and follower of the god Ore-Tsar, the Lady Miradona, would be building a temple in the city of Patradl. It was related to Izarian that the cleric was young and very beautiful. This offered Izarian an excellent opportunity, a "prize" that delivered itself. Izarian dispatched a group of his henchmen to bring the priestess to him. He imparted to the abductors that the job was to be done with much haste; waiting was not an option.

The city of Patradl was very excited to have the temple of Ore-Tsar. The first service was a great success but the joy proved short-lived for as it ended, the front door to the temple burst open and Izarian's henchman entered the hall. There was a brief fight, but being unarmed, Miradona could not do much since she was not prepared for battle. They took her from the hall and carried her to Izarian's tower in the west upon the Feador Plains.

When Izarian first laid eyes upon Miradona, he was instantly infatuated. He felt for the first time that which he had never felt before, love. For months he struggled with the feelings he had for

the cleric, but at last he came to realize that he must continue with his plan. If he could not possess her, at least he could give the object of his affection to his greatest love, the god Unklar.

When all was finally prepared for the sacrifice, he sent for Miradona. She prepared herself for what must come and when they came for her she fought them, calling upon the power of her god and fighting with desperation and determination. Izarian needed to sacrifice her alive, but in the battle her assailants were very rough with her. She had been struck many times to weaken her resolve, but she kept struggling. One last effort was made to break free, she was struck one last time in the face and this proved to be fatal. Her lifeless body fell to the floor.

The minions gathered the body and returned it to Izarian. Insane with rage, Izarian called upon dark sorcery and banished his guard to the halls of the Wretched Plains. Angry and heartbroken, he had the body removed to another part of his keep and prepared for burial. Now, not only had he lost the precious sacrifice to his god, but his love as well.

ORE-TSAR'S ANGER

Miradona was raised and sculpted for service in the church of Ore-Tsar. She was young and beloved of the god. Great plans had been made for this young cleric, but, she was the product of an untimely death at the hands of a great enemy. Now the lands responsible would feel loss and suffering.

Ore-Tsar gathered his power and laid such a curse upon the lands, such that all felt its sting. Black clouds gathered and a great storm of lightning descended upon the lands; fires burned in towns, fields, and forests. After the fire ravaged the land, the rains came; great torrents of rain saturated the area causing widespread flooding. The rains continued unabated and the lightning came in huge balls of terror, scattering what little people had built. The temperature held common and the rain never froze, but the lands wilted beneath the soggy embrace of the god's curse.

Since those days, all plant life has become brown and lifeless. No new plants have grown, no crops are there to harvest, and no flowers bloom to be seen or enjoyed. The landscape is quite desolate.

The curse carried to the people and the livestock as well, for no babes have been born, of any race or animal.

A call was sent out to the followers of Ore-Tsar to avenge the death of Miradona. From the area of Angouleme, the Knight Hospitaller Marc le Graf and a group of fellow knights answered the summons. They came to the northlands to avenge the priestess and set against the wizard. They hounded him for a long season, scattering his folk and slaying his minions. At last they cornered him in his tower. The battle and siege that followed was truly great. Before all was said and done, several of the knights were slain, the keep of Izarian was assailed and left in ruin, and its master and all of his followers had fallen.

The knights left victorious, celebrating for a while, for all thought for certain that the curse would be lifted. The knights

returned to their lands across the sea, but the curse remained, for the body of the priestess was not returned to Ore-Tsar, and that god looked no more upon the lands of her charge.

Thus things stand.

UPON THE NORTHERN SHORE

SAILING INTO THE CURSED LAND

The ship, the Red Make, and its captain Beritod carry the company across the Inner Sea with a crew of 10 aboard. Beritod seems perplexed at this group wanting to travel to this area in the north. Usually the only ones who do are either foolish treasure hunters who are often never heard from again, or those who go to sell their goods for outrageous prices. He is well versed in the story of the Priestess and Izarian; as a young man he was taken from his village in Patrodl and forced to serve as a galley slave, before Izarian's fall. If he finds out the purpose of their quest he offers them any information they seek, for he loves the land of his youth and would see the curse removed.

As you near the coast, black storm clouds cover the sky. Lightning flashes and thunder rumbles in the distance. There is a light but steady rain falling.

The lookout suddenly shouts that there is land ahead. Upon the distant horizon, small masses of land crop up. The captain says to the party that these are the small islands of the gulf, and that there are a great number of them. Many an unwary sailor has been slain in these waterways, so all had better keep their eyes open.

The first island is reached by mid-day. The water has become shallow and spotters have been placed in the front of the ship to watch for reefs or any obstacles. The going is slow. The ship has to change course twice because the way is not passable. By early evening, the ship has reached the last island, which lies a short distance before the entrance to the wide, slow-moving river Sorgon. The captain announces that he will drop anchor off the shore of this island and begin the journey upriver in the morning.

The night is very calm, with only a light rain. There is a slight breeze blowing, and the moon has broken through the clouds, its filtered light cutting the darkness. Late in the night, a loud disturbance comes from the landward side of the ship.

The crew is startled awake by a loud pounding noise on the side of the ship. When looking over the side into the water, a thin scaled creature is seen hammering with an axe on the side of the ship. At that same moment, a loud cry is heard as more of these creatures haul themselves over the side of the ship onto the deck. The creatures stand five feet tall, have yellow-green scales and some have crossbows in hand, but all have a wicked-looking long spear. The creatures with crossbows loose their bolts and the others attack with their spears.

Unbeknownst to the captain, he stopped the vessel directly over a hunting party of locathah. These creatures are attacking to damage the ship (not to sink it) and kill or capture the crew (hoping for ransom). The locathah attack with spears or javelins, hurling the weapons and dropping back overboard to refresh in the water, retrieve more weapons, and come back up. They will fight as long as it is to their advantage, but should the fight go badly for them, they will attempt to flee.

LOCATHAH (10-20): *(These neutral creatures' vital statistics are HD 2d8, HP varies, and AC 14. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a weapon for 1d6 or 1d8 points of damage. They always base their attacks around the water.)*

TO PATRODL

The following morning, once again the water is calm. Strangely enough, it is not raining. The captain seems perplexed by this. If asked, he relates to the party that it has been constantly raining in the area for five years, and even when he has happened anywhere near the coast it has been so. That being said, the order to raise anchor and get underway is given.

Within three hours time, the ship comes to the large waterway that empties into the gulf. The course is changed to move up the Sorgon River. This waterway has very dark, murky waters. They almost have a foul odor to them. It seems as though the evil of former days runs thick in the water. The waters are very deep from the rains of the past several years.

The captain remarks that he must stop off in the town Patrodl before he can take them up the Sorgon River where the stronghold of Izarian lies. The waterway is wide and deep and he promises to take them to the mouth of the Black River. It's up that waterway that the stronghold lies.

PATRODL

The town of Patrodl holds the first friendly seaport near to Gottland. It lies upon the western shore of the Gray Coast on the islands of the river delta. It is walled with a short 12-foot wall, but one that is 10 feet at the base. The houses are stone with thatched roofs and the streets are muddy and unpaved. No castle sits in the town, but a rather large residence in the town's center houses the Lords of Patrodl. The town is dirty and poor.

It was a very busy trade town in normal times. Business now borders on madness as few merchants visit the city, for the land yields little in trade. Presently the town is filled with local chiefs, traders, and people from all over the surrounding country hoping to gain supplies and foodstuffs they need for their people. They eagerly await incoming ships.

Unless the characters really wish to, there is no need for them to stay in Patrodl for any more than one night. The ship has some cargo to offload and is leaving the following morning. There are several taverns and inns on the town square, and a hostel for the poorer travelers in the northern city. The hostel offers good beer and a very friendly atmosphere.

Should the characters want to leave the ship for the evening, there is a traders shop with all kinds of equipment (double the normal price), an armorer/weaponsmith shop (double the normal price), an inn, and several other small shops all on the square.

If the character(s) leave the ship, there is an old beggar sitting on the docks by the ship.

The beggar is very old, and her skin mostly wrinkled. She is sitting on the ground, a worn dark cloak pulled around her. Even though the hood is pulled up, it is clear she has bright grey eyes and no teeth. The bulge of a hump can be seen on her upper back, and the skinny arms appear to have sores upon them as she holds up her cup.

If the characters place alms in her cup, she says:

"Thank ya kind people. This land ain't much of a kind place these days. Might be, though, some day, if them bones of the Miradona is rightly covered."

Cackling, she stands up, saying nothing more, and walks away - literally disappearing into the crowd.

THE ROAD TO THE STRONGHOLD

On the ship the day passes pleasantly and the weather remains calm. It seems the further west the ship travels, the clearer the sky becomes. The air is slowly gaining more of a chill to it. This also seems to have perplexed the captain. If asked he will relate to the party that the weather has been so mild for this area over the past five years, and now the air seems to revert to its normal state.

Near nightfall, the captain anchors the ship near the northern bank of the river. He sends a couple of his men onto shore to see if they can hunt some game for the evening meal. It seems that they are gone for a short period of time when they return with a young boy who is terribly wounded.

The boy tells that he and his family were taken by a large horned creature and some armored men. The captain listens in and informs the party that it sounds like a press gang. These groups roam the land and try to force others into the ranks of the followers of Unklar. The horned creature, he says, may be what is called an Ungern. The people who are captured will be killed if they resist too heavily. The boy at that point becomes nearly hysterical and begs for help for his family.

If the party should decide not to help the boy's family, just resume the journey on the following morning. If they decide to help, they can follow the trail back to a roadside shrine where the press gang attacked about one hour previously.

It takes a little over an hour for the party to reach the area where the boy was found. The ground is saturated with small pools of water standing everywhere. It is very easy to backtrack the direction the boy had come. Continuing west, the sounds of laughter come from ahead. The ground starts to rise, and there is very little standing water here.

At the top of the rise stands a large glade with a shrine and a garden. The rain does not seem to have fallen within the glade. It is quite dry and seems refreshing. Within the garden are three travelers, two males and a female. All three are seated upon the ground with their hands bound by rope, and their ankles bearing leg irons. Standing nearby is a human dressed in scale armor holding a crossbow with a broad sword and dagger on his belt. Another human, armed and armored in like fashion, has reached into his pack and is now eating some dry rations. Your attention is drawn, however, to a creature that has just finished hacking down the pole that holds the symbol of the goddess Ore-Tsar with a bardiche. The creature stands about six feet tall with dark red skin. Its hands are clawed, and its feet are cloven hooves. The head is wolf-like, with a long, tooth-filled snout. Growing out of its back and over its brow are long, black horns.

You know that this undoubtedly is one of the Ungern, and that this band is a press gang.

CK's Note: If the fight proves too easy for the characters, place two more Ungern within the shrine. They attack immediately.

UNGERN, 1-3 (These lawful evil creatures' vital statistics are HD 2d8, AC 16 and HP 13, 12, 12, and 9. Their primary attributes are physical. They can attack with weapons or with 2 claws for 1-2 or gore for 1-6+2 points of damage. They each carry a +1 chain coat, bardiche, dagger and 4-40gp worth of jewelry and coin.)

HUMANS, 2 (These neutral, 1st level fighters' vital statistics are HD 5, AC 15, and HP 5 each. Their primary attributes are strength, constitution, and dexterity. Their significant attributes are strength, 12. They carry spears (1d6), longswords (1d8), and light crossbows (1d4). They each have a mail shirt and a small iron shield, small helm, spear, longsword, dagger, light crossbow with 12 bolts, and 5gp.)

Once the press gang is defeated or chased away, and the prisoners released, they fall upon their saviors with many thanks. The woman, however, becomes strangely removed and after a moment calms and look upon the players with a warm light; she says the following:

"It is apparent that the good of the land has not been entirely snuffed out. If you would have this land healed to its former state, this is what you must do. Journey into what was once the stronghold of the evil Izarian. Here you must search for and recover the remains of the priestess Miradona. If you are successful in your endeavor, then make a sacrifice to Ore-Tsar and you will receive further inspiration.

"Today you have aided the cause of Ore-Tsar. Drink from the urn within the shrine and you will feel refreshed and be healed."

The shrine is little more than a dirt hillock into which a door has been carved. Stone pillars and a stone lintel front the shrine, though these have been damaged and defaced. Inside there sits a small altar upon which sits an urn. Here is where people make sacrifices to Ore-Tsar.

Allow each player to drink from the urn; any who drink from it heal 8 hit points as if touched with a *cure light wounds* spell. Only one drink will work on each player. If anyone takes more than one drink, the effect will be the same as drinking water.

Should any of the players repair the pole that bore the symbol of Ore-Tsar, award them 50 experience points.

Once back upon the ship, the family is reunited and are happy seeing that the youngest son is still alive. They agree to join on and help as crew until the ship returns to port. This night is definitely the clearest seen by any in this area in the last five years. There is a rumor that the captain feels this to be the guidance of Ore-Tsar, which seems to the crew very strange, for the captain is not known as a religious man.

The ship sets off early the next morning. It is a partly cloudy day and is the coolest day yet. There is a sharp bite in the air, and a fresh breeze blowing. The water itself even looks a little clearer. The general mood of the crew seems to be of high spirits.

THE STRONGHOLD OF IZARIAN

The ship moves up river until just after noon, when the smaller Black river is reached. This waterway spills into the Sorgon, creating a shallow lake. A track is spotted on the north bank leading off into the Feador Plains. The order is given to drop anchor, and a longboat is lowered into the water, made ready to transport the characters to the shore. Beritod wishes the party well and tells them he will remain anchored here for five days, but after that he will assume them dead and return to the sea.

It is a two-day journey up the road to the Stronghold, however, the plains are considered dangerous and the chances of an encounter great. For each day the characters spend in the open, camping, recuperating for battle, or even if the CK desires an encounter, roll 6d12. A roll of 1 leads to an encounter.

WANDERING ENCOUNTER CHART AREA 1

1. 1-2 Ungern
2. 1-4 Wolves
3. 4-8 Orcs
4. 1-3 Ogres
5. 2-5 Hlobane Orcs
6. 2-4 Boar
7. 4 Shocker Lizards
8. 2 Vargouille
9. 1 Troll
10. 1 Sea Hag
11. 1 Manticore
12. 1 Gray Ooze

Once upon the road, the temperature is still rather cool, but a dense fog lies over the dry plains. The road itself winds through the grasslands.

THE STRONGHOLD

The road opens onto a large landing with three walkways leading to it. The whole compound stands out in a wide flat section of the Black River, built on a series of mounds connected by stone causeways. Portions of the Stronghold are walled. The river itself creates an effective moat around the entire complex.

There are four structures built outside of the compound's walls, two on small islands and two in the water. The Stronghold itself is walled and built behind these, with three gated entrances. The walls are 25 feet in height. The gates are all double iron doors with metal portcullis lowered before them. The water which surrounds the structure is 10 feet deep.

The southern walkway is 20 feet wide, and goes for 70 until it comes to a drawbridge that bars the way to the doors. The northern walkway is 10 feet wide, and goes for 80 feet before opening onto what was once a landing that connected it to the structure. It has long since rotted away, leaving a narrow framework of the landing. On the left side of the landing, where once a small drawbridge rested, there is a 10-foot space between the landing and another walkway that leads to one of the four structures outside of the Stronghold. The center walkway is 10-foot wide, and runs for 30 feet before coming to an open drawbridge (see map for details).

THE OUTBUILDINGS

AREA 1: Here is a small island that houses a 20-foot tall structure with walls on the sides but open on the front and the back. There are walkways that lead off to the right and left, and to the center of the structure. The structure once served as a guard house, but there is little here now but for ruined furnishings. Mold creeps up the sides of the walls, gathering in huge black patches in the corners of the room. Everything is slick and damp.

Area 1a: The center pathway continues for 50 feet, but is missing a 10-foot section, about 20 feet out. The landing at the end is 30-foot square. In the middle is a statue of an Ungern holding a large crescent moon above its head. The 20-foot pathway that once led to the main structure is no longer there. If the players come onto the landing, the Ungern animates and attack the party.

UNGERN, 1 (These lawful evil creatures' vital statistics are HD 2d8, AC 16, and HP16. Their primary attributes are physical. They can attack with weapons or with 2 claws for 1-2 or gore for 1-6 +2 points of damage. They each carry a +1 chain coat, bardiche, dagger and 4-40gp worth of jewelry and coin.)

AREA 2: The walkway on the left leads to the second structure, a gatehouse seemingly in ruin. The building is a single story structure. The doorway is open, and is apparent that the door was long ago ripped from its hinges. Inside is one large open

room. The floor is badly rotted, exposing the water below. There are several shuttered windows within. On the far wall, there is another open doorway which leads to a drawbridge that blocks easy passage to the compound beyond.

AREA 3: The walkway on the right leads to the second island. The structure is a single story, and appears to be well kept. There is one door which faces the away from the Stronghold, with a window in each of the other three walls. The door is locked (CL 3). The smell inside is horrid, indicating that this place has recently been used. The remains of dead fish, frogs, and many other animals cover the floor. The only items in the room are a large, scarred, and stained table standing on a rough, filthy piece of carpet. A successful search (CL 2) shows that there is a strange but slight bulge beneath the rug. When inspected, underneath a section of cut carpet is a trap door that leads to **Level 1, Area 1**.

THE COMPOUND

AREA 4A: Here stands a small tool room within the stables. There a few rotten ropes, rusted hammers, and axe heads within.

AREA 4B: This area brings you to the stables; old straw lines the stone floor. There are 10 stalls lining the wall next to the tool room. In the back corner, across from the stalls, there is a small forge, a large anvil, and an empty water trough.

SHADOW (This chaotic evil creature's vital statistics are HD 3d12, HP 15, and AC 13. Their primary attributes are mental. They attack with an incorporeal touch for 1d4 points of damage. They can cause strength drain. They have darkvision (60 feet), are able to blend with their environment but have sunlight vulnerability.)

AREA 5A: Guard Sleeping Quarters – Here are the shattered remains of a wardrobe, a broken chair and a dozen rotting rope-lined beds. There is a door to the outside, and another to an interior room.

AREA 5B: Interior Passageway - Connects **Areas 6 and 7**. Just inside the exterior door are two tables, eight rotting chairs and a fireplace. A successful search check (CL 5) reveals a trap door set in the floor next to Area 6 (see **Level 1, Area 6**).

AREA 5C: Bugbear's Room - Dirty furs and bones line the floor.

BUGBEARS X 3 (These chaotic evil creatures' vital statistics are HD 3d8, HP 17, 15, 13, and AC 17. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack by weapon and do the appropriate weapon damage. They have darkvision and are very able to avoid hunters and trackers.)

Their treasure consists of two potions of cure serious wounds, potion of spider climb, +1 small steel shield, and 78gp.

AREA 6A: Temple Vestment Chamber - Hooks upon the walls hold several old sets of robes emblazoned with the crescent moon of Unklar. There is a tarnished candle holder on each end of the room. A successful search (CL 5) reveals a secret door (see **Level 1, Area 13a**).

AREA 6B: Temple Vestment Chamber - Hooks upon the walls hold several old sets of robes emblazoned with the crescent moon of Unklar. There is a tarnished candle holder on each end of the room.

AREA 6C: Temple of Unklar - This is a large open room with benches lining the walls. At the back of the chamber is a two-foot high dais with stone altar on top. There is a tapestry on the left wall of Unklar sitting on his throne in Aufstrag. On the right wall is a tapestry of Unklar reshaping the world, and behind the altar Unklar holds the Krummelvole (Unklar's crown of power) high.

A darkmantle has settled in the shadows over the altar.

DARKMANTLE (2-5): *(These neutral creatures' vital statistics are HD 1d10, HP 5, and AC 17. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 2d4 points of damage or a constriction attack for 1d4 points of damage. They are able to see in darkness, and have an improved grab attack that leads to constriction. They have 90 feet blindsight.)*

AREA 7: Storehouse - This building is evidently the former main storehouse of the compound. There are many old crates and barrels that were long ago emptied and broken that now lay scattered across the floor. Also the remains of burlap bags and spent torches are here.

AREA 8A: This is the entrance corridor to Izarian's main hall.

AREA 8B: A plain waiting chamber with benches lining the walls.

AREA 8C: A plain waiting chamber with benches lining the walls.

AREA 8D: This is a small room with stairs leading down (see Level 1, Area 18).

AREA 8E: Izarian's Main Hall - From the double doors that enter this room, a broken wooden and iron throne stands on a stone dais directly across the hall. Dozens of broken chairs are scattered about, and an eight-foot golden chandelier has broken away from its holding in the ceiling and now lies in the middle of the floor. No other wall hangings or decorations are seen. The door to the right of the entrance is held with the spell *arcane lock* (*dispel magic* CL 4) or it can be broken down on a successful strength check (CL 2). The small closet on the left side of the entrance opens to an area with an iron ladder going up (see **Area 8f**).

Two lesser chimaeras have taken up residence in all the ruin and devastation. They are nesting behind the throne. As soon as the party enters the beasts begin to slink from behind the throne, one on either side.

CHIMAERA, LESSER (1-2): *(These neutral evil creatures' vital statistics are HD 3d8, HP varies, and AC 14. Their primary attributes are mental. They attack with a bite for 1d6 points of damage, 2 claws for 1d4 points of damage, and a tail for 1d3 points of damage. The tail has a poison stinger that causes loss of 1-2 points of dexterity in the round after being stung and 1d4 points of strength in the next round. A successful constitution save negates the poison.)*

The chimaeras have amassed a small treasure that they have heaped behind the throne; it consists of rogues tools +1, +1 dagger of venom, chime of opening, and 150gp in assorted coin.

AREA 8F: Izarian's Residence - A set of steps leads from the Main Hall up to the only 2nd story room. There is nothing in the room but black ash covering the floor, walls, and ceiling. The four windows are all broken out, and part of the ceiling is missing.

AREA 9: This is a well; it is still serviceable. The water is surprisingly fresh.

AREA 10 AND 11: Here are silos, half full of rotted grain. There is nothing of value or interest here.

DUNGEON - LEVEL 1

AREA 1: Stairs lead down into what appears to be an empty room. There is a secret door at the back of the room, behind the stairs (CL 6).

AREA 2: A narrow corridor runs 140 feet to **Area 3**. It is five feet wide and damp within.

AREA 3A: The passageway opens into a cross corridor 10 feet wide. This corridor makes a rough square. There are two doors on the back wall. Neither of these are locked. An opening in the back corner leads to another passageway.

AREA 3B: Just inside and to the right there is a wall. This opens into a room with several broken chairs and barrels. Further inspection will reveal that some of the barrels are not very old. There is a secret door in the wall opposite the entrance (search CL 3).

AREA 4A: This is a large, well lit room. The smell of cooking meat is almost overpowering. A table with a platter of roasted meat of some type and tankards of drink is placed in the center of the room. Along the right wall are four barrels, and further back in an inset in the wall is a pile of fire wood, standing three feet high. There is a doorway on the left wall, and an opening to another chamber straight back. Sitting around the table are Hlobane Orcs, which stand immediately when they see the players.

On the right wall on the other side of the barrels is a secret door (search CL 3).

ORCS, HLOBANE, 4 *(These lawful evil creatures' vital statistics are HD 2d10, AC 16, and HP varies. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with weapon with a +1 to hit or damage. They prefer cleaving weapons, such as axes, bardiches, and halberds. They are very organized and never act independently, always working to support the troop with which they go to battle. The Orc leader has a gold armband worth 125gp. Otherwise each Hlobane carries 2-12 gold and 5-20sp.)*

AREA 4B: This apparently is the creature's cooking/sleeping chamber. There is a fireplace on the wall opposite the entrance, and a small pile of wood piled to its right. On the edge of the fireplace sets an iron kettle of warm stew. Various furs line the sides of the room. In here, also, is a *battle axe* +2, and a *chainshirt* +2.

AREA 5: A passageway 10 feet wide ends at a secret door that leads into **Area 3b**, and at the other end a door that leads to **Area 6** which is locked (open locks CL 5, break down the door CL 3, hardness 5, HP 20). As the players are turning left down the passage, there is a double blade trap that may be activated.

Double Blade Trap: At CL 2, it strikes with a +8; find and remove traps (CL 4) to clear.

The passageway branches also lead to the secret door in **Area 4a**. A rust monster has taken up residence here. It clings to the ceiling, its long antennae stretched down, feeling and listening for prey.

RUST MONSTER (*This neutral creature's vital statistics are HD 5d8, HP 19, and AC 18. Its primary attributes are physical. It attacks with a touch attack that destroys metal equipment. The rust monster eats the metal, leaving the flesh unharmed.*)

AREA 6: Supply Room - This long room holds the supplies for the dungeon. There are barrels of ale, oil, grain, dried fruits and meats, bundles of torches, and boxes of loose furs and cloaks. Stacks of spears litter the floor with three large barrels holding bolts, and racks on the walls hold battle axes, short swords, and heavy crossbows. There are four doors in this room which lead to **Areas 5, 7, 8 and 9**. Only the door to **Area 5** is locked (open locks CL 5, break down the door CL 3, hardness 5, HP 20).

AREA 7: This small carpeted room is a chapel to the god Unklar. There is an altar in the inset at the back of the room.

AREA 8: Inside this room there appears to be a large well. The well actually happens to be a mimic.

MIMIC (*This neutral creature's vital statistics are HD 7d8, AC 15, and HP 35. Its primary attributes are physical. It attacks with a slam attack for 3d4 points of damage. It has darkvision (60 feet), the ability to crush an opponent and mimic shape. Refer to the Monsters & Treasure book for details.*)

AREA 9: A 10-foot passageway connects **Areas 4a and 6**. Branching off from this passage is another that ends with a closed portcullis blocking the way. There is a crank on the wall (from area **Area 9** on the left side and from area **Area 10** on the right) which will raise the portcullis.

AREA 10: This is a short passageway connecting **Areas 9 and 10**.

AREA 11: Here is a chamber, rounded at the corners. The floor is a little rough in this room, and there are two pits in the floor. These are to the right and the left of the main walkway through. There is a large cruel face carved in the wall on the opposite end of the chamber, and the passage passes right through the mouth.

Spiked Pit Trap (40 feet deep): Anyone who falls into the pit must make a successful dexterity check (CL 3) or take 2d6 points of damage. They save for half. A find and remove traps (CL 4) allows the party to pass safely.

AREA 12: Short passageway connecting **Areas 11 and 13a** is found here.

AREA 13A: This is a large room below the temple. In the center are stairways that come down from a trap door in the ceiling (see **The Compound Area 6a**). Next to the foot of the stairs, on either side, are columns. There are two doors on the wall to the right, and at the rear of the chamber there are two openings on either side of the chamber. There is a secret door which leads to **Area 14** (search CL 3).

AREA 13B: Here is a circle corridor that connects on either end of **Area 13a**. The entrances are five feet wide but expand out to a 10-foot wide corridor. At the very back of the corridor, there is an entrance that has been bricked up (one foot thick, strength check CL 3 to break down). This leads to **Level 1 Area 17**.

AREA 14: Priests' Secret Chamber - There are four wall sconces in this room and carpeting covers the floor. On the wall to the left of the entrance are wall pegs holding silver and gold holy symbols of Unklar (five each). Facing the entrance against the back wall is a large iron bound trunk which is locked (CL 4). Within the trunk is a +1 *shock mace*. This is an evil weapon, which bears the crescent moon of Unklar upon it. If one who is of good alignment picks up the weapon, he will suffer 1d8 points of damage (no warning or save) per round the weapon is held. No damage will be suffered by one of neutral or evil alignment, and they will be able to use the weapon with all of its bonuses.

AREA 15: Sleep Chamber - Inside are the broken remains of several beds, a couple of tables, and some wardrobes.

AREA 16: Sleep Chamber - Inside are the broken remains of several beds, a couple of tables, and some wardrobes.

AREA 17: This is a 10-foot wide passageway connecting **Area 13b** and **Area 18**. The door at the end leading to **Area 18** is locked (CL 3).

AREA 18: This large room has a stairway in the middle of the floor which goes up to a trap door (see **Area 8d**). There are two secret doors in this chamber, one (wisdom check, CL 3) which goes to **Area 19**, and one (CL 2) which goes to **Area 21**. There are two doors here as well. One goes to **Area 20** which has the spell *arcane lock* upon it (*dispel magic* CL 4). The other goes to **Area 17**. There is a trap in front of this door.

Spiked Pit Trap (40 feet deep): Anyone who falls into the pit must make a successful dexterity check (CL 3) or take 2d6 points of damage. They save for half. A find and remove traps (CL 4) allows the party to pass safely.

AREA 19: Secret Holding Chamber - There are many different sizes of cages within this room. Here lies the decayed remains of an infant red dragon, an elf, a salamander, a halfling, a dwarf, several male and female human infants, and on a stone table, the mostly dissected form of a succubus.

AREA 20: Izarian's Private Chamber - Here Izarian made his last stand against the forces of Ore-Tsar. There is nothing in the room but black ash covering the floor, walls, and ceiling. Anyone entering the room must make a constitution save (CL 5), or fall under the effects of a *suggestion* spell, and attempt to flee the stronghold for 1d10 rounds.

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AREA 21: As the players turn left down the passage, there is a double blade trap that may be activated.

Double Blade Trap: At CL 2, it strikes with a +8; find and remove traps (CL 4) to clear.

AREA 22: This open room has tapestries on three walls, and the entrance on the fourth wall. Actually, on the wall to the right of the entrance lies a secret door (CL 4), and a floor trap is in the middle of the room. If the floor trap is activated, the player will fall into the floor, and then be *teleported*, as the spell, to the river where the trek to the Stronghold was begun.

Teleporting Floor Trap: Anyone who looks in the pool must make a successful dexterity save to avoid the effects of the pool (CL 5). If they fail, they are teleported.

AREA 23: A slanting, curving passage leads from level one to level two.

DUNGEON - LEVEL 2

AREA 24: A passage leads to areas multiple directions but toward Area 26 there is a trap.

Double Blade Trap: At CL 2, it strikes with a +8; find and remove traps (CL 4) to clear.

AREA 25: This passage continues on and connects with the back side of Area 30. There is a long pool that runs 60 feet down the corridor with one-foot wide ledges on either side that are very slick. If any player touches the water, they are *teleported*, as the spell, to the river where the trek to the Stronghold was begun. As the players are turning left down the passage to area Area 30, there is a double blade trap that may be activated.

Teleporting Pool Trap: Anyone who looks in the pool must make successful dexterity save to avoid the effects of the pool (CL 5). If they fail they are teleported.

Double Blade Trap: At CL 2, it strikes with a +8; find and remove traps (CL 4) to clear.

AREA 26: Izarian's Laboratory – The room is in shambles. Some type of battle happened here long ago. Broken equipment lies all about with burn marks on the wall and the like. There is nothing of value here.

AREA 27: This is a small room with an iron candle stand against either side wall, and a large iron-bound trunk against the back wall.

The trunk is not locked, and within it is 100pp, 1000gp and 3 emeralds worth 100gp each.

AREA 28: Here is a small room with an alcove that has a stone shrine to the god Unklar. Resting on the shrine is a wooden box with a rune inscribed on it.

The box is small, deep red, and made of a fine grained wood. The hinges and latch are gold, decorative and exquisitely delicate. A series of glyphs are engraved on the lid. It is light, obviously made of cherry.

If the box is opened:

The box itself is lined in dark red velvet. In the center of the box is a small raised hump with a rune engraved upon it. All about the hump lies a fine sand.

Any rune mark in the party is likely to know the name of the rune he is looking at, but in any case muttering the words "roan at Alenderde gorth" activates the magic of the rune dust.

Upon uttering the words, the sand begins to gently swirl. It circles the small hump in gentle motions, rising with each circumnavigation. At last the whole of it hovers in the air above the box. Slowly it unfurls into the shape of a piece of parchment.

The box is a magical box and the sand within it contains the rune of *dimension sight*.

AREA 29: A small room lined with shelves. The shelves are lined with jars, some broken, with dried and decayed spell components. None are of any use. The only objects of value here are three scrolls in bone scroll cases, and three *potions of cure serious wounds*. There is one scroll and potion each in a separate leather pouch, with a word in the orcish tongue scrawled on it, meaning "scout."

Scroll 1: 1st level - *Change Self, Mage Armor, Summon Monster I.*

Scroll 2: 2nd level - *Fog Cloud, Hideous Laughter, Monster Summoning II.*

Scroll 3: 3rd level - *Displacement, Monster Summoning III, Wind Wall.*

AREA 30: There is nothing in this room. There is a secret door in this room, search (CL 3), that leads to Area 31.

There are, however, several centipedes that have taken up residence in this hall. They have wormed their way through the ceiling to the hallway where they dwell. After four rounds of being in the room, the centipedes attack, dropping from the ceiling to the floor or onto the characters.

CENTIPEDES, GIANT (*These neutral creatures' vital statistics are HD 1d6, HP 3, 4, 5, and AC 14. Their prime attributes are physical. They attack with a bite that inflicts 1d4 points of damage plus a poison that requires a constitution save or become incapacitated for 1d4 turns.*)

AREA 31: Within this chamber lies the whole, undecomposed body of Miradona. The room is carpeted and she lies on a large bed in the center of the room. The room is lit by a globe in the ceiling (*continual flame*). She is clothed in a simple white robe, with a golden chain attached to her holy symbol, the Wheel of Ore-Tsar.

As the characters enter the room, the globe in the ceiling dims. A soft white light appears over the bed and an apparition speaks to the party.

I have been sent by the god Ore-Tsar. Take the body of Miradona to Patrodl which lies at the foot of the Dwarven Kingdom of Roheisen Hohle. Here, you are to place the body in the courtyard where I, Philip the Guileless, first spoke to the people of Ore-Tsar. You must get the body there to break the curse on this land!

The vision then disappears.

PATRODL

Once aboard the Red Make, Beritod is told of the next destination and the ship is quickly underway. The clouds are growing much heavier and darker, and it is beginning to snow.

During the journey the air becomes much colder, returning to its normal state. There is a strong wind blowing and the ship makes good time on its return journey to Patrodl. The journey is peaceful for the next few days, unless the CK wishes to stir up the encounters.

The ship comes safely into the bay and anchors at Patrodl. There a group of 12 clerics meet the party, and with them they have a coach with four horses. Sitting just next to the coach is an ornately carved casket. The leader of the group, Gerard, tells the party to place Miradona within the casket.

One cleric takes up a standard bearing the symbol of Ore-Tsar and leads the coach into Patrodl.

The coach is led to the center of the city, where there is a large courtyard, and in the middle is the statue of Philip the Guileless, a hero of Ore-Tsar. The casket is removed from the coach, and Gerard climbs the steps and mounts the base of the statue. A general blessing is given in the name of Ore-Tsar, and then the accounts of the life of Miradona are spoken aloud. The people of Patrodl are given a few short minutes to view the body of the deceased cleric, and then the casket is carried into the church at the back of the courtyard.

REWARDS

Gerard hails the party and invites them into the church. Once inside he leads them to his study, and bids them to be seated.

We of Ore-Tsar are most grateful for what you have accomplished. What you have done, we realize has been no small feat. Indeed it has been a great undertaking, for you have not only returned Miradona from the clutches of the horned god's minions, but in doing so you have broken the curse that has filled the land of Holmgald and the surrounding lands for some time. So, enjoy some of the wine here and you will receive your rewards.

With that Gerard exits the room. Two clerics enter a few minutes later, bearing a wooden chest. Within the chest are 20 platinum pieces for each member of the party, as well as a writ for each which is good for lodging anywhere there is a church of Ore-Tsar.

The players are all healed of any wounds they have. They are also given a place to stay within the inn, The Golden Harvest, for one week. This includes all the food and drink they need or want.

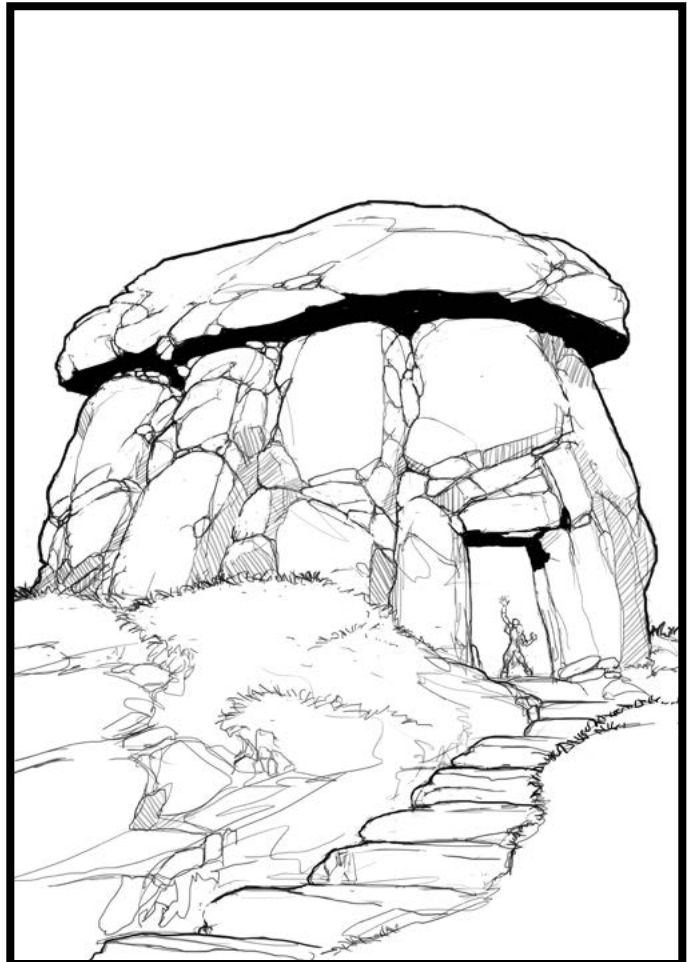
LEAVING PATRODL

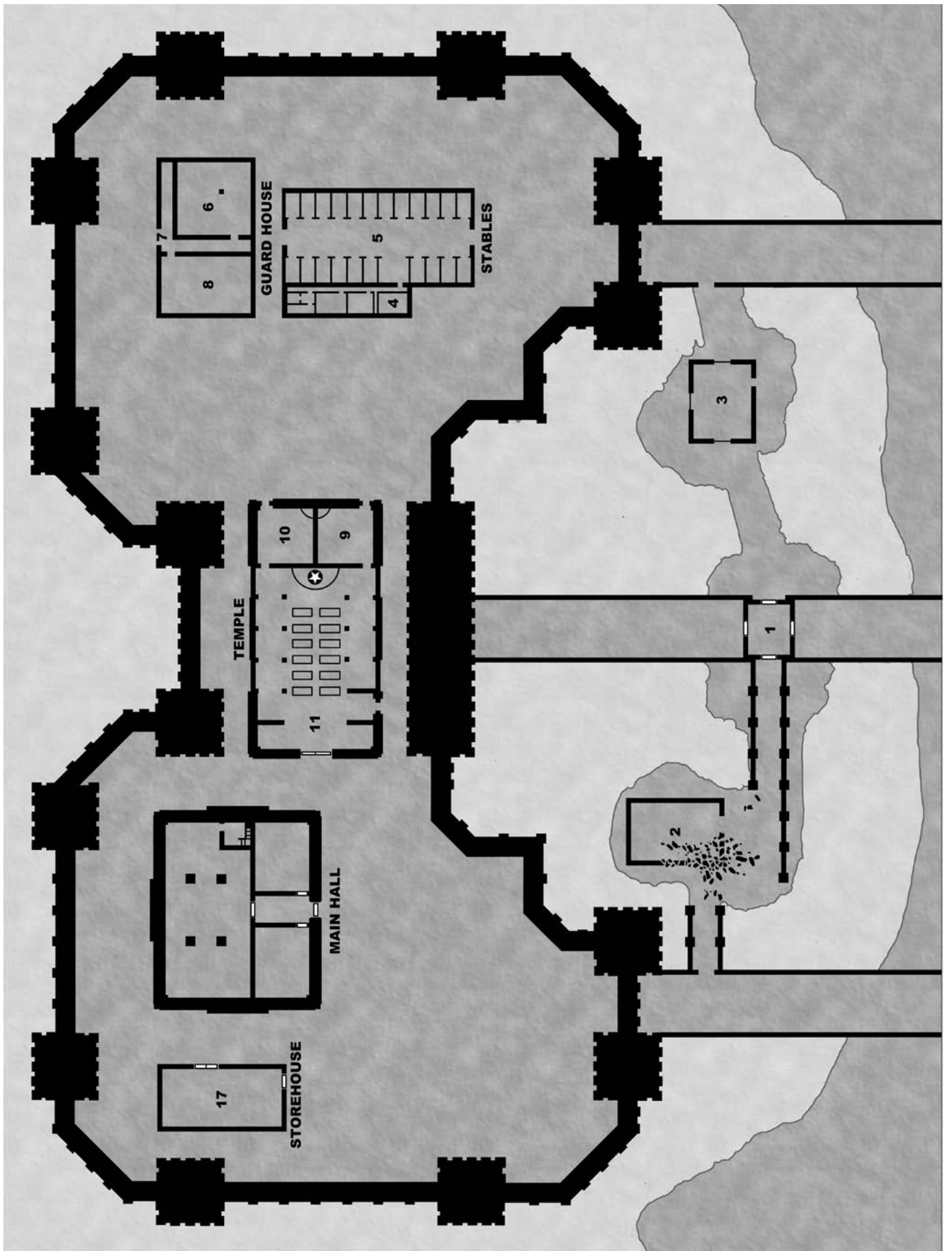
Gerard calls the party to another meeting and explains the following.

A local man, something of an antiquarian, Briesach, has gone missing. His servant called our attention to it, remarking that he began babbling about the return of the horned god just before he went missing. He mentioned something about a runic language, magical scripts and the like. He said he was looking for something called the winter rune.

We would like this man tracked down and returned to Patrodl if possible, so that we might question him.

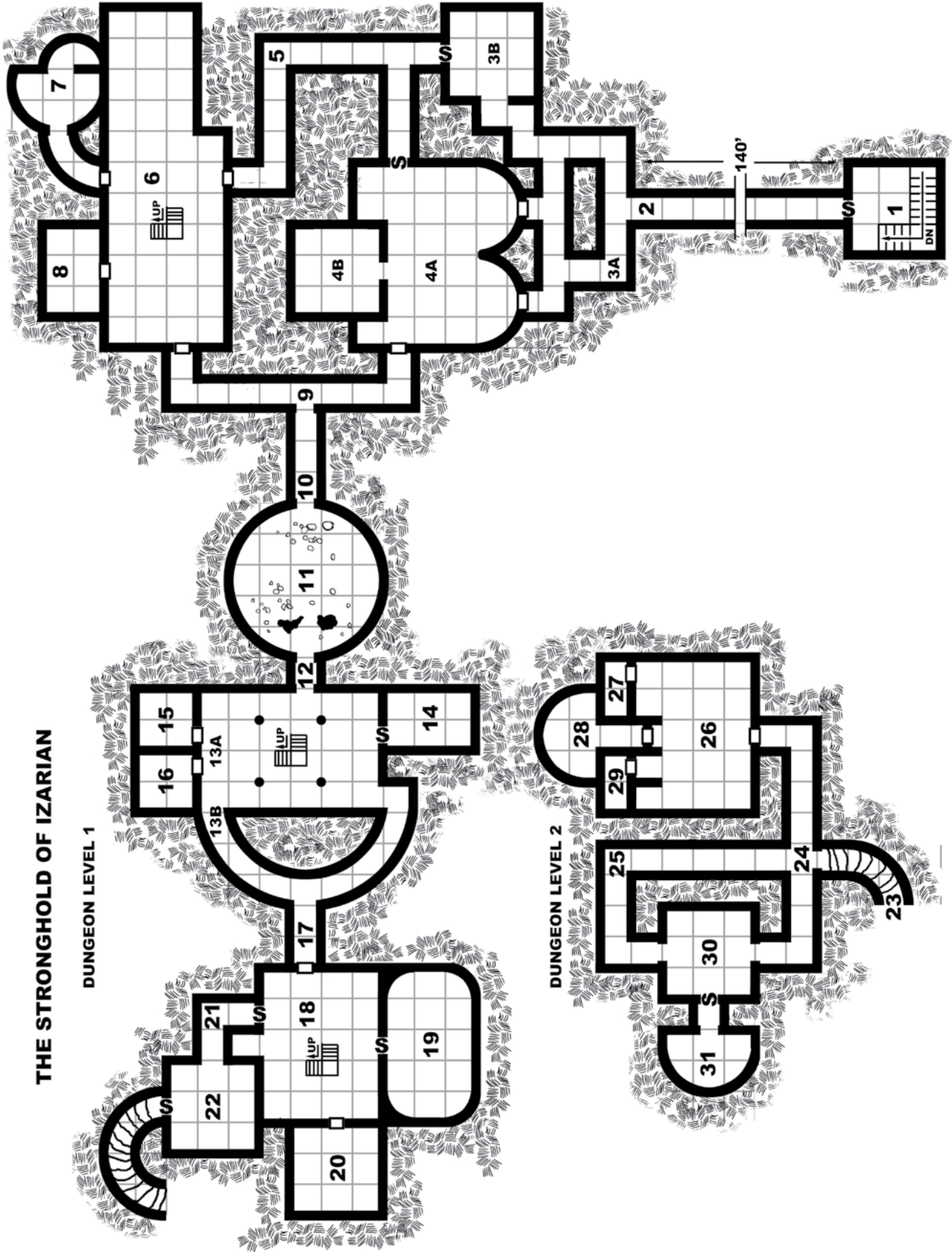
They have little to give the characters other than that he went by horse, left two days ago, and went north to the Holmgrad Mountains. The horse was rusty red with a deep black mane. His saddle was once owned by a man named Midlich, and his name is stenciled on the underside of it. His man-servant, Orn, lives in a room above the Twisted Sister, a tavern on Maynard street across from Briesach's tower.



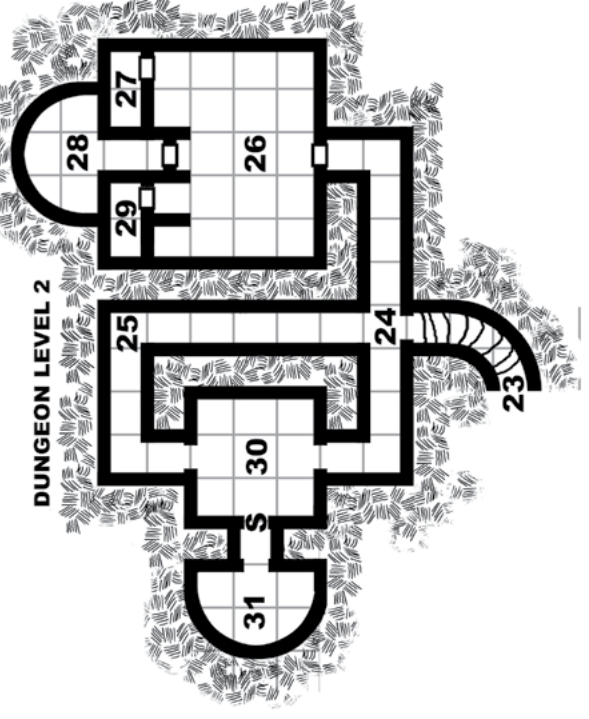


THE STRONGHOLD OF IZARIAN

DUNGEON LEVEL 1



DUNGEON LEVEL 2



HEIGAR'S WAY (#6 ON MAP)

Here begins the second set of adventures that brings the characters into the high paths of the northern mountains in pursuit of Briesach the Historiographer. It picks up after Izarain's Paramour or it serves as a simple stand alone. The adventure is broken up into a number of encounters that challenge the characters and occasionally give hints as to the rune lore they seek.

HISTORY UNFOLDING

Briesach the Historiographer spent most of his days pouring over dust covered toms in the hollow halls of ancient libraries. He spent hours bent over iron-banded grimoires, immersed in the contents of their yellowed pages, ever trying to bend their secret knowledge to his understanding. Oft times he is seen through the window of his home, in the small tower on Maynard Street, bent over his desk with stacks of books, sheaves of paper, scrolls and their cases piled up around him, writing or reading by the light of a single candle.

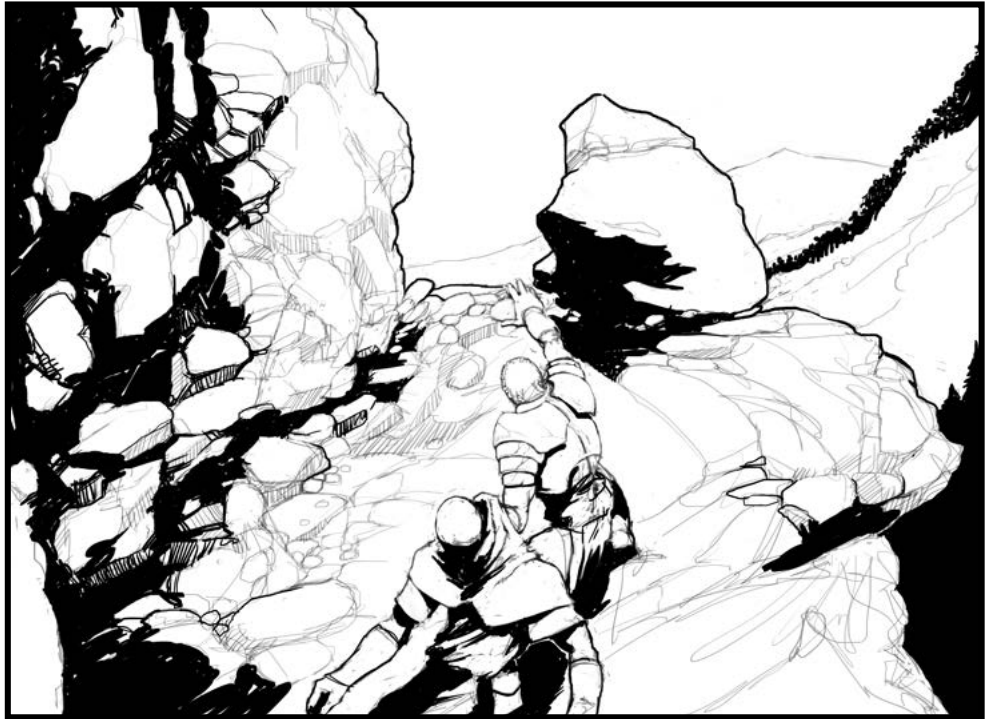
No one knew what ancient knowledge he sought after, nor what drove his lust. They did not question Briesach when he left for many weeks, returning only when he had amassed another collection of books and scrolls. They only knew that Briesach was an historian. He seemed a simple man, for he wore plain clothes and was always clean, his visage unassuming. Breaches, a shirt, and coat in the winter, and always soft-soled boots lined with rabbit fur were his usual fair. He laughed a great deal, particularly when at the Lucky Dog tavern, where he ate and drank almost every night.

In truth, people knew very little about him. Briesach, you see, was an altogether evil man, a despicable creature without conscience, who could act without remorse. Briesach belonged to a cult of evil, the Crna Ruk, and he paid homage to the Horned God, banished so many years before. It was always his quest to bring back that dread lord and his rule of law and evil.

"Master! Master! What is it? What shout shatters the stillness?"

"Damn you Orn! Hush foolish worm, you interrupt my moment of triumph!" The aged historian wore a look of glee upon his wrinkled face and his beard danced in the shadows of the fire. "You fool, you little fool, can you not see? I have it! I have the staff... this staff, see? Here I have it!"

"What? Master, it is late, and we are but one day returned from our explorations! Hush, or your shouts will bring the watch."



"Damn the watch! Do you not see?" The old man's voice cracked, his white knuckled fingers clutching the staff. "Here, in my hand, is the staff of the Winter Rune! It must be. With the Winter Rune...with the Winter Rune" His voice quieted, "Or rather, bring him forward." Chuckling, Briesach clutched the staff to his chest and began rocking back and forth singing an old tune, a haunting melody.

"The winter's wind never breaks,

on summer's shore no stop it takes,

The Shroud of Darkness, cold and stark

The world the Horned God's Winters Dark."

At the utterance of that foul name a shudder came over Orn, a great terror spreading through him so that he fled the hall. He felt, nay knew, that Briesach the historian had slipped into madness. None could speak that name with such glee. Yet, the ghosts of the name hounded him, pursuing him down the streets, laughing at his terror, feeding on his weakness, and he saw his Master's shadow pursuing him. The name of the Horned God rang in his ears and the shadows hounded him all the long night until dawn found him by the river, aggrieved and stricken with madness.

When the watch gathered Orn up and learned of who he was, they returned him to Maynard Street and the tower there, but they found Briesach's house empty. The front door stood open and a horse missing from the stable, but a haunting melody hung in the early morning's air, ringing with the words all those who stood around could hear. The watch shuddered and made the sign of Ore-Tsar in the air, but Orn muttered it aloud so that all could hear, "the Horned God's winter, the Horned God's winter, the Horned God's winter."

QUESTIONS FOR ORN

Orn has worked for Briesach for over 10 years, however he does not know him well. The historian kept quiet about all matters personal, though he had precious few friends and no relatives of which to speak. He knows that the historian is quick to temper but very intelligent. He seems obsessed by the work of dwarves and their runic abilities.

Orn lives in a small room above the Twisted Sister. He is relatively poor, with old clothes and little of any distinction about him. His hair is long, unkempt, greasy with streaks of gray in it. He wears simple clothes and carries a long dirk at his side. His dark eyes show more cunning than intelligence. He is neutral.

If the party seeks him out and questions him they can find him in the Twisted Sister, drinking. If they offer him a few coin, 5-10gp, he happily spills the tale. He talks to them about his research and the last conversation he had with the historian, and the copper gold staff. At that point he grows silent and mutters curses of demons and hauntings and madness.

“He’s gone now. Headed north to Unklar’s Iron, along the trail known as Heigar’s Way. He’s going to see if the staff fits the pillar, if it is the one. I know this to be true.” A terror creeps over him and he says little else.

THE TOWER

The small house and tower consists of a one-room building with a 30 foot tower attached to it. The main room has a dining table, fire place, some cupboards and the like. A door in the back leads to the tower. On the bottom floor there are trunks of old clothes, extra food, pots, pans, and odds and ends. The stairs lead up to a study and to where Briesach slept.

An investigation of the tower reveals that Briesach was indeed a historian. His study is littered with books, papers, scrolls, their cases, and other debris. A large table dominates the room and upon it are a score of quills, many used or broken, ink bottles, papers, and maps.

The material is largely concerned with history, much of it about the past centuries, though some of it ancient dwarven scroll about the mountains, their holds, and other material.

If the characters spend time studying the material they can learn a great deal about the history of the region as outlined in the setting material and they can acquire some maps of the Gottland and Moravan Plains.

Once wadded-up sheet of paper has the following scrawled upon it:

“The staff is five feet long, one inch in diameter and made entirely of Oracalcum metal. It reflects the glowing, golden copper color of that metal. The head of the staff is capped by three prongs which serve as a focal point for the runic magic.”

HEIGAR’S WAY

The trail leads north to the feet of the Long Spur and the beginning of Heigar’s Way, the old dwarven track that leads up and into those hills.

His trail is easy to follow as any know where Heigar’s Way begins.

The flat lands give way to gently rolling hills. For many hours you lumber your packs and gear through country, broken but gentle. Your muscles stretch, settling into the brisk walk up and over hills. All the while the purple-hazed mountains loom in the distance, their snow capped peaks stretching into the heavens, a ramp to the gods above. After many hours thus, the trail closes off. The track gives way to a more narrow path, one carved into the rock. You pull yourselves up, adjusting packs to fit the new gait, and move on up into the mountains. You come at last to a sign, carved in a great stone. In the Dwarf tongue of old, it reads: “Here begins Heigar’s Way. Upon rock and beneath Stone. Turn back, lest you be made of the mountain’s bone.” Whether a warning or challenge, you turn and look behind you. The path falls away into a steep bolder-riddled slope. Jagged rocks and gullies dot the landscape as it stretches down, down, down to the hills below and the plains and sea beyond. Little had you realized how far you had come.

This trail begins on the southern slopes of the Long Spur of the Holmgrad Mountains and traverses the 75+ miles into the highlands between the Gottland and Moravan Plains; the trail itself winds through the mountains. In ancient times this route served the Dwarves as a main trade route to those folk who lived to the north. Heigar the Dwarf and his folk carved the track out with pick and axe, over and through the mountains.

Spaced regularly, every 8-10 miles along the track are small shelters, cut from the very stone. These served travelers in ancient days even as they do today. Of course, time has eroded many of these sheltering caves into little more than nubs in the rock, or erased them altogether. Those that remain in good shape serve to protect the traveler from both the weather and what dangerous creatures stalk the mountain tops. If the characters make that distance in a day they should be able to reach one.

BARREN STONE (#7 ON MAP)



his adventure finds the characters traveling on a section of trail that snakes along the top of a large ridge line with little or no shelter. It continues the adventure begun in Heigar's Way or serves as a stand alone if desired.

A storm of divine origin rolls over the high mountains, driving the characters to seek shelter. The only shelter they find is a large cromlech, built off the main road. The cromlech is the work of stone giants, who built the structure many years ago. The storm creates magical creatures that fall from the sky. These beasts begin sniffing out living things, the characters, and hunting them.

The encounter is designed as a running battle between the party and the ignith beasts. The creatures attack singly and in pairs, attempting to pull down and kill party members. The CK should set the number of beasts that attack by the relative strength of the party and their own designs. The running fight can take place over several hours of game time with a dog hitting them every few minutes, followed by an occasional pack of 2-4 dogs. The cromlech is of course the only area of safety for the party, offering some shelter and some defense and an avenue of escape if they locate it.

GODSTORM

The country here is wide, the mountains looming in the north, the sea a distant memory. The country is cool, but dry, the rocky slopes and hills covered with rock slides and the like. As the

morning gives way, a storm brews in the north; black clouds roll over the countryside. Lightning sparks in their depths.

The characters watch the storm approach; it is moving very rapidly. Any with outdoor experience can make a wisdom save (CL 8, CL 4 for druids and rangers); if successful they realize that the storm is not natural.

In fact the storm is the direct result of a battle between two gods, Amenexl, Lord of the Dark Fey, and Angrim the Black. The latter is a god of Dwarves who possess a Viking longboat able to fly in the skies. Amenexl is an evil creature bent on possessing the runes of old. He wages war on Angrim's ship, raining magics upon it while Angrim the Black hurls *javelins of lightning* at him. The result is a tremendous light display throughout the clouds, with chain lightning arcing from the deep clouds, above and below.

Each time Amenexl's magic strikes Angrim's attempts to block the blow with his shield. When he does so, a large rumbling sound like thunder follows, and a shower of sparks tumble earthward. The sparks are laden. Most burn out before they strike the ground, but some few, the most powerful, hit the earth with a heavy impact. The shock of the earth-strike awakens them to life. Called ignith dogs by the dwarves, these creatures assume the form of a six-legged reptilian beast.

The ignith dogs range out, looking for prey to kill and devour. They stay on the hunt until they are killed.



The tumultuous clouds range the whole length of the northern horizon. Seething to the south, seemingly driven by the energy of the lightning storm that ranges at its center. From there, huge arcs of lightning branch out, stretching their sheering white fingers into the darkening sky. Rumbles roll across the broad valley, a thunderous clash of sound, that brings to mind the madness of battle. In the midst of this appears a blinding light, a detonation that sends a torrent of sparks through the air, tumbling downward. In the shadow of their light it seems a boat, long and dark, cuts through the clouds.

Any dwarf in the party knows the boat is a sign of Angrim the Black. Anyone else should be allowed a charisma check for bards (CL 4) or intelligence check (CL 5) for anyone else to have knowledge of the Dwarf's boat. It is far less likely that anyone will know the source of the ignith dogs, intelligence (CL 8).

REIGN OF FIRE

The storm moves rapidly over the valley, covering the horizon from east to west. A wall of darkness creeps along the valley as the storm blots out the clouds. By mid-day the wall creeps over the ridge and road upon which the characters are following. South of them the sun shines like a light upon the land; to the north it is dark and stormy. Above them the battle of light rages on as the gods wrestle for control of whatever the fight is over.

Any cleric in the party has a chance to understand fully that what they are witnessing is a battle between two gods. With a successful check they may even know which gods wage battle above them.

About the time the cloud passes over the party and darkness covers them, everyone begins to hear a faint howling from the north. A quick look reveals little in the gloom, but occasionally a light is seen here and there, moving rapidly across the ground. There is more howling.

No matter what the characters do, the dogs will gain their scent and as soon as one does it howls to its companions who all come running.

The first one that spies the characters does so from a small hill top about 200 feet away. It howls a long excited howl that sounds more like popping electricity than a dog howl. As soon as the howl ends the beast bends its nose to the ground and charges the characters. It is now that they spy it.

The beast runs with an exaggerated lopping motion. At first it appears to be a work, dark, running low to the ground. When the beast looks up, its pure white eyes belie its origin. Some magical beast, you quickly realize that its long, knob-capped tail and six legs make its gait angular and off balance. Rows of sharp teeth line the creature's mouth and it opens its maw in anticipation of the attack to come.

The ignith dog leaps through the air upon the party, attacking the target nearest to him.

IGNITH DOG, 1-100 (These chaotic evil creatures' vital statistics are HD 1d6, 14 AC, and HP varies. The creatures' primary attributes are physical. They attack with bite dealing 1 point of damage. On a successful bite the ignith dog is able to discharge a searing bolt of electrical current for 1d4 more points of damage; victims save versus constitution for no effect. They are also able to tail slap for 1d4 points of damage. The ignith dog possesses an SR of 1. They do not have any treasure.)

The party should dispatch these dogs pretty quickly, but there are more howls coming from the shadows. Anyone who takes the time to look sees the figures of these beasts or the lights of their eyes moving across the broken, rocky ground. They stop from time to time and howl.

Here the running battle begins. The characters are not in a defensible area. The ridge is broad and flat and the ground for miles around is broken, filled with gravel covered slopes and deep gulches. The dogs are moving rapidly over open country; the party has to hole up in a circle or head for shelter.

Place the cromlech where it best fits the tone of the game. If the running fight is going to be a long one, it should be some distance off, forcing the characters to cover the ground and encounter numerous packs of dogs. On the other hand, if the fight should be engaged quickly and serve only as a small episode, place the cromlech closer.

NOTE: Running battles are very fun for characters as they contain an element of uncertainty and fear in the lack of protection. The damage the party takes should be relatively small, slowly bleeding them out, but the number of dogs slain should be high, giving the party a sense of power. When their reactions play out the party should begin to grow fearful, slowly realizing that though the monsters die easily, their own strength is playing out. It makes for a desperate party and a fun game.

Whatever the approach, the characters should spy one rock formation in the long, broad valley, the Cromlech.

THE STONE GIANTS

Long ago the stone giants came to this valley. They lived the rocky hills and cliffs, building homes. A city of sorts sprawled across the valley floor, carved from the rock itself. They constructed high walls around their homes and deep tunnels underneath. Thus they dwelt in relative peace as stone giants are wont to do.

In those days they trafficked much with their bearded cousins, the dwarves, and their wares spread to the east and west. The dwarves armed the giants with iron weapons and armor, but in time the long wars that the dwarves fought wasted their numbers and left their kingdoms shadows of their former selves, and the trade dried up. The giants continued to live in their valley, but in reduced condition.

Then the trolls discovered them. Ever at war with each other, the trolls gathered a great host of their people, fleshing out their numbers with orcs and other such foul creatures. They fell upon the giants, bringing war to the valley. In the opening assault many giants fell, mostly the young and elderly, and some women caught unawares, but the giants mustered and closed their gates, holding the army at bay. For three years the trolls lay siege to the city until at last they broke down the walls and plundered all within. Long and hard the fight raged, but in the end the giants fell, their city thrown down and turned to dust.

Only one edifice remained, a ring of stones built like a house, with a great stone set on top, the cromlech. It was the heart of the town, a temple of sorts, if such creatures pay homage to the gods. It the trolls could not break, though they tried, hurling hammers of iron, bolts of power, and flesh and bone against it. The stone suffered no damage, nor did it move. The stones were deep, driven by the giants to the bowels of the world so they took root into the back of the great dragon Inzae, and thus avoided the misfortunes of the war.

In their rage all the valley was turned to gravel and dust, reduced to nothing. Only the cromlech survived, as it does to the modern era.

THE CROMLECH

The cromlech sit on top of a small promontory upon the ridge, set just off to the north. It consists of five huge stones, each about eight feet wide and twelve feet tall. On top of them all another stone lies, covering the whole thing in a roof. The place is about 50 feet in diameter and easily houses the party. The stones of the wall are set closely together so that there is only one doorway, but it is a good eight feet wide. All of the rocks are smooth except for the largest of the wall rocks, the one on the northern wall. This one has hosts of vertical lines cut into it. If there is a stone mason or dwarf here they can, on a successful check, determine that the lines are natural (CL 4).

The interior of the cromlech offers some shelter, though the unevenly placed rocks allow some of the dogs to climb the rock itself and slip into the room. The doorway, too, is open.

Getting on top of the stone is not difficult for an experienced climber, though very difficult to everyone else (CL 9).

It is up to the party to choose what to do next. The dogs attack until the party is all slain or the dogs themselves are all dead.

ESCAPE

The stone upon the northern wall of the cromlech is the largest of the wall stones. It is huge, roughly 10 feet wide and 12 feet tall. The vertical lines disguise a door built into the rock by the stone giants. A successful search check (CL 5) reveals the door and the small lever that opens it.

Etched into the stone are several runes, as well as the letters H and W. A successful charisma check for a Rune Mark reveals

the lettering to be dwarven and probably indicates that Heigar's Way goes beneath the ground.

The door opens to a small landing and a ramp leading down into utter darkness. The stairs are broad and deep and made for a stride larger than a man or dwarf's. They lead down about 100 feet to a huge tunnel carved into the rock. The tunnel heads in a western direction.

If the characters take the ramp, they quickly find the tunnel. The whole area is quiet and free of disturbance. The tunnel is about 15 feet high and 10 feet wide. They follow it for over a mile until it ends in a large natural cavern that stretches on through the darkness.

Here where the tunnel ends and the cavern begins, they find a skeleton. It is a stone giant child. The bones are oversized, but the whole creature was about six feet tall. The ribs of the creature are broken and shattered.

There is nothing on the bones, but clutched in the creature's hands is a crown made of stone, wrought in flowing patterns with diamonds mounted into its crest. It is the Crown of the Stone Giants, a powerful item, long lost to that kindred.

If they follow the tunnels and caves, they eventually, after two days of travel, arrive at another set of stairs. These rise up, and following them places the party at a similar door that opens in a wide cliff, overlooking a narrow valley.

You exit on a broad shelf of rock that tops a long, gentle, but rocky slope which overlooks a deep, broad canyon. The shelf sits at the foot of a broad mountain that towers over you, clawing its way into the heavens upon shoulders of rock. The sky is clear and blue, the air crisp as mountain air is wont to be. Not far from you, 400-500 feet down, you spy a horse in a small vale, sheltered by two arms of the mountain. The beast is rusty-red with a black mane and a saddle. There is no rider in sight. It is grazing upon a tuft of grass at the foot of a 12-foot high dark obelisk.

This must be the horse Briesach stole to flee into the mountains. Proof is found on the saddle where the name Midlich is stenciled.

OF GODS & IRON

The Obelisk is Unklar's Iron, that place where Nulak-Kiz-Din first opened the Wall of Worlds and stepped through to the Void to find Unklar (see Unklar's Iron in setting material). Briesach came here by a narrow trail from the south; he discovered the *winter rune* went missing and whilst cursing his luck was taken by the two frost giants who dwell in the mountains to the north. His equipment and gear they carted off, though the horse avoided this fate.

If the characters choose to follow, the tracks are easy enough to find. A simple track check (CL 5) reveals the struggle and capture and the path leading to the north.

GOLDEN THREADS (#8 ON MAP)



The encounter takes place along Heigar's Way after Barren Stone. Use this with the ongoing adventure, or insert at another time or place. Porting to another locale is very easy. It involves the characters discovering a small waterfall, behind which is a cavern filled with the debris of the ancient world. The room is littered with debris, but in and amongst it are several magical items. A small magical chest brings the characters to an extra-dimensional space where they encounter a magic cloth, the likes of which they've never seen before.

If coming from Barren Stones, the frost giant trail leads onto a narrow mountain path and veers west.

The trail tops a small ridge, dipping down into a broad valley. The valley itself continues for many miles. In the south it is flanked by a line of broken hills, cut with gulches and gullies, crowned by large boulders and other broken stone. To the north the valley climbs in a series of ridges for several hundred feet, contained by a line of pine trees. Several of these ridges, each higher than the next, climb many thousands of feet into the rock crags of the mountain above; they rope in the valley, coiling around the far western end.

The trail clings to the northern ridge line, just beneath the line of trees. It follows an even contour, being largely leveled by the dwarves who carved it so many thousands of years ago. Markers stand along the way, every few miles; these too are remnants of times long past.

The sun is setting when the characters, having crossed half the long valley to come to a small tumbling creek. A stone bridge crosses it, but it is much abused by time and weather. The creek itself, babbling and tumbling over a host of rocks carved from the ground, promises cool and very fresh drinking water.

Anyone who bends down next to the water to fill their flasks or take a drink can't help but notice a thin trail of gold moving with the current of the water. The gold acts much like in other liquid, pulled and pushed by moving water. It is clearly visible, marking out the various twists and turns of the currents, pooling here and there for a moment before it is pulled downstream, or coiling around itself as it rushes on into the oblivion of the sea. It cannot be grasped; any attempt to touch it pushes the liquid away from the hand much like milk in water.

The gold originates up in the mountain. If the characters choose to follow it, they can easily do so by following the course of the stream. It winds up several steep courses, climbing the first ridge line where it has cut a channel for itself. Beyond the first ridge lies several hundred feet of flat grassy area. The stream snakes across this to a pool which sits beneath a tall cliff, fed by a waterfall several hundred feet tall. The golden thread of liquid winds up the stream into the pool, vanishing beneath the dark eddy of the water.

The water is very cold and the area very loud due to the amount of water falling in the distance. The characters should hear the waterfall as they top the first ridge.

The water is home to an undine, a water fowl. In times long past these creatures were born of the residue of slime rolling from the All Father's back, washed away by the rains. They are filled with evil intent and desires. This particular creature lies dormant at the bottom of the pool, noticeable only to the keenest of eye. A successful wisdom check (CL 12) reveals a slight bluish tint to the water at the bottom of the pool. This is its natural color.

Anyone who moves near or touches the pool, stream, or waterfall alerts the undine to its visitors. He does not attack but rather rises slowly to the surface to investigate and listen. The creature understands most spoken languages. If the water fowl takes any hint that they might discover the cave behind the waterfall and/or enter it, he immediately climbs up the waterfall, shapeshifting himself into a darkened shadow of a human/statue.

While climbing up the water, those around the pool have a chance of seeing the strange bluish tint moving in the water; successful wisdom save CL 10. Even if they see it, though, they must have particular knowledge of the creature to know what it is.

The undine waits there, hoping to attract the attention of one of the party members. If someone comes close he attacks, attempting to grab his victim; if successful he falls backward into the deep pool to drown his prey.

WATER FOUL, UNDINE (*This neutral evil creature's vital statistics are HD 4d8, AC 14, and HP 25. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a slam for 1d6 points of damage. They use their camouflage and change shape ability to hide until they can strike, attempting to achieve an improved grab attack, and pulling their victims under water where they drown them.*)

The water fowl's treasure: at the bottom of the pool are the remnants of the creature's catch. Several sets of bones lie there, but also scattered coin worth 200gp, and a small iron cask of 32 gems, all worth 15gp. There is a magical ring as well. The ring, once worn, allows the wearer shape stone or wood as the 3rd level druid spell. It has an inscription etched into its inner ring, a name: Crymyr. Crymyr is a famous craftsman and druid, known in the lands of Haltland and Holmgald for his magic wares. It is worth 400gp.

CRYMYR'S SHAPE (RING): This magical ring allows the wearer to shape stone or wood similar to the 3rd level druid spell. If anyone other than a druid wields the ring, it takes 3 rounds to shape 1 cubic foot of wood or 10 rounds to shape 1 cubic foot of stone. The ring can only affect an area of 10 square feet. If a druid uses the ring, its power enhances his own. In that case, it affects 20 cubic feet +2 cubic feet per level of the druid and one half a round to create 1 cubic foot, etc.

Assuming the characters investigate the waterfall, they quickly discern a wide chamber beneath and beyond it. It is dark and damp, as only a flickering light from the sky above penetrates the falling water.

Beneath the tumbling water you see a broad, deep cavern. It is lit by a shaft of light spilling through the broken roof; weathering has recently caused a minor cave at the back of the larger one, and a steady stream of water pours into the room. The years and water have etched deep crevices and jagged edges throughout, but despite this a broad, open (if rough) floor greets you. The room once housed more than time however, for a large table stands in the back with water falling directly onto it from above, and a single chair lying on the floor next to it. Several casks stand to one side; next to them is a trunk, its lid fallen in. An iron bed, its bedding long gone and much of its shape rusted, sits not far from the table. Above it all three chains hang from the roof of the cave, holding old lanterns.

No monsters dwell here. The water foul has long kept the cave safe from invasion. Much of the property here is rotten and even a little stress through use causes it to collapse. The table is an exception, made of hearty wood, seasoned and coated with thick resins; it holds up to use. Scattered pewter dishes lie about the table.

The cave was once home to Diab, a hermit in service to the Og-Aust. Fleeing his homeland in the far south, he sought to find the gods by climbing to the roof of the world. He made it to this hidden cavern and dwelt out the remainder of his life, until the water foul moved into the pool guarding his home. It slew him and there his bones lie at the bottom of the pool.

Searching the room reveals little of value. The trunk is large, brought here by dwarves who traded what knowledge the hermit had. It has old rotten clothes in it, a long dirk, a club with several symbols written on it, and a cable backed bow. This bow, fashioned from drift wood, has been reinforced with golden threads taken from the stream below. The threads are magical, giving the bow its unbreakable nature and adding a +1 to any to hit bonus. There are also seven arrows in the trunk. An old suit of leather armor, much wasted and unusable, lies in the bottom of the trunk. Some fishing material rests here as well.

On the far side of the room next to the bed is a barrel with several tools in it, a hammer, an axe, and several iron spikes.

The item of most value, however, is a small iron cask. It was sitting on the table but has been knocked into the stream of water; the characters can easily follow the trail of gold to the cask. It is made of black iron, six inches long by four inches wide by four inches tall, and has a flat top. There is no key or lock on the trunk, but the water lapping around it is pulling upon a single thread of gold that hangs from within; this is the source of the golden thread of liquid that spills down the course of the waterway. It ends the moment the box is lifted and the thread removed from the water.

The box is not locked but has these letterings etched onto its surface: "Health is found in the Sleeping." It is a double meaning; sleep heals wounds of course, but health is also found if the maiden that rests in the box is left to her slumbers.

The lid opens with a golden light; it caresses your face in warmth. You are immediately comforted and feel as if the day's toils have given way, if only a little. Within the box is the tiny figure of woman lying on a dais. The dais is round and covered in crumpled golden sheets, the source of the warmth. A woman of surpassing beauty lies atop the sheets in gentle slumber. Uncovered and wholly nude, her legs she has drawn up, knees to her breasts; her body bends a little forward, giving her form a circular shape with one arm draped across her legs, her other folded over her eyes and head, and her fingers vanish in the thick curls of her red hair. Her skin is smooth and her long limbs lay in restful repose. A single golden thread hangs from the box.

The box is magical and the woman inside a fire spirit of tremendous power. She dwells in the inter-dimensional space created for her eons in the past. She always sleeps, ensorcelled by the golden sheets upon which she lies. She dwells in her own dream world in contented happiness.

It is dangerous to disturb her, or attempt to wake her; any such attempt causing her to stir in her slumber will cause the sheets turn from gold to red and the glow to become scorching hot. Anyone looking in or attempting to touch her suffers 1d12 points of damage; a successful dexterity save reduces this damage by half.

Entering the dimensional space through a teleport or similar spell is equally dangerous, for the whole dimension is no more than the bed upon which she lies and the sheets offer their potent charms to any who touch them. Anyone who enters the dimensional space must make an intelligence saving throw or suffer the affects of a *dreaming* (CL 18) spell, lulled into a comatose state and unable to act in any way. They remain in this state so long as they are in the dimensional space.

If left to her slumber, any who gaze upon her are healed of the world's tribulations; exhaustion fades, hunger and thirst are relieved, and wounds healed. For every turn one gazes upon the open box he is healed 1 HP. Exhaustion fades at double the normal rate, and hunger and thirst are not felt nor do they affect the character. It is important to note, however, that these latter two effects are not permanent. While looking at the box, characters can do nothing. Disturbing them breaks the spell and no further aid is granted.

The thread can be pulled gently and removed from the dimension, or returned to the box. The thread is strong, requiring +3 or better magic to cut or dissolve it. Once cut, it is very powerful, as thin as any thread, but of such magic that it is almost unbreakable, serving to tie up things such as the bow above. Pulling the thread, however, runs the risk of waking up the fire spirit; any pull of six inches or more results in her moving, and she wakes up on a roll of 1 on a d20.

JUNLUTH'S HOUSE (#9 ON MAP)



he encounter takes place on Heigar's Way. This encounter should allow the characters to rest and refit their gear and also allow them the early teachings, if such is necessary, of the Rune Lore. The trail of the frost giants leads beneath the house.

Junluth is a very old Dwarf; he is the last of his line, a people who settled in these mountains long ago, long before the Winter Dark. He has kin living in Roheisen Hole to the far east and some others scattered in the northern hills, but only he remains of those who carved the road through the mountains. He is a kindly dwarf, one who travels into the north often, but rarely into the south. He and the frost giants have an understanding.

Junluth is a master stone mason and has spent his many years in the study of rune lore, both magical and other. He prides himself in his knowledge and is more than happy to impart it to any willing enough to listen.

THE HILLS HAVE EYES

Travel in the mountains is slow; at best the characters can make six miles each day. Long neglect and some particularly vicious weather patterns have battered these central walkways so that, though noticeable, they are hard to navigate. Loose stones, gravel runs, and ice patches all make the trek difficult. High upon the roof of the world, as the dwarves say, gives one exposure to the sun. After many days of travel following the frost giants on a narrow trail through the mountains, the party should be a little worn down.

The trail snakes around a wide butte, spilling out onto a gigantic flat rocky plateau, several thousand feet wide. On the far side the trail enters a small canyon. The canyon is roofed above, not by the rocky cliffs, but by a house. You see the undeniable signs of a porch, a doorway, and several windows, all made into a wall designed to span the cleft.

If it is night time or near it, light spills from one of the windows. Smoke rises from a chimney on the house's top.

Junluth's house is built upon a bridge over the canyon. It is about 60 feet wide, made of carefully carved stone that makes it appear as if there is but one block of stone there. His porch extends the length of his house. Access to the house is gained by metal pins carefully designed to fit into pre-cut holes in the surface of the cliff. These are cleverly hidden in the shadows of the cleft beneath and above his house.

Sitting upon his porch, Junluth spies the characters as they come around the butte. He fetches his telescope and watches them from inside the house as they pass over the rock, trying to ascertain their nature.

When they come within shouting distance of the house he comes out on the porch. He wears a suit of +4 chain mail under his shirt, well hidden from prying eyes. He hails them and asks, in a very friendly tone, where they are headed.

While they talk he uses a *ring of detect alignment* to determine whether they are evil or good. If evil he ignores them and prepares to flee his house through the roof. If good he strikes up a conversation and offers them a safe place to sleep and a good meal if they desire. He asks only for news of the south and east and anywhere else they care to talk about.

To gain access to the house, Junluth must first climb down. He does so using the iron pins, placing each in a hole and lowering to the next. He is very skilled at it and moves very fast. He brings extra pins for the others to use. For any unable to scale the cliff, he drops down a rope ladder.

Junluth is a rune mark of some distinction. His fathers before were All Fathers of their clan and had mastered the runes. Though his knowledge is not as great as theirs, he has a good command of the discipline. If the characters are good and willing to talk he expounds upon the skills of the rune lords and offers to explain whatever items they have picked up along the way. He explains that this country and the lands to the west are filled with the magic of the runes, for here the dwarves had a great traffic of goods in "olden times." Any questions about the frost giants yield that they passed several days previous, under the house and into the canyon, no doubt to their home in the north. He is also aware of Unklar's Iron and explains that it is where a powerful wizard crossed into the Void long ago.

He is very open and teaches what he can.

If the season is late he offers to keep the party for the winter and teach the characters interested in rune lore the mastery of a few of the runes; he possesses the Codex of Winter. Any rune mark in the party can attempt to master a new rune of their choice. He also imparts what skills he has for surviving in the mountains, snow, etc.

Castle Keepers may want to advance time, allowing characters to gain valuable information both about rune lore and wilderness survival, as well as dwarven culture and a greater history of the world they are walking through.

In any case the dwarf keeps the party fed and watered and offers a safe harbor, asking nothing in return except, if ever they come to his house after his passing, to make certain that he is buried in stone in the high mountains above his home, somewhere he says "that I can see the whole of the world, from the sea to the south to the skies that dome us all. Of mountains, rock, and stone, I've seen it all."

JUNLUTH (This 4th level, chaotic good, dwarf rune mark has 23 HP and an AC 21. His primary attributes are wisdom and dexterity. His significant attributes are dexterity 14 and wisdom 16. He has a suit of +4 chain mail, +1 shield and a +3 short sword. He carries a battle axe of wounding as well. His battle axe serves as his relic, and has four runes on it: glyph, mind trail, nuclei, and bands.)

His treasure is well hidden far out on an ice field to the north. He will not reveal it under any circumstance.

When the party departs, Junluth fills their satchels with food, water, and other supplies such as bandages. He gives them each one of the *nord stones* that heal those who use them.

OVER CHASMS DEEP (# 10 ON MAP)



he encounter takes place along an old dwarven track that winds through the Long Spur. Adjust the hit points or number of monsters as needed. Porting to another locale is very easy, the Castle Keeper only needs a mountain terrain with a chasm.

If coming from *Junluth's House*, the frost giant trail leads over the chasm.

Over Chasms Deep involves the characters crossing a wide, long, stone bridge that spans a chasm of unknown depth. The chasm is home to ancient powers who demand a toll in coin and blood. When anyone steps foot upon the bridge itself the creatures are alerted to their passage and begin rapidly climbing the walls of the chasm until they hit the edge of the bridge, spilling over onto its cobbles. They demand a toll from any crossing over; this always involves coins, but this time, it involves the characters feeding them one of their own.

When the dwarves of old carved this mountain road, they chose to push the trail through the valley and build a bridge across the chasm there. It promised, and was indeed, easier work than continuing to carve through the stone of the cliffs. The bridge they built from stone quarried along the foot of the northern cliff. It has withstood the harsh environment and the test of time, testament to the craftsmanship of the dwarves.

During the construction, however, they discovered that the chasm was home to some foul minded creatures, the kuthite; creatures with the torsos of men but the bodies of snakes. The creatures offered the dwarves free passage if a dwarven champion could best their own. The dwarves took up the challenge, and on winning it, continued work. A few days passed and another kuthite offered a challenge. This time the dwarf was killed and the creature demanded the dwarves destroy their bridge. The dwarves slew the beast and a battle broke out between the dwarves and others that lived in the chasm. The battle proved costly and the dwarves offered to pay the creatures in order to gain passage. The creatures took the deal and retreated into the darkness, leaving the dwarves to finish their bridge.

The deal, however, was not honored and after a time the beasts returned to the span, haunting those who traveled over it. It became a test to a traveler's courage, whether he would cross the bridge, or shoulder packs to journey through the high mountains.

Thus the bridge earned its name The Firthnach Span, "the Bridge of Courage".

It has been many years since any have used the bridge and the creatures are hungry for battle. When the characters come to it, they immediately begin their rapid climb to the top.



FIRTHNACH

The mountain trail caps a sharp edged ridge, plunging then several hundred feet down to a broad plain. The plain itself is nestled in a wide open-ended bowl-shaped valley of rocky cliffs. The valley is dissected by a deep chasm spanned by a very old-looking stone bridge. The cliffs loom over the plain, promising little chance of passage without a risky climb through the mountains.

The trail drops steeply before the party. As they walk and climb down, rocks slide out from under them and small dirt-slides tumble down the cliff face. Each character must make a successful dexterity check (CL 2) or tumble 10 odd feet down the cliff. No damage is taken, but they are dirtied and their equipment is jostled around. If any fall, they must roll a second check as they continue the descent. The check must be repeated until they stop falling or after five checks have been made. If they fall they times they suffer 1-2 points of damage per fall after that. If they fall five times consult the Castle Keepers Guide for equipment damage, or barring that, just roll for an item breaking, such as a torn water flask, ripped pants, a broken pommel, etc.

Once at the bottom the party should be assured of the risky nature of any climb through the valley area.

The plain of the valley is roughly three miles wide from trail head to trail head. The valley length from the mountain cliffs to mountain cliffs is about one mile.

There is nothing living in the valley, nor any signs of occupation. Two stone edifices stand on the trail, one on either side of the bridge; each edifice is about mid-way between the cliff and the bridge.

Any experienced mountain traveler, which much of the party must be by now, may detect the signs of work on the northern cliff. At its feet on the eastern side, the dwarves carved much of the stone for the bridge itself. There, cut into the rock-face are signs of their work. A successful search, either wisdom or intelligence check, (CL 5) reveals the cut surface. Nestled inside is a secret door opening to a stairway that leads down into the chasm. The dwarves carved this during the battle for the bridge.

When the party is about 500 feet from the edifice, they detect writing chiseled into the stone. The writing is in Dwarven Runes. To any who can read the dwarf tongue, it says the following "Firthnach."

This is a dwarven word with several meanings. When used in mining it means either *unbroken stone* or *courage*.

THE CHASM

The chasm itself is roughly 1000 feet deep. Its sides are cliffs that could be navigated by a skilled climber, but would prove very troublesome to the unskilled. The chasm is only about a mile long, as long as the plain above. Giant mushrooms, fungus, molds, and moss grow in the cool deep; beginning about 300 feet from the bottom, these strange plants serve the kuthite as food and shelter. It is also here where they store their loot and treasures.

ACROSS THE SPAN

As soon as someone's foot touches the cobbles of the bridge, the kuthite below are alerted. They waken from their long, drug-embalmed slumber and begin looking up. The greatest of them starts his climb immediately. It takes him only a few rounds to hit the bottom of the bridge. As the characters approach the apex of the bridge a huge serpentine body throws itself over the pass: even before it lands, the head and torso of a man appear.

Beneath you, in the deep dark chasm, the cool air brings a clattering noise; at first it seems to be rocks sliding but quickly you realize something is sliding over the rocks. It rises from the deep, very quickly.

Unless the party is extremely quick, running at least at 40 feet per round, the kuthite rises to the apex before they reach it. The creature is huge, snaking around the bridge, rising above the whole much like a cobra would. In its hand is a bow, with an arrow nocked but not drawn.

Others hang back, but anyone who even casually glances off the bridge sees them, clinging to the rocky surface and watching. They too carry bows.

98 CASTLES & CRUSADES

The one on the bridge says the following, or something very near it: "You may not pass, oh worthy strangers. This bridge is mine, taken from the dwarves of old, and to cross it you must pay the bridge's toll."

If asked what that toll might be, the kuthite responds, "pride." The party must chose a champion and best the kuthite, by killing it or dying in the attempt. If the champion fails, the party may not cross and must return the way they came. If he or she wins, the party has free passage and may take whatever possessions from his body they desire.

The party can attempt to talk their way through the encounter. The kuthite are hungry for sport and battle but if the party is able to flatter them, or pay them enough (probably close to 5000gp worth of items or coin) the kuthite might consider it. Any persuasion attempt should be made against a CL of 9, accounting for the creature's hit dice, but also for its unusual desire for battle.

NOTE: The CK should judge carefully. Kuthite have seven hit dice and a fairly strong AC. If the characters are still lower level, be sure to roll a lower number of HP to the kuthite.

If the party takes the challenge, the battle commences with an outcome determined by the dice. If the party chooses to attack as a group, more kuthite join into the fray. The CK should weigh the encounter accordingly.

Whenever the main kuthite is killed, the others flee to the chasm below.

KUTHITE (*This neutral evil creature's vital statistics are HD 7d8, AC 18, and HP is variable. His primary attributes are mental. He attacks with a long bow or constriction. He always gains a +2 when shooting the bow, and gains a +2 on damage. After a successful constriction attack in the following round, he automatically deals 1d8 points of damage. He has an SR 2. The kuthite always carry +1 long bows and a quiver of magical +1 arrows. The kuthite on the bridge carries a +1 bow, twelve +1 arrows, one potion of cure serious wounds, a magical bracelet that instills a +1 to AC, and seven rings, each worth 50gp.*)

REFUSING THE CHALLENGE

If the characters refuse the challenge, the kuthite taunt them, attempting to goad them into battle. If they continue to refuse, they remain in and around the bridge until the characters make the laborious climb out of the valley, at which point they all slide off the bridge and down the cliff face.

CHASM DEEPS

As noted, the dwarves carved a secret passage into the cliff face on the eastern side of the chasm. It is well hidden, hard for any non-dwarves to detect (CL 8); however, if a dwarf investigates he possesses a better chance to detect the unusual stone patterns (CL 4). The secret entrance is a simple lever-based sliding door.

It opens to a very narrow and very steep staircase that winds down into the darkness. The characters must enter one at a time through the slim and roughly-cut stairway. The stairs circle in on themselves, making falling very difficult; a stumbling character is likely to catch himself and suffer no more than a few scrapes and bruises.

The stairs lead down over a thousand feet, to the bottom of the chasm, where they end in an easily-discerned door. A lever opens this door as well.

The door opens into the pitch black of the chasm's bottom. The smell of the fungi is heavy in the air, and indeed it grows all over, clinging to the sides of the chasm, creeping along the floor and even piling together into multicolored mounds of mushroom caps. A shallow stream runs through the bottom of the chasm.

Here the kuthite claim their home. If the characters make it this far undetected by the kuthite, they are at a distinct advantage for they catch the creatures in states of repose.

The kuthite utilize the mushrooms by both eating and smoking them, harnessing the powerful hallucinogenics to help pass the time. The kuthite in this part of the fissure are almost always in such a state, curled up on top of their mushroom homes, smoking, eating, and dreaming of worlds beyond worlds. If one is attacked, the others will rouse themselves only to flee, if they even hear it, as the drugs coursing through their systems give them a distinct disadvantage in hand-to-hand battle. They suffer a -3 from all initiative rolls and attacks. The kuthite climb the steep cliffs, taking only their bows and arrows. From on high, they shoot at the characters.

Anyone moving through the fungi forest is able to hide and conceal (+6) very well from shots taken from above.

Unlike normal kuthite who disdain treasure, these have amassed some and scattered it throughout the valley. The characters, if they remain for any length of time searching, should be allowed to stumble across 1-4 of these treasure troves; roll on Treasure Type 6. In the midst of all this, allow the characters to find a scroll with the rune of *fold space* upon it.



THE LONG STAIR (#11 ON MAP)



he encounter takes place upon the eastern slopes of Mount Skaelin. Following the adventure path from Over Chasm Deep the characters encounter a long winding stair that climbs up the steep cliffs of a mountain. Adjust the hit points or number of monsters as needed. Porting to another locale is very easy, the Castle Keeper only needs a mountain terrain with a chasm.

The frost giants clearly went up the mountain.

The dwarves were ever fond of creating paths that others might find difficult to use, the Long Stairs being a perfect example. The path winds for many turns through broken hill country until it comes to the feet of a great mountain, named by the dwarves Mount Huletag, though few if any call it that now. Steep cliffs mark the end of the trail and beginning of the mountain. The cliffs are piled one atop the other for several thousand feet until they give way to a long, broad ledge just beneath the mountain's peak.

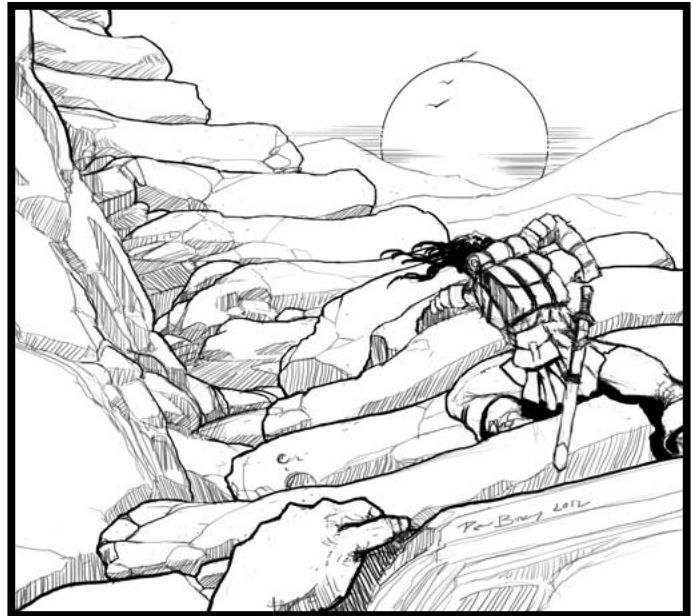
The steep stairs offer a challenge to the characters, in that climbing them alone is an arduous and dangerous task. To make the journey worse the heights are held by a small gust of wind elementals who promise to hound the party as they climb the cliffs.

NOTE: The elementals listed below are lesser elementals with a standard HD 4. The CK should adjust this accordingly to fit their own campaign and adventure. To bump them up or down in HD, consult *Monsters & Treasure*.

A great heap of rock looms in the distance. The trail winds down into a dry, broken country, snaking along rock strewn ridge lines. Small gusts of wind pick up the sand and gravel, carrying it in whirlwinds of extreme violence, only to dump them unceremoniously in some distant spot. Beyond the broken country, the trail seems to end at the feet of that massive stone heap. There, long sheets of rock stand one on top of the other, stacked like a giant's stairs into the distance above.

The trek across the valley floor is long and hot, taking several hours. The winds here act in a peculiar manner, blowing in no certain pattern. Anyone who watches carefully has a chance of detecting this. With a successful wisdom check (CL 4) they notice that something is odd about the winds. Why they are moving is beyond understanding of most people. It might be a simple trick of the hills and high cliffs. It will take a skilled ranger or mountaineer to detect what exactly is going on. On a successful wisdom check (CL 7) the skilled observer notices that there is no discernible pattern to the wind gusts, that they move about without any influence from the ridges and cliffs.

In truth, the strange patterns are the wind elementals that inhabit the high cliffs above. They consider the whole valley their playground and frequently sweep down to and through



them, wrestling with each other, gathering up sand and dirt to throw at one another, pushing small rocks and boulders and the like. They have completely overcome the normal wind patterns that might come down from the mountain passes and cliffs.

The chaos they have caused keeps the winds of the valley constantly moving so that they never settle down, creating effects that the characters may or may not detect as they cross the valley.

STINGING SAND

As the characters cross the broken trail country, one of the elementals crossing nearby scoops up a huge amount of sand and dirt, and broadening himself out into a tall, narrow and deep gust of wind, he rushes the characters.

To them the wind elemental looks like nothing more than a wall of sand coming to them. It is not so thick that they cannot see through it, but is dense enough to make a dark haze. Even the slowest of characters notices that the gust is only about 20 feet wide, weakening on the edges.

As it approaches, it gains speed and makes more noise until the ground virtually shakes from the thunder of its passage.

Just before it crashes into the characters, it flies upward, avoiding direct contact, dropping the rocks and sand as it moves on. The characters take no damage but are pummeled by the flying debris, suffering numerous stinging bruises and sand in their gear and eyes, mouths, and noses. Behind them the flurry of sand tumbles about.

AIR ELEMENTAL (These neutral creatures' vital statistics are HD 4, AC 17, and HP varies. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a wind gust/slam attack for 2d4 points of damage. They can regenerate and are able to use a whirlwind attack.)

The elemental does not remain to battle the characters. There is a chance they can detect the creature, however slim. Upon a successful intelligence check (CL 8) a party member detects an abnormal density to the wind, as if it shimmered in the heat. If they have encountered air elementals before, they gain a +1 to their detection. Regardless, the elemental, unless somehow stricken of 30% of its hit points, rises into the air and returns to the cliffs over the stair.

The rest of the journey across the broken country is without encounter. The small whirlwinds and dust devils fall off so that by the time the characters arrive at the steps, the whole valley is quiet.

THE LONG STAIR

As the characters approach the rocky cliffs they discern a single pattern in the stone; a line cut in near perfect diagonals across the cliff face rises from the valley floor, switching back and forth as it climbs to the top of the mountain. This is the Long Stair.

The trail ends at the base of a towering cliff which rises to dizzying heights above you, climbing into the blue sky. Lines snake back and forth up the rock-side, climbing first to the top of one cliff, then along its ledge until to the next before resuming its climb. You realize then that these are stairs, cut into the flat surface of the rock, climbing to the top of the mountain.

If the characters take no note of their surroundings, they have little chance of spotting the debris around the foot of the cliff. Much of it is partially covered in gravel and sand, but here and there, protruding from the dusty skin of the valley floor, is a bone, a sword pommel, a spear butt, a helm, etc. These are the remains of others who have tried the Long Stair and died in the attempt.

If they take no note, their chance of detecting something is slim, wisdom check (CL 10). If they take a few minutes to search around the foot of the cliff they quickly see some of the debris (CL 2). Many of these victims have fallen not due to the difficult stairs, but in battle with the elementals.

A search of the area reveals mostly old, rotten equipment, but on a successful dexterity roll (CL 4) the characters discover something of use. Roll on the following chart:

Roll	Item
1	50 Feet of Silk Rope
2	Magic Item (see <i>Monsters & Treasure</i>)
3	Rune Stone
4	Cable-Backed Bow
5	Seal Skin Tarp
6	Ski Poles
7	Whale Bone Axe
8	Snow Shoes
9	Inuktituk (snow glasses)
10	Crampons (12)

THE STAIRS

The stairs are two feet wide and only about eight inches deep; well worn in the center, the smooth rock is slippery, making travel up them difficult as each step requires extra force to make purchase certain. One side is walled by the cliff face, the other has only a 4-6 inch lip protecting the traveler from a tumble to the ground below. Along the wall, from top to bottom, an iron cable is anchored. Crafted by dwarves, it shows little sign of age or weakness and serves those less sure-footed as a rail to cling to when the winds pick up.

Walking up or down them is possible if the traveler moves at a slow and steady pace. Characters do have a chance of slipping, however, and the CK should take periodic dexterity checks in order to keep the characters on their toes and nervous. If the characters are moving slowly there is a CL 0, if moving anything slightly faster than cautious, add 1 to the CL, so that by the time they are rushing it should be CL 8. Adjust accordingly. If characters are holding onto the cable there is no chance of them falling from the cliff, though they may still slip and bust a knee or even a face.

There is nowhere to rest on the stairs unless the characters just sit on them. This can be dangerous, as one could roll off. The ledges are slightly better, offering a place to stretch out.

The journey up is exhausting, putting the characters through strenuous exercise. The lower back, thighs, and calves of even the most hardy are aching by the time they reach the top of the second ledge. After that, for every 100 feet traveled they must make a successful constitution check or suffer temporary loss of 1 point of constitution. If they run out of constitution before they reach the top they, must rest for at least 10 minutes per constitution point.

If the characters rest in route at least 10-15 minutes, they do not suffer the affects of exhaustion.

The first 500 feet carry the characters to a narrow ledge, at the foot of the next cliff. There are three switchbacks on this trek.

The second ledge is reached after another 700 feet. There are four switchbacks here.

The third ledge is reached after another 400 feet. There are no switchbacks here, and this section of the steps puts them on the far end of the ledge where there is a cave, roughly 40 feet deep and 12 feet wide at the mouth. It has a small pool of water in the back collected from drips in the cave ceiling.

The fourth and final portion of the Long Stairs is 800 feet after the last ledge and has five switchbacks.

THE ELEMENTS

The air elementals are of course watching the party climb. They allow them to get almost to the second ledge, about 1000 feet above the valley floor. Here they choose to begin their "play",

FIRST ENCOUNTER

The first of the elementals, a younger, weak one, begins to crawl and snake its way across the rock face. It moves by flowing across the surface of the rock, filling its nooks, cracks, and crevices, much like water flowing across the ground. It moves behind the party, flowing over the lip of the stair and up it. The elemental is playful, moving beneath their walking feet, around the legs, and on up the stairs. Anyone with bare skin exposed feels a sudden drop in temperature around their feet or hands. It passes as quickly as it comes.

There is a chance they can detect the creature, slightly better than before. Upon a successful intelligence check (CL 6) a party member detects an abnormal density to the wind, as if it shimmered in the heat. If they have encountered air elementals before they gain a +1 to their detection. If they detected the creatures in the valley they gain another +2 to their checks.

Once it passes through the whole party it flows over the lip and back down the side of the cliff. Clinging there, it looks for anyone wearing loose clothing. Picking its target, it rushes quickly rising like a gust of wind, blowing clothing, hair, and other light and loose materials up. Anyone not holding onto the cable and having been struck must make a successful dexterity check (CL 2) or tumble back down the steps, colliding with whoever follows. That person must make a successful dexterity check as well (CL 4), or so on down the line. Anyone who rolls less than 4 tumbles over the side. If this happens he must make another successful dexterity check to see if he falls to his death or grabs hold of the edge of the stair.

AIR ELEMENTAL *(These neutral creatures' vital statistics are HD 2, AC 17, and HP 8. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a wind gust/slam attack for 2d4 points of damage. They can regenerate and are able to use a whirlwind attack.)*

The characters now have a better chance to detect the creature, gaining a +2 on all future checks.

The creature flees if physically attacked.

SECOND ENCOUNTER

Seeing the fun its brother had, another elemental breaks free and slides across the mountain. There is little chance of the characters spying the creature, but on a successful wisdom check (CL 8) they spy the strange movement of darker air. This creature gathers itself together upon the steps, creating a wall of wind before the characters. It is quiet, gusting up and over itself, coiling back down like a wave into itself.

When the first character arrives he is struck by an updraft of violent air, silent but powerful; sticking a hand or face into it causes the skin to be battered and knocked about, like entering a wind tunnel. The creature makes no overt attack but to get through it the character must make a successful strength check (CL 6). Doing so allows him to push through. If they fail, they stagger back from the creature and cannot try again for 4 melee rounds.

During that time they have a better chance of seeing the creature; see above but add +2 to their rolls.

AIR ELEMENTAL *(These neutral creatures' vital statistics are HD 5, AC 17, and HP 22. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a wind gust/slam attack for 2d4 points of damage. They can regenerate and are able to use a whirlwind attack.)*

After the third character breaks through, the elemental collapses into itself, flowing rapidly down the stairs. Anyone with exposed skin notices a sudden drop in temperature.

The creature flees if physically attacked.

THIRD ENCOUNTER

The play attracts more of the elementals; now all across the cliff's walls they begin to crawl, flowing in waves over the rocky escarpment.

The air dies down to a deadly still. It captures your attention, but even as your mind focuses on the lack of noise, there seems to be a push of dry air rolling over you. As it breaks like a wave against you, a sound picks up, slow at first but growing in volume. Wind. There is wind blowing and it's coming at you from both your left and your right. The sound picks up to a howl as you see gusts of wind-borne dust and sand rolling across the surface of the cliff, coming toward you.

There are a dozen air elementals with low hit dice rolling toward the characters. They attack by pummeling the characters with gusts of wind, rising up and smashing them. If the characters cling to the cable they cannot be dislodged for the air elementals cannot grab them. However, clinging to the cable means they can only use one hand to defend themselves.

If a character releases his grip on the cable and is attacked, every round of combat that he is hit by the elemental he must make a successful dexterity save in order to keep footing. The CL is equal to the elemental's hit dice. If the character falls, allow a second dexterity check (CL 5) so long as he drops whatever he is holding. If successful he clings to the side, if not he plummets from the cliff.

AIR ELEMENTAL, LESSER X 12 *(These neutral creatures' vital statistics are HD 2, AC 17, and HP 8. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a wind gust/slam attack for 2d4 points of damage. They can regenerate and are able to use a whirlwind attack.)*

AIR ELEMENTAL, LARGE X 3 *(These neutral creatures' vital statistics are HD 6, AC 19, and HP 8. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a wind gust/slam attack for 2d8 points of damage. They can regenerate and are able to use a whirlwind attack.)*

The elementals fight until a character is killed or 1/4 of their

number are destroyed. Castle Keepers may wish to keep the battle going, but caution is advised as the fall is a long one and character deaths will be hard to replace in this storyline.

JAREL'S COL

The stair gives way to a narrow ledge that ends in a curved ramp that goes up and around the top of the final cliff. Beyond is a broad, open col, a narrow space between the top of this rocky mountain and the next. The col is clear, though patches of snow cling to the rocks and in the crevices. In the center of the col is a mere, a crystal clear lake called the Mere of Alenerde by the dwarves.

Built in the rocky precipices above the mere is a stone house. Built for travelers, it is presently empty of any living creatures. A close investigation reveals little sign of recent activity, but peering inside the single-room structure shows stone benches against the walls and a long stone table in the center. A large fireplace on the back wall, cleverly constructed into the cliff, sits empty and cold. There is fresh water in a basin by the door, fed by an underground pipe constructed by the dwarves. The water is warm but drinkable.

Sitting in front of the fire place is a figure, his ragged clothing hanging off him in tatters, the bones of his body protruding from beneath, a Rune Mark who has long since died. The characters find the following on his person: a relic in the form of a staff with eight runes engraved upon it, a book with the same eight spells in it, four *rune stones*, a shirt of +1 leather armor, and a masterwork longsword. Everything else he may have owned has long since rotted away.

THE MERE OF ALENERDE

The Mere is sacred to dwarves. It is a place where their Fathers traveled to see into the mind of Al-Erde, the All Father. Standing upon the bank they watched the stars traverse the evening's sky and sought to travel the roads of the All Father. It is a Ring of Brass, a magical portal that brings one into the halls that crisscross the the multiverse.

This water is perfectly still, the only motion in the water caused by something thrown within. It is warm to the touch, fed by slumbering heat deep in the mountain. The Mere is clear and casts a near perfect reflection of the sky and the two peaks. The Mere reflects images as a mirror; however, it is more than a simple looking glass.

Looking into the water at night for longer than one melee round reveals a wide vista of stars, framed by the snowy peaks of the mountains. The beauty draws the viewer in and all other stimuli fade.

Looking down into the water is as looking up at the stars, framed only by the mountain's peaks. The wind dies and you are taken by the utter stillness of the place. The stars seem above you and the ground beneath and the whole shifts, spinning around so that you face the north. On the edge of your vision is the Great Empty, the forever and beyond.

These gates to the outer planes are closed, opening only to a Rune Mark with a *rune of opening*, or a mage with a similar spell can open the Ring of Brass. If one does so, the tunnel opens into a large hallway with buttressing columns; it is 20 feet wide and 40 feet high. Everywhere are runes carved into the stone. The tunnel winds into the darkness.

See *Rings of Brass* below.

The col leads to the northern flanks of the Halmroof Pass and the abode of the frost giants. Coming out on the other side of the peaks of Mount Skaelin, the party spies a jumbled slope of rock that leads back down and the broad pass below. Here, however, the party can see the giant snow-covered peaks of Mount Eoyotten and the valley of the Pass beneath them. Far in the distance, nestled on the flanks of the southern mountain, stands an old tower. The ruins of its walls lie about the slopes, but the tower itself remains intact; carrying a shroud of snow, the black stone looks like some king of old.

The trail goes down the slope. The giants, however, are waiting for the party.



HALMSROOF PASS (# 12 ON MAP)



This encounter area follows the Long Stair and takes the characters into the high mountains overlooking the long Hoden Valley. This encounter is longer and more involved with a clear set up for the characters to be captured by giants. This may need to be modified for individual campaigns. It can be played as a stand alone, if not the giant's trail continues into the mountains.

At that point where the mountains rise to their greatest, and travel becomes so difficult as to be near impossible, the Horned God's most powerful minions, the Mogrl, rived the escarpment connecting the peaks of Mount Eoyotten and Mount Skaelin, thus making travel possible across the forbidding, snow-packed peaks. Many an army passed over this pass from the Moravan to the Gottland and beyond. Later, a fearsome Mogrl, known far and wide as Ingnot, set himself upon that cleft, constructed a mighty tower and thick gate, and from there, terrorized the upper reaches of Aihrde.

With the passing of Unklar, the Mogrl scattered and hid themselves in deep holes and far away places. Lest they be found out and confronted by the Council of Light, Ingnot abandoned his tower and moved to places unknown. With his passage, the armies who were massed about Halmsroof dispersed and scattered into the mountains and hills, having been left without leadership. Here, they were hunted and killed in droves by vengeful northmen who had suffered for years under the heavy hand of Ingnot's despotism. The northern way was abandoned except to occasional traffic as the north shores of the Inner Sea had become safer and easier to travel by boat. Not long ago two massive frost giants, Umyard and Skleome, made their way to Halmsford, found it nearly abandoned and made it their home.

Umyard and Skleome are brothers and their ages unmeasured. Neither can remember when they came into the world as those memories have disappeared beneath too many snows and icy peaks. They have wandered the northern wastes for centuries, sometimes resting for decades in abandoned keeps, castles, and caves, and at other times traveling to the far flung reaches of the Holmgrad Mountains.

On one such trip several decades past, Umyard and Skleome happened upon a small town, Yinsfeeord, which they intended to pillage. They waited for nightfall and planned to plunder the town as the last lights of the village blinked out. However, early in the evening, the inhabitants of Yinsfeeord gathered in a local temple and began a celebration. As Umyard and Skleome waited, they heard a singularly beautiful voice rise up into the night sky and enchant the blackness about them, causing the stars to dance, or so it seemed. Umyard and Skleome were hearing the remnants of the "first song" that had coalesced in a daughter of Yinsfeeord.

Valyana, the first of three daughters born to Neemord and Hana, was gifted as no other in Aihrde. Her voice had a luminescent quality, like a diaphanous gown it hung like a gentle shroud upon those who heard her voice. With it she could enchant and calm



the minds of even some of the most vile creatures in Aihrde, but the minds of Umyard and Skleeome are ancient and accustomed to both the beauty and ugliness of the world. Though enchanted by the sound of her voice, they did not fall under its spell.

They did, however, find that the voice reminded them of days long passed, before the coming of Unklar, when the Mountains were emptier and the winds and snows, swirled and spun around the mountain peaks, making a music all their own. In a moment the two giants decided to claim this voice and make it their own.

They stole into Yinsfeeord like a violent storm and laid low all those who stood in their way. Umyard faced and challenged the brave warriors of Yinsfeeord while Skleeome broke into the central hall and snatched Valyana from the arms of her screaming mother. Having captured their prize and knowing the men of Yinsfeeord would eventually overwhelm them in such further battle, they broke and ran into the clefts, valleys, and crags that make up the Holmgrad Mountains.

The village was much grieved at Valyana's theft and many set out on the trail, but none returned. There came a time that Valyana's younger sister, Freyja, set out after her and soon thereafter the youngest of the sisters left home in search of her siblings (see below).

In the meanwhile, the giants traveled several long years with Valyana in tow before happening upon Halmsroof. Valyana, sickly and with dying voice, needed rest or escape from her captivity. Sensing this, the giants settled in this snowy pass and made life as pleasurable as possible for Valyana. In fact, they treated her with such care, tenderness, and attention that those who might have witnessed them would have assumed she was a Princess from the years before the bending of the world, and the giants her servants.

After arriving in Halmsroof, Valyana immediately improved, though a deep sadness was upon her as she realized it was her voice that brought ruin to Yinsfeeord and her family. Yet, Valyana sang for Umyard and Skleeome whenever they requested it, which was often. Her voice, however, had changed. Its youth was gone to be replaced with a more mature song, one of sadness, loss, hopelessness, and a suffering which comes from all things that live long years in loneliness and misery. This maturity did not diminish her music, but rather, increased its power. For Umyard and Skleeome, though, it no longer provided memories of the freedom of their youth, but rather, the dire times of Unklar's rule, so they took her to the depths of Halmsroof and placed her securely in a dreadful chamber guarded by Ingnot's last remaining servants in Halmsroof – the minotaurs.

When the giants arrived in Halmsroof, they found the pass' fortress in complete disrepair and most of it fallen into complete ruin. There were two exceptions to this. The central keep, having been built for the Mogrl, remained fairly intact. The giants took up residence here. A maze of sorts wound beneath the remnants of the gatehouse, constructed in times before the coming of the Mogrl and only discovered after construction of the fortress began. The ancient maze housed a great knowledge, the builders'

intent to make access difficult or impossible. It contains, written into its walls, missives and allusions to the use of Language of Creation. It was here where the giants made Valyana's prison.

Within the maze were several minotaurs, great vicious beasts of immortal make. They needed no food for sustenance, no water to quench a thirst, nor air to fill their lungs. These minotaurs were of a special breed, magically enchanted to withstand the hammer of time and forever guard the labyrinth in which they were placed. When travelers passed Skleeome and Umyard's way, the giants would capture them and throw them into the labyrinth, enjoying the slaughter that ensued. Valyana, sensing others were in the labyrinth, would sing a joyous song, hoping her rescue had come and unwittingly leading any who were thrown into the labyrinth closer to their doom.

The giants have made the pass a dangerous place to travel, so few do so any more. As such, Umyard and Skleeome have taken to wandering away from the keep to find captives for their entertainment. These, they bring back to Halmsroof and cast them into the labyrinth. Though they continue in this practice, it has come to bore them of late and they tend to forget about those in the labyrinth, leaving them and the minotaurs to whatever fate awaits them.

In despair, Valyana began the slow path to an early death. Umyard went in search of a way to prevent this, for though with less regularity, the brothers still enjoyed listening to the songs Valyana. Umyard found an ogre shaman of immense power and requested his aid in saving Valyana. The shaman, being of uncanny intelligence and power, knew of only one such spell that could save her. The shaman cast a binding knot between Valyana and the snowy peaks surrounding Halmsroof. Thus, Valyana's soul and being became tied to the ice and snow that capped the top of the world. As long as she stayed in close proximity to it and the snows never melted away, she would neither wither nor die but remain immortal. At the same time, the snows of the peaks became tied to Valyana so that as long as she lived, the peaks would forever be caught in a virtual blizzard at the top of the world.

GIANT HOME

As the party travels along Heigar's Way, they are set upon by Umyard and Skleeome. It is unlikely that the party has the power to fend off such an attack. Luckily, Umyard and Skleeome do not intend to kill the party right away. They plan to take them back to Halmsroof, feed them, and drop them into the labyrinth.

The snow-packed escarpment stretches up into a brilliant blue sky. The light of the sun glistening off the snow is blinding. The only guideposts for Heigar's Way are tall columns of granite that thrust and poke out of the snow like the fingers of the dead, seeking egress from an untimely burial. Ahead, as the path narrows between two large blocky granite peaks, one massive guidepost comes into view.

Umyard and Skleesome are sitting to either side of Heigar's Way at the point where the peaks level out on the escarpment. The guidepost is nearby. They have been sitting and waiting in this spot for two days. As such, they are covered in snow and fairly well-hidden. Their bluish/gray skin looks much like the ice covered granite walls about them.

Spotting the pair is fairly difficult. They are accustomed to these ranges and know how to hide in the crags and crevices it offers. They are off to one side a little and downhill somewhat. The sun is working in their favor as most creatures must squint and look down to avoid going snow-blind from the glare of the snow. The party members must make a successful wisdom check (CL 15) to see the giants.

The party encounters one warning that trouble is afoot as they top the pass. The snow on the pass reflects many indentations, partially covered by fresh snow fall; all this means that something large passed this way in the last few days (CL 5 for a successful track check, CL 12 for generally noticing something is afoot). If the tracks are found it is clear to anyone that some activity has taken place recently. Umyard and Skleesome intend to wait until the party reaches the guidepost before waylaying them. At this point, they attack the party with massive clubs.

A thunderous rumble cracks the silence of the day and the snowy cliff sides seem to sunder and split. Out from crevices on both sides of the defile emerge gigantic men with freezing blue skin and long white beards, wearing slate gray armor and clutching massive knobby cudgels. With a heave they shake off the snow that covers them and roar a deafening cry to the winds and the sky while swinging their clubs in a ferocious manner.

Umyard and Skleesome do not stop to parley with the party under any circumstances. The giants are not intent on killing the party members and go to some lengths to avoid it. They do, however, intend to knock each of them out or force them to surrender their arms. If the battle seems to be going poorly for the giants, they will begin killing the party, though this is unlikely.

Once the party has either surrendered or been knocked out, the giants gather their arms and any items which the giants feel might pose a potential threat to them. They then tie the characters together and begin marching down the mountain and on to Halmsroof.

The trip to Halmsroof is not that far, only 50 miles. To the giants this is easily covered in one day's march. However, considering the party size and the potential bruising they have taken, the giants will allow for one night's rest. If camp is made, the giants keep the characters tied together and stay awake throughout the whole night rummaging through their equipment, tossing some and keeping any interesting portions. They tell stories of their youth and make jokes about all the people they have killed who have passed through these mountains.

If the party attempts to engage the giants in conversation, they find the giants immediately willing to be so entertained. Umyard

in particular likes to hear stories of wars and conquests. Skleesome loves stories about the fall of Unklar and the routing of his various minions. Though the giants listen intently to interesting stories and even laugh at jokes, their disposition does not change. They do not, in fact, consider any other race worthy of consideration or even an afterthought. The value of the party's lives is, to the giants, about the same as that of a snowflake.

On the second day, the giants force the party to move the remaining distance to Halmsroof. If they must, Skleesome and Umyard will carry one or two of the characters. Towards the end of the day, the characters see:

Ahead, up a long defile and between two ragged and pointed granite peaks, is a narrow pass. The crumbling remains of a gigantic wall hangs between the two like a curtain exposed too long to a blustering storm. Little is left except snow-covered stone, broken masonry and shattered battlements. Only one thing remains fairly intact; a tall snow-capped spire to the south side of the pass stretches high, nearly as high as the surrounding peaks. Indomitable stones have been used to build this monolithic structure and its age and strength seem indefatigable.

HALMSROOF

Halmsroof consists of only two extant structures at this time, the rest having fallen into ruin. There is the Kral-nak-Fil, which is the tower in which the Mogrl rested, and the maze. The maze is located beneath where the old gatehouse rested. Its discovery was a boon when Halmsroof was first constructed, for it offered a prison and execution yard. Each is discussed separately below.

The giants take the party to the spire and throw them into a prison beneath the first floor of the entry chamber (see **Area 4**). The giants keep the party there before taking them to the maze. While in the dungeon, the giants are sure that the party has a lot of food and warm blankets. As for the giants, they spend most of their time in the entry chamber drinking mead, telling stories, and eating.

GIANT, FROST X 2 (These chaotic evil creatures' vital statistics are HD 11d8, AC 20, and HP 53, 49. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a battle axe for 4d6 points of damage or two fists for 2d8 damage each. They are able to throw rocks for a further 2d10 points of damage. They are vulnerable to fire but immune to cold.)

KRAL-NAK-FIL

This is the structure that once housed the Mogrl. It is a large tower measuring 150 wide at its base and about 80 feet wide at its top. The Mogrl, being spare beasts, had little need nor care for excessive accoutrements, so the Kral-nak-Fil consists of only three floors and a basement.

AREA 1 ENTRY CHAMBER: The entry chamber is a large room with a flag-stoned floor. In the center of the room is a massive black stone urn. The urn contains an eternal flame. The

urn itself measures some 20 feet across and weighs several tons; it cannot be moved. From within its center, a large bout of bluish flames constantly erupts and sputters, sometimes in massive gulfs and at other times in small but constant whispers. The coloration changes from blue to red to green. The urn actually opens up onto the plane of fire and the nexus is located in the center of the urn. Moving or otherwise damaging the urn may cause the rift to expand or contract. On a d10, 1-4 means an expansion and 5-10 means a contraction. If the rift expands it does so in a small amount, adding from one to ten feet of width. However, it does so immediately and any character caught in the expansion must make a dexterity save (CL 5) or suffer 2d10 points of damage; save for half. Each time it is so disturbed it can contract or expand.

Elsewhere in the room is a large table and two chairs. These are obviously makeshift. The giants have built them themselves. They collected the wood on one of their numerous trips down the mountain. There are heaps of fir and a large vat where the giants are, unsuccessfully, attempting to make mead.

There are stairs leading up and a large iron trapdoor to one end of the chamber.

AREA 2 STAIRS: Herein the Mogrl would sit and ponder and plan. Now the giants use this as their sleeping quarters. Heaped and piled about the room are piles of furs, cloth, tapestries, and other goods they have acquired over years of travel. They also keep most of their treasure in this room.

Treasure: Contained here are 4000sp, 725gp, a gold dragon comb with a red garnet eye (1050gp value), a brass mug with jade inlays (350gp value), a *potion of gaseous form* and a *ring of counterspells*. There is a small book as well, named Imach's Golden Libram. Within it are five spells of the Rune Mark, they are as follows: *rune of writing*, *rune of threads*, *rune of creation 1*, *rune of linking*, *rune of knowledge*. They also have a small pouch with a rune blazed on it. Within is a small glass vial containing a rolled-up piece of torn parchment. On the parchment is a small piece of the Rune Mark Prophecy.

*Beneath iron Shadows
Where Winter once blossomed
When the Rune Lords Fall
A vision of the other world
Of creation's very Forges

These are the god's paths.
These are the Umbra.
Five and Forty Runes To Master,
A Wall for Worlds to enter
Rune Lords to Conquer
The Empty to be filled to make the
Runes a Master.*

AREA 3 UPPER FLOOR: This room is almost completely bare. There are two large windows up here and the vista they offer is spectacular. The Mogrl Ingot used this room to watch the pass. Little came or went without his notice. He also used the room for communing with other of his kind and contacting his master. Because of that, this room still reeks with evil. The stench of Unklar is upon the place and even the giants enter only on rare occasions.

Any lawful good character entering this chamber immediately feels the effects of the evil of both the Mogrl and Unklar. A wisdom save (CL 12) is necessary to prevent the temporary loss of 1 point each of strength, constitution, and dexterity.

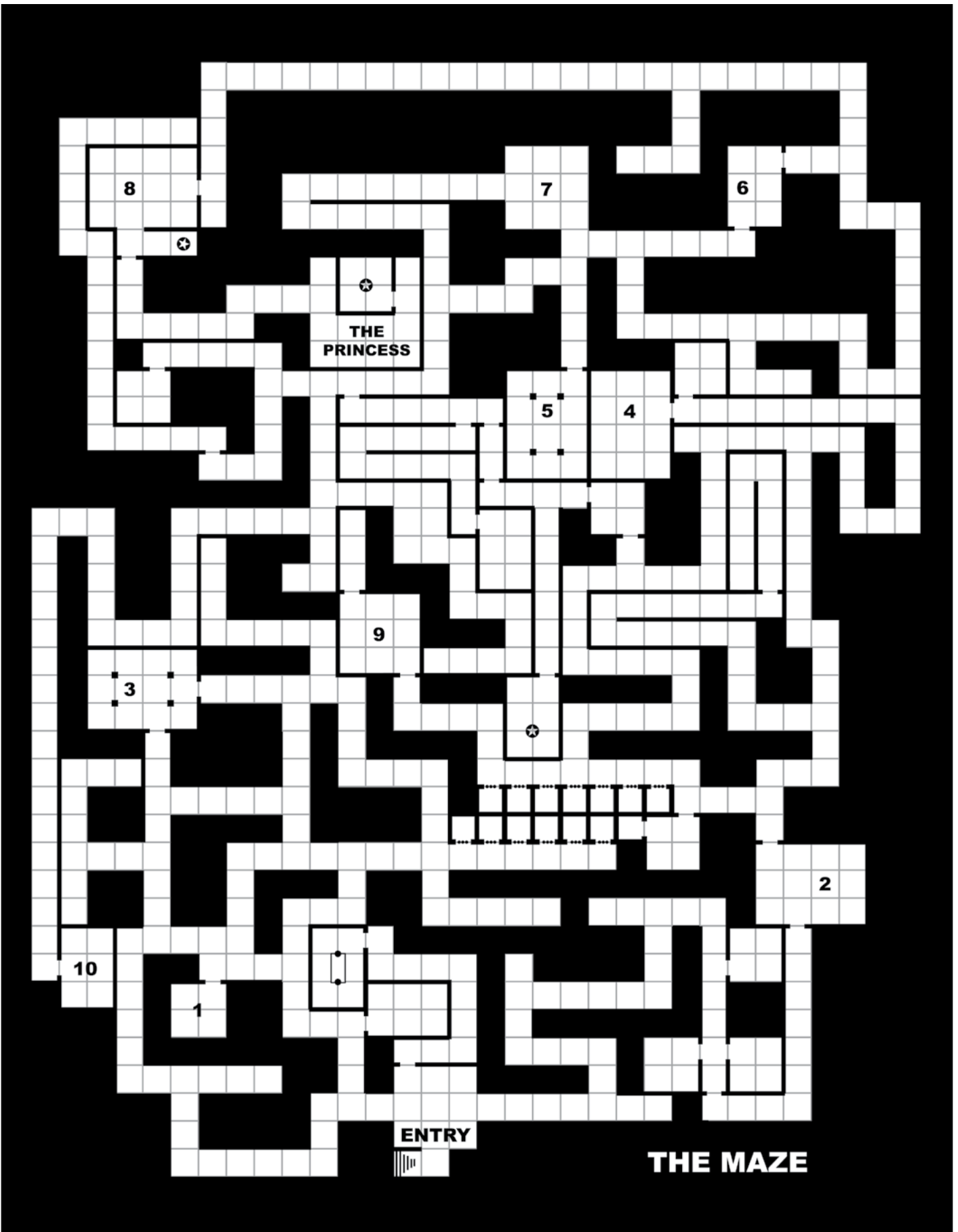
AREA 4 THE DUNGEONS: The Mogrl used this chamber as his personal interrogation center; as such it was perfectly suited for the purposes the giants needed: imprisonment. The chamber is broad and long. Along all the walls are a host of shackles. The floor has various large fire pits in it, as well as chains, hooks, and poles hanging from the ceiling, chairs with straps, and hundreds of instruments used for torture.

The giants throw the party into the dungeon and lock the trap door, visiting them only when they believe the party needs food. There are no exits from the chamber except through the trap door. The party must while away their time until the giants feel it is time to dump them in the maze. The giants throw them food once a day - a lot of food. The room stays relatively warm due to the eternal flame in the room above. The party are not allowed to keep any of their weapons, wands, staves, rings, or anything else the giants may perceive as potentially harmful.

Breaking the lock to the trapdoor is nearly impossible. The iron trapdoor itself weighs almost a ton and the crossbar and bolt mechanism that locks it is about 10 inches thick.

After a week or so the giants decide it is time to let the party out and drop them in the maze. They gather their items in a sack, then one goes down to tell them that they are free if they perform a task. They must free Valyana from the maze. They claim they are simply too small to enter it and fighting the monsters in the maze is too difficult for them.

This is, in part, the truth. The maze is fairly small and movement for them in such a space is difficult but not impossible. They found they could not kill the monsters in the maze (being immortal - see below) but did discover a room the monsters could not enter. This is the room they placed Valyana in. They place people in the maze to give Valyana a sense of false hope. As soon as another creature enters the maze, Valyana believes that she is being rescued and begins to sing a song of joy. These songs are much liked by the giants.



The party is brought, in chains, to the entrance of the maze. The giants drop their goods down a shaft and then suggest they enter before the winds and storms of cold and death arrive. They would like for the characters to bring Valyana back to them. Now, the giants couldn't really care less what happens from this point forward. Once the party enters, they close the trap door and head back to their tower to await the songs of Valyana. They assume the party will die but in their passing provide the giants with some enjoyment. They do not suspect the party will manage to kill all the monsters in the maze.

For her part, Valyana knows the characters have arrived and begins to sing songs of bravery and freedom. This can embolden the adventurers because they too can hear the songs (they gain a bonus +2 to all attribute checks). Valyana waits for her rescuers (see **Valyana below**). As for the minotaurs and other creatures found in the maze, they also know the characters have arrived and begin to hunt and scour the maze for them.

There are seven minotaurs (more or less if the CK deems them necessary to challenge the party) and one giant minotaur (max hit points) in the maze. The maze itself is a very complex series of tunnels and hallways with many small apertures in it. There is only one entry to the maze, the trapdoor at area **Area 1**.

The creatures that inhabit the maze are magically summoned and inherently imbued with certain magics. They need no oxygen, food, or water for sustenance. In this respect, they are immortal. The only thing that can kill them is physical damage, but this is only a temporary death. Each creature resurrects 10 days after it is 'killed.' The only manner in which to permanently kill them is to use a *death* spell and a *remove curse* on the body afterward.

The creatures trail the party and try to set traps for them. Since they are not organized, the encounters are completely random. Occasionally and by accident, several of them come together to attack those in the maze. The giant minotaur awaits the party near the chamber and sets many traps from the material of long-fallen heroes. In all, the battle in the maze should be a running one. The minotaurs enjoy toying with interlopers, setting traps for them, leading them astray, and such activity. They run if they feel they cannot win in a head-on attack and await a better opportunity to attack.

For each turn the party remains in the maze, roll a d10 for the encounter:

- 1 one minotaur
- 2-3 two minotaurs
- 4-7 one minotaur
- 8-10 no encounter

Each aperture **Area 1-10** contains piles of loot from previous people who have been killed here. Roll on the standard treasure table in *Monsters & Treasure*.

Briesach lies in **Area 4**. His body has been roughly handled and partially eaten. He is long dead. With him are his goods. The

Staff of the Winter Rune lies next to his body. A long *dirk of venom* lies upon the floor. His cloaks and clothes, tattered and blood-stained, cling to his body. A pouch with 48gp hangs on the belt.

MINOTAURS (These chaotic evil creatures' vital statistics are HD 7d8, AC 14, and HP varies. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a head butt for 2d4 points of damage, a bite for 1d4 points of damage or by weapon gaining a +4 on all damage attacks. They have a powerful charge that allows for a single gore attack at +9 to hit and for 4d6+6 damage. They are immune to maze spells and are uncanny trackers.)

VALYANA - MORDIUS DRYAD

Entering the room of Valyana you find before you beautiful woman. She is tall and shapely with long golden hair that reaches her waist. The hair hangs freely about her shoulders, pulled back only off her forehead with a small gold circlet. Her face is soft and she welcomes you with tears of joy.

Valyana is a songstress of sorts. Her chamber is elaborate with piles of clothing and other goods that the giants occasionally bring to her. No magic except a single *staff of eternal light* is found here. If the party enters her chamber, offering to free the poor maiden, Valyana sings a song of such joy that it begins to crack the walls of the maze and even breaks the lock on the entry chamber. The cracks open up on the slopes below the castle tower and the characters are able to escape out and into the night air, free from the maze.

Should they get out, the giants do not notice for some time as they have been lulled into a near-sleeping reverie at Valyana's last song. This, however, does not make them defenseless. Should an unwary character attack them, they rouse to fight.

After Valyana's song ceases (after the party talks her into leaving the room she is in) the giants go to check on the maze and notice the entry has been cracked opened. They immediately begin to pursue the party. They hound them from the mountains but are reluctant to travel into the lowlands as the Trolls of Nacht haunt those lower slopes.

As for Valyana, she can only stay with the party for a few days. As soon as she gets about 20 miles from the mountain peaks, she grows weary and tired unto death due to the binding knot cast on her by the shaman. She of course does not know the nature of this spell, nor what is happening to her. She slowly dissipates, turning into snowy flakes to be blown back up the mountain where she will remain for eternity.

NOTE: Valyana's sisters come into play in the adventures of Gottland as they are searching for their older sister. All three women are in fact Mordius Dryads (see Appendix B, *New Monsters*).

Heading south from the high reaches of the pass places the party at the southern end Hoden Valley that empties out onto the Feador Plains, almost where the party began their long trek, where the adventure *Of the Horned God's Winter Begins*.

INTO THE DUNHOLLOW (# 13 ON MAP)



his encounter is set for higher level characters. It begins upon the northern banks of the Sorgan River. The approach to the river is over a small rise, crossing up the hill. The characters can smell the moisture in the air, but more importantly, they hear the sounds of battle, grinding metal and the clang of weapon on shield.

The trail gives way to a slightly larger clearing upon the banks of a slow-moving shallow river that crosses beneath the eaves of a broad forest. The sounds of battle carry over the tumbling water and wash over you. Across the water a half-dozen well armored dwarves stand against armored men twice their number. The grinding of metal on metal and metal on bone mingles with the shouts of the wounded. With a loud crack, a dwarven axe splits the mail of his human opponent. The blade sticks hard in bone and sinew, creating a bloody ruin in the man's chest. They hack at one another with no small skill, fighting and dying beneath the trees. Even as your minds race to action, the battle ends in a blinding flash, and the shouted curses of the dying dwarves are all that remain. A tall, older woman walks from beneath the trees; at her side stalks a strange beast of chaos. She is well dressed in black-red robes, her hands tucked deep in her long sleeves.

The wizard, Norah of Fiume, is a rune mark of the Paths of Umbra guild and the remaining soldiers are mercenaries from Ossford. The four beasts at her side are Charon Fiends. She has spent many years traveling to and fro in the Gottland searching for the riddles of the runes. She knows of Unklar's Iron and has recently learned that the *winter rune* went south with The Maiden of Winter's Blight. She also knows that the adventurer Dante stole the *rune of unmaking* from the Graugusse (reference **Dante's Pass** above). She lives in Ossford part of the year, but does most of her research and keeps much of her wealth in the far-off town of Fiume.

If the party treats with her she offers to make camp with them and exchange news of the lands. She relates the story of the dwarves who attacked her party, for her pets offended them.

Always curious and strongly believing in fate, she looks at all encounters as a possible source of information. If the party lets on that they are seeking anything to do with rune magic she gently presses them for more information, attempting to determine if they have information that she can use, or power she needs to take. She also sizes up their strengths and weaknesses. Norah of Fiume is very clever, quick-witted, and will at no time let on that she is seeking rune magic of any kind.

If asked about her association with the Umbra Guild, hers is a quest for information that she needs to complete a text which she is writing, "A Lexicography of the History of the Northern Realms of the Lands of Ursal, A Biographical Geography."

She parts with the company in the morning, but sends one of her Fiends to follow them. They cross to the north bank, heading to the high country from which the characters just traveled.

If the party attacks, she defends herself and soldiers. First, she sends the charon fiends and soldiers to meet the party in the ankle-deep river, keeping the single largest Fiend at her side. The soldiers fight the party until half their number are dead and fall back. If Norah feels she is being outclassed or cannot overcome the party she flees into the forest.

NORAH OF FIUME (This lawful evil 11th level female Rune Mark's vital statistics are HD 11, HP 40, and AC 16. Her primary attributes are intelligence, wisdom, and charisma. Her significant attributes are dexterity 14, constitution 12, intelligence 16 and charisma 17. Norah attacks with her spells, attempting to unsettle and confuse her opponents before striking them with the full force of damage causing magic. In close quarters she wields her staff of ice which causes an extra 1d12 points of cold damage upon any successful hit (a successful constitution save cuts the damage in half). She possesses: body tattoos that act as magical totems, staff of ice with 50 charges, wand of cure serious wounds with 50 charges (5th caster level), +4 shawl of intelligence, +5 cloak of resistance, +4 bracers of armor, 200 pp.

She possess three codices on her person; her Codex of the Initiate, the Codex of the Winter Runes, and a third she has created called the Codex of Norah, within it are four of the Four Pillar runes: enchantment, fire, unmaking and dreaming.

She is able to use 13 runes a day. She has one static rune cast upon a wooden chip. The static rune is recall, and the conditional rune is rending. When she bites the chip the recall rune returns her to her tower in Fiume. She uses it only in emergencies.

THE PRIEST (This 8th level lawful evil human cleric's vital statistics are HD 8d8, HP 40, and AC 22. His primary attributes are wisdom, constitution, and dexterity. His significant attributes are intelligence 14 and wisdom 20. He wields a mace in combat and wears magic armor. He possesses +3 cloak of resistance, +1 plate mail of spell resistance (SR 15), wand of cure light wounds with 50 charges (1st caster level), wand of cure serious wounds with 23 charges (5th caster level), 50 pp.

Spells Prepared: 0: create water x2, detect magic x2, detect poison, purify food and drink. 1st: bless, death watch, entropic shield, obscuring mist, shield of faith, doom, protection from chaos*. 2nd: augury, death knell, hold person, remove paralysis, calm emotions*. 3rd: prayer, invisibility purge, searing light, speak with dead, dispel magic*. 4th: divination, freedom of movement, tongues, imbue with spell ability.)

BERIC OF THE ORANGE PLATE, RANGER: (This 6th level chaotic good human ranger's vital statistics are HD 6d10, HP 39, and AC 17. His primary attributes are strength, dexterity, and constitution. His significant abilities are strength 14 and dexterity 16. He wears +2 leather armor and shield, and carries a +2 long sword, 2 potions of healing,

longbow, 20 arrows, a pack, and hunting gear. He carries a fair amount of gold, usually around 88 gp. He carries a small ring around his neck. It is made of an orange basalt rock, lined with white strands. It is a family heirloom, belonging to his mother and then to his daughter, both of whom are now deceased. It is worth 500 gp.)

MERCENARIES (5-8 AS NEEDED): (These neutral to neutral evil humans' vital statistics are HD 5d10, AC 17, and HP varies. Their primary attributes are physical. Their significant attributes are strength 17, dexterity 14, and constitution 14. They attack with a variety of weapons, pole axes, swords and the like. They have mixed ensembles of armor, pieces taken from here and there that are hobbled together much like a gladiator's. Three of them have +1 chain shirts in their ensemble and all carry master work swords and axes. Any other weapons and equipment are normal. Each has 50 gp.)

CHARON FIEND (These lawful evil creatures' vital statistics are HD 5d10, HP varies, and AC 16. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with two claws for 1d6+1 and one bite for 1d10+1 points of damage. They have darkvision and twilight vision. They are able to camouflage themselves, possess poison attacks, and are able to rend their opponents.)

If Norah is captured she yields no information unless forced by magical means or torture; she remarks that the 14 dwarves and three slain halflings are rogues offended by her pets. She attempts to ingratiate herself to any Rune Mark in the party by calling upon a common cause. In this vein she does give away all she knows, which is, that the Winter Rune, stolen from the Iron Pillar, passed into the Winter Wood. If she joins the party for whatever reason, she attempts to find out everything she can from the other Rune Mark(s) about their travels and riddles and so forth.

DIETRICH

There is one survivor from the party of dwarves and halflings, Dietrich. Wounded in the stomach, he crawled to the edge of the river and slid down the bank. He hides there now, packing his wound with mud and river grass; he listens to what unfolds above. If both parties leave, he crawls out and attempts to follow the characters, hoping to get some assistance. If the two parties gather for a camp he stays hidden until the following morning, hoping that they both leave. If Norah leaves he comes out of his hiding place.

A halfling, battered and bleeding from a wound in the stomach, staggers into view. He carries his head high, but his face is pale and drawn for the loss of blood is tremendous, the red-black substance staining his torn white jerkin and shirt. Falling to one knee on the river's edge, he calls to you for aid.

DIETRICH (This chaotic neutral 9th level halfling's vital statistics are HD 9, HP 48, and AC 20. His primary attributes are dexterity and intelligence. His significant attributes are strength 13, dexterity 16, and intelligence 14. He has all the abilities of a 9th level rogue and halfling. He carries a short sword +2, leather armor +5, light crossbow, 12 bolts, and a quiver. He has a 40 gp in his pouch.)

Dietrich is a halfling of the Bauml clan and hails from the Beormot Ridge area. He and two of his cousins were employed by the dwarves in Ossford to guide them to the Sorgon River and the Pass at the Roof of the World beyond. They wished to cross over the Holmgrads without going through the Kleberock. The dwarves intended to plunder the Graugusse. Once patched up, fed and wined, Dietrich freely passes this information onto the party. Further, he offers his services to the party, free of charge, as a thanks to the aid they gave him. Dietrich knows many of the legends of the region and is well versed in travel in the southern lands, the Warden Plains, the Mammoth Ridge, etc. He is possessed of intimate knowledge of the Maiden of Dunhollow (see below) though he knows very little about the wood itself other than it is haunted.

The ford upon which the battle was fought lies squarely at the doorstep of the Dunhollow Wood and leads south and west toward the mountains beyond.

DUNHOLLOW

Travel through the Dunhollow Wood is slow as the trail is difficult to follow. The nicely spaced trees are old, with wide, entangling canopies, many of which droop almost to the ground. The trail winds in and out of these trees, often being lost in the clearings beneath the branches. The trek through the woods takes four days from the banks of the Sorgon River to the eve of the forest in the south.

If Dietrich is with the party he explains that the forest is haunted and cautions the party to be quiet, to move with care, and to build only small fires sheltered in the crooks of trees. Making any noise, stoking too large a fire, or even drinking the water may draw the many haunts that wander the wood.

Indeed, the wood is haunted. The tortured souls of the victims of Castle Nacht wander haplessly through the wood, often gathering in great hosts of a hundred or more. They move as vapors through the mists of the early morning which always gather (see **setting material above**), or as shadows in the dark of night. In quiet voices that echo the pain of death, they call out to one another or to themselves, leading the party to believe that the mist itself is alive. These clouds represent scores of beleaguered souls.

Roll normal encounters for travel through the forest. It should take the party about four days travel, assuming nothing goes wrong, to arrive at the foot of the Shadow Mountains and the Wernher Road.

Place the following encounter where convenient on the trek through the forest.

The forest is particularly dark, the boles of the trees a deep gray, and the canopy overshadows it all. In the distance a wind picks up. It moans as it twists and turns through the forest, until at last you realize there is no wind, at which point you spy a deep cloud of fog moving slowly through the trees. It seems to glow in the darkness and moves as if alive and sentient, slowly enveloping trees and small hillocks. The moans pick up and fade, rolling over you like the tide and you discern voices, pain-wracked voices, carrying a terrible agony. The sense of their longing overwhelms you and no matter your stature, a fear of their suffering rises in you. Images of a squat, black fortress, a stain of dark and evil on the slopes of hills broken by a thousand years of turmoil. rise in you.

The fog of dead rolls over and through the party, spreading its reek of fear. The party must make the appropriate saves per the level of the ghost encounter. For purposes of the "Horned God's Winter," the CK must set the level of the ghost encounter (see *New Monsters* for more detail).

- 1) 5-10 are equal to a 5 HD ghost
- 2) 11-20 are equal to a 10 HD ghost
- 3) 21-30 are equal to a 15 HD ghost
- 4) 31-40 are equal to a 20 HD ghost

The fog suddenly engulfs the party, slowly coiling around and through everyone. It's cool and hard to see; faces loom before them, shrouded in white mist, contorting in twisting convulsions. One scream sounds, a wail of agony and madness, and the fog itself goes mad as other faces rise and shout, echoing the original call. Whirling around the party are the forms of dozens of figures, great and small. They beat upon the characters' senses and call the to the realm of the dead.

GHOST, DUNHOLLOW, CLOUD *(These lawful evil creatures' vital statistics are HD varies, AC 20, and HP varies. Their primary attributes are mental. They attack with a slam for 1d12 points of damage. Any successful hit ages the victim, unless he makes a successful constitution save. The affected suffer as follows: humans and half-orcs 1d8 years, halflings 10-30 years, and dwarves and gnomes 2d6 decades. Elves are immune. They also utter a frightful moan that subjects any who hear it to a fear spell, unless a wisdom save. They are incorporeal and use telekinesis.)*

FREYJA, THE MAID OF DUNHOLLOW

Upon the slopes of Gardrim Mountain, within the Pools of Dunhollow, there dwells a lady of surpassing beauty and sadness named Freyja. She is the sister of Valyana and Ainoja and dwells alone in a long house in the Dunhollow. She left her home in the village of Yinsfeord in the Holmgrad Mountains to the north. When she was very young, two giants fell upon the village and after devastating the hamlet they stole her sister Valyana,

renowned for her voice and beauty, and vanished into the wild. The town grieved for the loss. The mourning never left the village so when the time seemed right Freyja took to her sister's trail, intent on finding the giants and bringing her sister home.

Frost Giants are wont to come only during a winter's storm, living in their halls and mansions when the wind does not blow. By the time she set on her quest, the trails of the giants had grown cold and Freyja wandered the high mountains for a great while, until at last she came to the southern lands and the Valley of the Sorgan River. After many trials she settled in the deeps of Dunhollow, refusing to return home without her sister but lost in the hope of ever finding her.

Unbeknownst to Freyja, the curse that befell her sister, which bound her to the mountains of the Frost Giants, snared her as well. Forever tied now to the Dunhollow Wood and its ancient ground, eternal life is Freyja's. She lives a timeless life, never aging, nor changing, nor is she aware of the changes in the world around her. She thinks only on her loss and that of her sister's and what pain she may have felt in the end. Freyja has become a Mordius Dryad, one bound to the land upon which she lives, and whose moods bring the weather. For this reason the ghosts and fogs of the Dunhollow echo her sorrow, and tarry in the forest longer than they ever should.

When the party first sees her, they find her drawing water from one of the pools.

It takes you a moment to discern the movement in the darkness. The trees here are huge affairs and no light of day or night spills through their canopy. The trees are largely white oaks with bark that shimmers in the light and long, heavy leaves. There is a slight figure across the clearing. Her gown is long and full sleeved, her long hair black and her skin pale. As you watch her movements, you realize she's drawing on a rope, suspended from which a simple bucket rises from the dark, still waters at her feet. Her alabaster skin reflects the light of the trees. Beyond her stands a long, low house built in the fashion of the northmen.

Unless they have used some type of magical stealth, Freyja is aware of their coming, as she speaks with all of the forest around her, trees, grass, brush. She is not alarmed, nor acts so.

Her home is fashioned from living trees whose boles she has tamed to grow laterally along the ground before rising again to the sky above. It is a simple affair, about 60 feet long and 30 feet wide; the trees serve as the walls, and their canopies mingling above act as a roof that rises on up into forest around the home. A small stream runs through the middle of it beside a very small fire pit.

If the party approaches calmly, offering no violence or threat, then Freyja is very open and friendly to them. She invites them to enter her home and rest there as long as they feel the need. Here, they are given food and drink of surpassing taste. The food and drink taken together in the house prove restorative; by



the first meal's end, all wounds are healed. This affect is good only once, as the food loses its unique quality once it is eaten.

If queried about her person, Freyja says the following: "I have lived here since I gave up the search for my sister, Valyana whom the Giants bore from our home when we were younger. Long I searched, covering all the lands north of the river, but there was never any sign. I know that my younger sister, Ainoja, came in search of us too, and she passed into the south carrying what she called a compass for the old ways. It was some iron she had, the head of a staff. I await her here, but it has been a long while for she passed into the mountains... some seasons before."

This is in truth all she can impart. The enterprising character will of course discern that the iron she is talking about is the Winter Rune itself taken from Unklar's Iron. Upon a successful intelligence check (CL determined by Castle Keeper) the character may make the connection. The information is not critical to the move south, but may help in giving the characters a better understanding of what they are up against in the Winter Wood.

If the party continues to be kind and offers in any way to help the Maiden find her sister (they may have already done this in the mountains north) then Freyja offers them a look at the *Book of Years*. It lies, she explains, in Mordrius' Grove, just north of her home.

The party must strip themselves of all weapons as well as set aside any footwear. Once unclad, she leads them up a short path to a grove of trees.

The trail ends in a small clearing, surrounded by 12 towering trees. These forest giants stand like sentinels of the old world and seem to brood upon your passing. Beyond the grove you spy a deep, dark, blue pool of water. The cool water pulls you, calls you to plunge into the unexplored depths, to vanish into the dark and unearth treasures beyond human compare. Before you are pulled into the Dunhollow Pool, however, you see a simple stone pedestal upon which resides a book, leather bound and locked.

This is the Mordius Grove and the book is the *Book of Years*. It possesses the power of wisdom and those who approach it with humility can be so blessed. Freyja explains that a supplicant must approach the book and take up the quill. This summons the power of the goddess Mordius, a goddess of nature. She grants an answer to any direct question put to her. Once the question is written in the book, the answer appears on the following page.

Any attempts to twist a question or gain more than one answer will result in the spell being broken. The *Book of Years* can be read only once by a character. The question can be great or small as the characters deem; the CK should answer to the best

that the situation and his own knowledge allow. The supplicant gains a point of wisdom and a point of charisma. Those enterprising characters who don't want to ask a direct question, but simply kneel before the book gain a point of wisdom, but no specific knowledge. The point of wisdom is automatic, but the characters should not be told until all characters have used the book. If a character asks a question and returns to ask another, the pages will not except the ink from the quill and the page remains blank.

The party can stay as long as they like at the Maiden's house, but Dietrich warns them that if they eat more than three meals there, they run into the danger of becoming ensnared by the Maiden's world. Every meal after the third (counting one meal a day), the character must make a wisdom save (CL: 8) or become ensnared. Those ensnared remain at the Maiden's house. In time they fade from the world, becoming benevolent spirits that wander the woods around her home. They may be rescued if a *remove curse* is cast upon them, or if Freyja is killed, or her sister is rescued and brought to her home.

FREYJA, MORDIUS DRYAD (This neutral creature's vital statistics are HD 7d8, HP 41, and AC 17. Her primary attributes are mental. She attacks first with spell use, but if pressed wields a long, thin, +4 spear of dancing that acts in all respects like a dancing sword for 1d8+4 points of damage. She has symbiosis with Dunhollow Wood, allowing her connections with greater areas than normal dryads and the ability to awaken plant life. She also has spell-like abilities that allow her to dimension door as a 7th level caster. For more information refer to *New Monsters* below.)

Freyja is small, thin and petite. Her skin is pale, so much so that in the light of day her blue veins are easily seen. Her hair is pitch black and long, cascading down around her shoulders and arms, reaching even to her waist. She wears simple garments, a long gown of dark blue and black. It shimmers in the light of the stars and captures the lights of the fogs of the Dunhollow when they pass.

Freyja has amassed a small fortune which is kept in the pool in the grove. A water elemental dwells there, keeping watch upon her fortune. If she calls upon it, the creature brings her the treasure. The following items are in the haul: 120 pp, 400 gp, 7 gems (each worth 50 gp) and one magical gem of healing that, if worn upon the breast, heals 1-4 points a day; she also has a suit of +5 elven chainmail and a +4 *tulwar of wounding* which she uses in battle if need be.

OVERLAND

When the party decides to leave Freyja's abode and continue their trek into the south they find themselves at the feet of the Shadow Mountains, just beneath the Tugensele Plateau at the Baerlun Tunnel.

WERNHER ROAD (# 14 ON MAP)



his encounter involves travel through the long Tugensele Valley; here an old Dwarven Road, the Wernher Road, begins and follows the length of the valley. The Adventurers must pit their wits against monsters, weather, and terrain to negotiate the road and bring themselves safely out of the Warden Plains and on the road to the Winter Wood.

The land is one of extremes, where low-lying, jagged mountains drop off into steep valleys; dry, almost arid plateaus feed water into deep lush valleys. Precipitation varies as the mountain's rain barriers bring huge amounts of water to one region, but give another very little; vegetation grows thick where the rain falls or water run-off is great, but is sparse in other areas. Much of the land hosts a wide variety of evergreen trees, lob-lolly and yellow pines, cedar, and the like. The melt-off from the snow gathers in pools that turn to streams and tumble into mountain lakes and ponds; the large snow caps on the high mountains feed the whole system.

It is a land abundant with food if one knows what to look for, and possesses the time to hunt and gather. The Holmgrads house a number of giants, the frost giants being more common than all others. These wander the mountains in search of prey, often alone, but at times in the company of one or two companions; the Hoden is a favored spot to hunt. Hippogriffs hunt these high extremes as do other creatures, the manticore, yeti, wyrvn, and bugbears.

Some men dwell here, but they are wild and far from the haunts of men. Several large tribes move through the forests, migrating from one area to the next, hunting and gathering food. They are tall people, light-skinned with blue or green eyes. They worship the Og Aust, the old gods, calling on the spirits of the land to safeguard them and guide them. They use stone tools, though many trade with the northmen of the south and east for metal tools and weapons.

THE ROAD

The Tugensele Plateau marks the southern boundaries of the Dunhollow Wood and the northern fence that is the Shadow Mountains. It is a broad, dry plateau, protected from the northern winds by the Shadow Mountains and that enjoys the warm, moist air of the Dunhollow country. The precipitation the area receives tends to linger as snow in the winter and autumn, but giving the soil enough nutrients that the Tugensele plays host to fields of bunch grass and flowering cous grass in the spring and summer. It is perfect grazing ground for large herds of yak, elk, red deer, turkey, and other animals, and as such attracts a large number of predators: wolves, bears, bugbears from the north, ogres, and the like.

Where the Tugensele ends, the Wernher road begins. On the far western edge of the plateau stands the towering fence of the Shadow Mountains. The mountains tower over the country, creating a seemingly impassible barrier. As one approaches they



see only snow-capped peaks, tall cliffs, fields of boulders, and glacial snow packed into deep canyons. However, the mountains are cut by a series of deep, interconnected canyons and ridges that the dwarves tamed long ago when they built the Wernher Road.

The plateau itself rises up against a cliff face some 1000 feet high. The dwarves cut a tunnel through the cliff to the valley's beyond and there the road begins.

The road itself is roughly 120 miles long. It consists of cobbles cut and shaped in squares and rectangles set in a checkerboard pattern. Where necessary, the road is elevated two to three feet above the ground, set upon gravel with natural run-offs built in. The dwarves shaped the land as they built, removing many natural obstacles, real and anticipated; for this reason it has survived in relatively good shape for the long centuries. The wild men who occupy the valleys use it often, keeping it clear of brush, trees, and grasses.

Despite this, the road has suffered the scourge of time. In places it has been washed out, disintegrated, or just absorbed by the land. In several of the marshy valleys, bridges remain where the road has sunk into the mire.

Traveling the road is difficult as it follows the natural contours of the land, climbing up hills and cliffs as high as 5000 feet above sea level where snow often covers the road, then plunging into deep valleys that are barely 1000 feet above sea level, where run-off from the elevations gathers in marshy pools and swamps. Upon



the high slopes, pine, hemlock, and fir trees grow in abundance, mixed with any number of smaller elderberry and chokeberry brush. In the marshy valleys, several hardwoods thrive, mostly black cottonwood and big leaf maple trees.

Despite the road, movement in this terrain is difficult; the winding road snakes up long slopes and back down steep inclines, slowing travelers appreciably. On a good day travelers can cover eight miles, but on bad days reduce it to as few as four. If weather intervenes, the travel slows again.

WEATHER ON THE WERNHER

Like the terrain, the weather is extreme. Sudden storms blow off the northern mountains, bringing huge amounts of snowfall to the southern valleys of the road, but the mountains that gave them birth block sections of the road from the worst part of the storm. The deep valleys shelter the sun's warmth, trapped in the humid air where no wind blows.

Roll weather daily. Consult the following chart.

CHANCE(D20)	CONDITIONS	VISIBILITY	EFFECT ON MOVEMENT
1-10	None	Good	0%
11-15	Moderate	2-3 Miles	90%
16-18	Bad	0.5-2 Miles	50%
19-20	Severe	0.1-0.5 Miles	10%

FOOD

Food is abundant in the valleys of the Wernher road, and even on the slopes if one knows what they are looking for. There is plenty of wild game, deer, mountain sheep, turkeys, and other small fowl. Hunting animals for food is time-consuming; a ranger can easily spend a whole day to track enough food to feed himself and a few companions. Foraging may produce better results.

The cous grass, or flower, produces a huge tuberous root; harvesting four or five of these takes only a half-hour or so, and can feed a man for a day. They are dry and a little tasteless, but provide a solid meal. Elderberry and chokeberry bushes grow throughout the valleys and in the tree line above. Industrious players can harvest these as they travel.

EDIBLE PLANTS

Black Cottwood, the bark

Cous Flower, the roots

Cames Grass, the roots

Elderberries

Chokeberries

FORAGING

If the characters run out of food and are forced to forage, cut their movement in half. This assumes they possess some knowledge of the terrain and the flora that exists here. This reduced movement accounts for time gathering roots and berries, and hunting and trapping small game. Hunting this way is possible for one week, at which point the characters begin to feel the nagging affects of malnutrition and should be encouraged to spend a full day hunting and gathering to flesh out their diet. Failing to do so weakens the body. After the second week, 1 point of constitution per day is lost.

Note: It is unnecessary and counterproductive to create a complex system of charts with all incumbent variables as that is not conducive to fast-paced play.

ENCOUNTER

Roll encounters on a d12. On a roll of 1 there is an encounter. Encounters are not common in the mountains, so roll the d12 four times during the day and twice at night. Consult the Gottland-Ne Encounter Charts.

THE BAERLUN

The Wernher Road begins at the end of the plateau. Here a towering cliff, over 1000 feet high, stretching east and west as far as the eye can see, blocks the west-going traveler. The dwarves took the time to cut a tunnel through the mountain to break into the deep valley on the far side. This tunnel they called the Baerlun, after its architect.

The tunnel is just over a mile in length. It is paved, with walls and a roof. Arches line the tunnel, one every 100 feet. Every 1000 feet is a large open hall that can sit up to 500 comfortably. These way-houses served the traveling dwarves as rest areas and places to hide from storms. Each way-point normally has a source of water, run-off, captured in channels from the cliffs above. The third area's water passage is blocked by some debris and there is no water there.

The tunnel is dark, possessing no outside sources of light, though in friendlier times, lanterns on each of the arches lit the way. Some few of these remain, but most have long since vanished. Those that do remain are still in working order, though they contain no oil.

Before you the road washes up against a cliff over 1000 feet tall. It's steep, though its broken face offers plenty of ledges and crevices for purchase. It is obvious, however, that a climb is risky; to fall is to die, but the road itself rises up a ramp to an opening in the cliff. It does not look natural, and upon closer investigation, you realize it is constructed of stone and mortar. There are no gates or doors but what you see at the top of the ramp is undoubtedly a tunnel.

The Baerlun has become home to a colony of dire colbies. These strange creatures occupy the third way-stop, some 2000 feet into the tunnel. They occasionally hunt on the Tugensele Plateau but normally wait in the darkness of the Baerlun, clinging to the ceiling or behind arches, waiting for some creature to pass beneath.

NOTE: The CK should place as many dire colbies as necessary to make the encounter challenging.

DIRE COLBY (*These chaotic evil creatures' vital statistics are HD 2d8, AC 18, and HP varies. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with two claws for 1d6 points of damage each and a bite for 1d8 points of damage. They are only able to bite if they successfully strike with both claws.*)

Scattered around the third way-point are hordes of bones mingled with all manner of debris. If a detailed search of the area is made, it reveals 300 gp in coin, a suit of +1 *dwarven chainmail*, six +1 *hand wraps* that grant their user a +1 to hit and damage when using their fists to pummel or strike someone, a potion of cure light wounds, a *ring of spell turning*, a ring with three runes on it (CK's choice), a book with three wizard or illusionist spells in it, and a *feather token*.

The tunnel opens on the far side of the cliff face to a deep, long valley. A long broad lake stretches the length of the long valley, fed by countless streams and run-offs. Trees cluster along the banks of the lake and up the deep gulches and clefts that creep up the towering mountains. The ridge lines are barren of all but short, faded green grasses and patches of yellow flowers. A warm humid air greets you. The road winds down into the valley, following the course of several switchbacks until it breaks into valley proper, snaking off into the distance.

This is the beginning of the long Tugensele Valley that leads through the western fence of the Holmgrad Mountains and ends at the Plains of Doost

DEEP LAKE VALLEY

This valley is 18 miles long. The road follows a relatively gentle path, following the northern bank of the lake, where the vegetation thins out due to lower amounts of precipitation. Travel is very easy here, normal even. Barring incident, the characters should cover the distance in a day.

Game and water are both plentiful.

The valley is rich in game and predators. Roll encounters every three hours on a d12; on a 1, consult the encounter table above for possible encounters.

SADDLETOP

Deep Lake Valley ends at the foot of a large saddle-back hill that stretches across the whole of the Tugensele Valley. The hill is over 3000 feet tall, but the rise is gentle, climbing slowly up to apex over the course of four miles. The ground here is dry; all moisture runs off its course and down into the valley below.

At its top, the hill breaks into a wide shelf roughly six miles across.

There is no water here, though wild grasses and the cous flowers grow, nestled into rocks, clefts, and the like. There are bones everywhere, animal and other.

This whole area is a primary hunting ground for a nest of fiedoths, called shovelmouths, that dwell on the southern face of the mountains to the north. They perpetually hunt the saddle top, swooping down on unsuspecting prey.

SHOVELMOUTH (*This creature's vital statistics are HD 7d8, AC 17, and HP varies. Its primary attributes are mental. It attacks with a single bite for 1d10 points of damage. It is able to ram its victims. It also can grab its prey with tentacles that serve as tails. Each tentacle does 1d6 points of damage.*)

The shovelmouth attacks by ramming its prey, trying to knock it over (save versus dexterity). If successful, it hovers over the victim, encasing it in its tentacles and attempting to absorb the target through barbs along its tentacles.

The creature's treasure lies scattered all over the broad hill, wherever its victims fell and died. If the party makes a determined search for treasure, for every hour of searching off-road they have a chance of finding coins, gems, equipment, or magic. Roll a d12 to determine which.

ROLL COIN

- | | |
|------|---|
| 1-4 | 1-100 gp in coins |
| 5-7 | 1-10 gems (10-25 gp) |
| 8-10 | Master work equipment and gear, choose from equipment list in this book |
| 11 | Magic items, consult <i>Monsters & Treasure</i> or choose |
| 12 | Fire Rune Stone, or choose |

BROKEN ROCK

The Saddletop plateau ends in a gentle slope down into Broken Rock. This area comprises the bulk of the center portion of the journey, consisting of 45 miles of rolling hills and valleys; the valley is roughly 11 miles wide. These road winds up and down the hills, snaking back and forth across the valley floor. There

are marked elevation changes ranging up to 4000 feet above sea level. These hills are cut by steep drop-offs and narrows gulches. The road follows the hills, for the most part.

The going seems easy but is rather rough, and the party only makes about six to eight miles a day.

Along the road there are precious few resources, water, or food; there is no firewood. Off-road, down in the valleys, food and water are plentiful.

Encounters in this stretch of the journey are normal for the road. Consult above. A small herd of mountain ponies make their home here.

Check encounters as above in Deep Valley.

NIMAPOL

Living in this large stretch of country is a tribe of stone age humans. They number about 1600 people, broken into 8 bands. They range the entire length of the valley and into the high mountains above. They call themselves the Nimapol.

The Nimapol bands are led by any number of headmen, or chiefs; there are war chiefs, hunting chiefs, Mouths of the Gods, and so on. The warriors usually number 20% of a band's actual number and range in age from 14 to 40. They use bows, arrows, spears, war clubs, stone axes, and stone daggers. One in ten possesses a metal weapon. They are rich in food and an alcoholic drink called skun that is very potent though bitter to the taste. They know the geography of their country well.

The Nimapol have scouts that range the valley. They spy the party as it travels off the Saddletop. Every 12-hour period the party is in the valley, there is a 1 in 10 chance of being spotted by the Nimapol.

They do not attack but immediately send runners to the other other bands to warn them, and all move their people deeper into the wooded gulches. They send a war party out to meet the characters and determine whether they are a threat or not. They are not adverse to trading, if they are given metal tools. They are not ignorant savages, but experience hunter-gatherers. If relations are friendly enough they invite the party back to their campsites.

They speak their own tribal language.

ENCOUNTER WITH THE NIMAPOL

Use the following to instigate an encounter if needed.

The road tops a small, round, snow-covered hill top. It switches back in front of you, headed down the far side of the hill. As you negotiate the crest you notice a several carrion birds circling a dark patch in the snow. Several of the birds have landed, fighting amongst themselves as they fight for a spot on the intended meal.

The dark spot is a Nimapol child called Carlut, which in the Vulgate would mean Out of Rocks. He left his band 12 days previous to find the Aug Oust, the Old Gods, so they might give him guidance. He has wandered in the wilderness alone since leaving his village. He is nearly starved to death, for he has fasted as well. He lies upon the ground, nearly dead.

If the party chooses to rescue the boy and feed him, they find that he recovers very quickly. In just over a day he is conscious and able to speak. He only speaks his own language and sign language. It is up to the characters to overcome the language barrier.

Carlut views the encounter as one guided by the Old Gods and he seeks any sign of this amongst the party. This sign could be any animal symbol that is visible, such as a hawk on a tabard, a boar's head on a pommel, etc. He adopts this as the sign of that particular god, from which he gains his power over the world.

He offers to take the party to his band where his father can aid them in their journey.

The travel to the band takes two days. When they spot the party, the band marshals its warriors, led by the war chief Lut-te, and rushes the interlopers. They do not attack when they see the boy, but circle the party until the matter is resolved.

FIGHTING THE NIMAPOL

If forced into combat the Nimapol never fight to the death; their numbers are too few for that. They fight to wound and kill enemy but do not put themselves in life-or-death situations unless it is to save the band's women and children.

Any war chief is an 8-10th level ranger. Other band members are fighters and rangers from 1st to 8th level. They possess their own form of magic and if given proper time to gather their "power" as they call it, often add war paint and war relics to their battle array. These serve as magic items, granting users +1-4 on AC to hit and damage; this depends on the individual warrior.

Use the following as an example of a Nimapol high-level warrior.

LUT-TE (This chaotic neutral human ranger's vital statistics are Level 10, AC 20, and HP 82. His primary attributes are wisdom, strength, and dexterity. His significant attributes are strength 18, dexterity 15, wisdom 14. He attacks with a spear and shield. In close quarters, he possesses a war club. The spear has a number of ritual totems on it that grant it a +5 to hit and damage. The shield protects him against normal missiles so long as it is not raining. The war club is painted green and marked so that its ritual power is +2 to hit and damage.)

RUNE MARKS

The Nimapol shamans are called Mouths of the Gods. These are rune mark holy men. They range in level from 1st to 10th, with one tribal leader of 15th level.

If the characters befriend the Nimapol, they offer to teach them

the way of the rune marks, the Mouths of the Gods.

This of course takes time and should be a perfect time to advance a season or two as the rune mark learns his new craft.

BITTERDROP CANYON

The Broken Rock Valley ends in a long shelf of rocky terrain, dipping then to lower elevations accessed by a narrow canyon that marks the divide between Broken Rock and the rest of the road. The canyon is marked by sharp, rugged cliffs. The road follows the south flank of the canyon, going down at a solid 45 degree angle. Travel is difficult, especially if anyone is laden with much gear. Every 500 feet there is a raised portion of the road, creating speed bumps.

The road snaps to the north at the canyon floor, into a thick forest of black cottonwoods. The ground here is very wet and covered in thick clumpy grasses. There are wild and dangerous animals.

The canyon is roughly 11 miles in length. However the road here is completely gone; only a single bridge remains, about 2 miles into the woods. Travel here is slow and difficult as there are numerous bogs and pools. Hordes of mosquitoes hound the characters day and night. The bridge offers a safe haven to the party, where they can dry off and rest. Travel is very slow, maybe three miles a day.

Encounters here are not common. Roll four times a day on a d12. A 1 indicates one of the following:

ROLL MONSTERS

- 1 Afanc (there is a small colony of eight of these here)
- 2 Giant Spider
- 3 Snake, Viper
- 4 Nimapol warrior
- 5 Musher (edible and aggressive fish)
- 6 Algoid
- 7 Quick Sand
- 8 Poisonous Plant

AFANC (This chaotic neutral creature's vital statistics are HD 3d8, AC 16, and HP varies. Their attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d4 or two-claw attacks for 1d6 each points of damage. They hunt by mimicking sound and luring victims into the swamp, where they attempt to drag their prey under water.)

SPIDERS, GIANT (These neutral creatures' vital statistics are HD 1d6, HP 4, 5, 5, 6, and AC 14. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a poison bite that does 1d4 points of damage and requires a constitution save or the victim takes an additional 2 points of damage for the next three turns.)

SNAKE VIPERS (These neutral creatures' vital statistics are HD 1d4, HP 1 each, and AC 1. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite that does 1 HP of damage and requires a constitution saving throw or take an additional 1d4 damage.)

MUSHER (This neutral creature's vital statistics are HD 8d8, AC 13, and HP varies. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d4 points of damage. Their skin emits a toxin that is deadly. Anyone touching the fish must make a successful constitution save within 12-24 hours or fall into a coma for 2d20 hours. For each hour after 12 the victim suffer 1d4 hit points damage until he is revived or dies.)

ALGOID (This chaotic neutral creature's vital statistics are HD 5d8, AC 15, and HP varies. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with two fists for 1d10 points of damage. It suffers only half damage from slashing or pointed weapons. They have spell immunity.)

QUICK SAND: Any character who falls into quick sand must make a successful dexterity check if attempting to grasp something as he falls; the CL is dependent upon the CK and the terrain. Once in the quick sand victims cannot break free without help, unless they make a successful strength check (CL 7).

POISONOUS PLANT: Unless there is a ranger or someone with specific knowledge of the plants, the party inadvertently passes through a patch of poisonous-contact plants. Everyone must make a successful constitution save or suffer rashes and skin lesions. Those that fail suffer a -1 from all attacks for the next 1d4 days. A ranger may make an intelligence check to determine if he spots the plants.

The water is drinkable but foul. Anyone who drinks it must make a constitution save (CL 0) or risk contracting a giardia infection that lasts up to three days. The attacks come with vomiting, diarrhea, and severe stomach cramps. A *cure disease* or similar spell removes the parasite. Within as many hours as the user has constitution points, the infection takes effect and the person becomes feverish and begins vomiting and experiencing violent bowel movements, at which point they are unable to travel.

There is little food here aside from the black cottonwood bark.

THE CLEFT

The canyon narrows precipitously at the far western end to little more than a dozen feet. Tall rocky escarpments tower on either side of the five-mile long cleft. The road crosses through here and the bottom of the Cleft is paved. Signs of an old dwarf way-station built into the wall, offering some cover, exist on the right side of the entrance to the Cleft.

A dwarf way-point remains at the half-way mark. It consists of an opening in the south cliff face about four feet tall. This opens to long corridor about 40 feet in length that ends at a bronze door set into the wall.

AREA 1 DOOR

The door is made of bronze. It is round and set to roll open, sliding into the wall to the left (when facing the door from the outside).

The door looks similar to a round shield, with a metal knob in the center of it. Reliefs of four bearded dwarf heads decorate its bronze surface, the beards all twining around the central knob.

Pressing the knob normally opens the door. Pressing it now, the knob goes into the door, but this is followed by a click sound. The door is jammed on dry runners as it has not been opened in many years. Pushing the door while pressing the knob breaks it free. A successful strength check (CL 4) is required to open it.

AREA 2 GREAT HALL

The door opens into a room 100 feet wide by 80 feet deep. It is filled with stone tables and stools. The tables are built into the floor, but the stools are free-standing.

The walls are decorated with reliefs of dwarves battling monsters and building the road.

There is little of interest in the room. The temperature is cool and the room altogether comfortable.

On the left hand wall is an arched doorway about eight feet wide. This leads down a hall to another arched doorway.

KITCHEN

Beyond the open arch is the kitchen area. Stoves are built into the walls, while tables and work benches line the walls and fill the center of the room. Shelves on the wall sport ceramic jars, small tin boxes, and other containers. Cooking implements hang from chains in the ceiling. A large coal bin sits in the northwest corner, filled with five days' worth of coal.

The room has long remained undisturbed.

A detailed search reveals little food. Whatever the dwarves kept here has long dissolved. There is a well head in the room with clear, clean water in it. This is covered by a small hatch. The kitchen supplies that remain, plates, pots, mugs, flatware, etc., are all in good and working order.

GATES TO THE BEYOND

Beneath the coal bin lies a trap door, cleverly hidden in the flagstones of the floor. Detecting it requires a successful search check (CL 8). It opens by placing pressure on the two raised portions of the flagstone at the same time. The door drops down several feet, swinging wide to the left. The opening reveals a deep pit, lined with cobbled stone walls. A ladder that plunges into the darkness. A heavy draft of wind blows up and through the tunnel; it carries the smell of burnt hair.

The ladder is bolted to the side of a cobble-stoned wall. This wall extends in the darkness 120 feet in both directions. The far side of the pit is 240 feet away. If characters cannot see that far in the darkness, the far wall remains invisible.

The stone work is carefully carved and set.

The pit is 500 feet deep. The ladder goes down 400 feet, ending 100 feet above the floor. Every 100 feet there is a small ledge to allow one to rest. The rungs are spaced for a dwarf; any taller than five feet has a little trouble negotiating the ladder.

The pit is an entrance to a gateway. One of the fabled entrance to the Rings of Brass lies here. Built by the dwarves to travel the planes, the Rings of Brass are tunnels carved into the cosmos through use of the runes. The tunnels are usually well hidden and guarded. This one is no exception.

THE FACE OF FEAR

At 250 feet, anyone descending the ladder comes to a gap in the ladder where three rungs are missing. There are faces here, carved into the stone work of the wall. Each is a dwarf with contorted face, showing terror or fear. There are several hundred of these, as they stretch around the room. They have a powerful magic mouth spell cast upon them, so that they mutter words of fear in soft whispering tones; they give birth to the thought of falling from this great height into the unknown darkness below.

Anyone here who attempts to negotiate the rungs must save versus fear (CL 7) in order to continue moving along. Any who fail their save seek to return to the safety of the kitchen above. If stuck between continuing to descend or crawling over a companion to reach the safety above, they choose the latter. This can be a dangerous task and should require a dexterity check as the CK sees fit.

END OF THE ROAD

Those who continue discover that the ladder ends about 100 feet above the floor. They can determine the distance if they can see that far in the dark or have dropped a torch or some such.

Much as above, the faces of dwarves line the walls, these descending down into the darkness, one dwarf relief for each brick as it descends. Immediately to the left of where the ladder ends is a stone with a dwarf face. Down from it one stone over is another, down from that one, one stone over is another. Each of these is a magical stair. If one steps into the space where the dwarf relief is looking they discover a stair. It leads down to the bottom.

A *detect magic* or similar spell reveals this magical effect. Dwarves have a normal chance of detecting abnormal conditions underground. A search for these magical stairs is very difficult, CL 10.

The stairs lead to the bottom of the pit.

GATES

At the bottom of the pit is a broad chamber, 240 feet across on all sides. The floor is cobbled. The room is empty but for the skeletal body of a man in armor with sword in hand.

The room is wide, nearly 250 feet across. It is empty but for the skeleton of a man. He sits against the ladder with his back to the wall. A suit of splint mail covers his body, leggings and all. A helm sits on the floor next to him, as if sat casually upon the ground. He holds a sword in his hands, pointed down, arms extended as if he were resting upon it. On his back is a quiver with three arrows in it.

The man's name is Ervyn of Peak. He was a warrior who ventured here centuries ago. He and his companions passed into the Rings of Brass but only he returned, hounded by demons. He fell back against the wall in hopes that his comrades would return. They never did.

He wears +2 *splint mail* and has a +1 *small helm*. The sword is a long sword of *luck blade*. Carved into the blade in elven are the following words: "the day is yours." The quiver holds three magical arrows, each crafted of lodestone and bound each with a different rune, *arrest motion*, *drain heat*, and *repulsion*. The arrow, if it successfully hits its target, acts as the rune does. Each is good for one use only.

The wall at which he forever stares conceals a door way to the Rings of Brass, hidden behind a magical screen of dwarven make. The dwarves cast a powerful illusion upon the wall to hide the door, a *screen* spell. The spell makes the wall appear normal. Seeing through the illusion is difficult (intelligence CL 15). However, if the characters should come to the conclusion that Ervyn was looking at something specific, they gain a +3 to their checks.

THE DOOR

Seeing through the *screen* spell reveals a tall, bronze, double doorway. It is set with the reliefs of two stone giants, each reaching out to where the doors join. All the characters need do at this point is push upon the doors and it swings wide. Beyond is a long, low staircase that winds into the infinite darkness.

This gateway leads to a maze of tunnels that snake through the planes. If the adventure turns in this direction the CK must prepare for some major plane-travel adventures. See the Rings of Brass in this volume for more information.

There is nothing left of value in this dungeon.

Returning to the surface brings the characters back to the Cleft, and a day or so later back out into the world beyond.

THE LAND OF TALL MEN

The Cleft gives way to a large, steep rise of earth and rock. The road follows this for several miles, switching back several times, until the travelers reach an elevation of roughly 5000 feet. The Land of Tall Men extends for roughly 15 miles until it ends in the Plains of Doost.

At the top of the rise the remainder of the road unfolds before them.

The country opens before you, rolling out like a massive blanket of patchy white. Snow-covered hills range with dark brown valleys where run-off has carried the mountain waste. The sky is high overhead and the mountains to the north and south offer a formidable fence. The country seems barren of life, home to glistening sun-draped snow, through which jut fingers of cold gray rock. The land tumbles in this way as far as you can see.

This is a very difficult country and travel through here is slow. The road winds up and down the many hills and is covered in sheets of ice and snow, and is in some state of disrepair. Getting off the road is very easy; unless the characters should break the ice and snow to make certain they stay on track. However, picking it back up is not difficult as it is seen here and there in the distance as it cuts through an area not covered by snow.

Movement is roughly 1-6 miles a day. Roll on a d8 to determine distance traveled. If they have proper travel gear, such as snow shoes or skis, the travel increases to 4-12 miles per day.

There is very little to eat here, unless the characters hunt for wild game.

The Land of Tall Men is however home to the ferocious yeti. These creatures stalk the hills in early evening, hunting for prey. They are extremely vicious, attacking without mercy or concern any they encounter. They hunt in pairs or small packs of up to four, but when they go into battle, they emit ferocious howls, calling any others that may be in the area.

YETI (These chaotic neutral creatures' vital statistics are HD 5d8, AC 14, and HP varies. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with two fists for 1d10 damage each and a bite for 1d8. Being very territorial, they attack anything whether they desire to eat or not.)

Where the Land of Tall Men ends lies the Home of Bjorr. Where the pass divulges into the valleys below, he has taken up his watch. Generally friendly, he welcomes travelers, enjoying games of riddles and good tales. He is always interested in news.

He will be fascinated with any story told by a party member of their encounter with Umyard and Skleome and the kidnapped Valyana.

BEER GIANTS

Bjorr resides near the base of a mountain in the Troll Downs. He lives alone in a lodge of fallen trees in a secluded grove. The lodge covers a cave, opening into the mountainside, and it is in this cave where Bjorr brews a beer of remarkable quality.

BJORR THE BEER GIANT (Giant) (He is a chaotic neutral frost giant whose vital statistics are HP 40 and AC 20. His primary attributes are physical. He attacks with two

fists for 2d8 damage each or a gigantic morning star for 8d4 damage. His special abilities are Rock Throwing, Immunity to Cold (full), Twilight Vision, and Vulnerability to Fire). He wears a helmet and bear pelts. His beard is slightly reddish and, underneath his helm, he is as bald as a rock.)

Bjorr lives a simple life: hunting, brewing, and drinking. He keeps to his own business, except when he needs to raid nearby trade routes for brewing supplies. Unlike most frost giants, Bjorr is not overtly evil. He is not particularly nice, but he won't slaughter intruders if they are respectful. He certainly will attack if provoked and he does not suffer idiots. Those that rub him the wrong way will soon find themselves at the business end of his morning star.

He greatly enjoys riddles. If in a particularly good mood (i.e., if particularly drunk), he may challenge visitors to a riddle contest. He rewards those that stump him with wineskins full of his beer.

His lodge is surrounded by several rain barrels, which he uses to collect water for brewing. The inside smells like a tavern and is spartan: a gigantic cot in corner, a fire pit in the center (lit only to cook), and a large chair and table in another corner. A shortsword +1 with a beautiful wolf-head pommel is stuck into the table (Bjorr likes the look of it and uses it as a toothpick). Empty and full barrels emblazoned with a lion's head mark (his self-appointed standard) line the walls. Drinking horns, steins, and mugs litter the room. Bear skins rugs cover the floor.

The mountain cave is full of brewing ingredients: sacks of barley, yeast, grains, hops, and barrels of water. It is chock-full of kettles, vats, and barrels, as well as wood for fuel.

Bjorr's beer is of an exceptional quality and could be sold for 50 gp a barrel. There are eight full barrels in the lodge at any given time.

Bjorr keeps his treasure in a locked chest hidden in a hole covered by a stack of barrels in the northwest corner of his lodge. Inside is a human-sized ivory drinking horn (500 gp), a sack of 300 gp, a silver statue of a lion's head (he liked it so much that he decided to use the image to mark his beer, 300 gp), and a gold-encrusted dwarf skull (1000 gp). Bjorr keeps the chest key with him at all times.

THE END OF THE ROAD

The Wernher Road winds down the long slopes of the mountains to the grassy plains below. The lands beyond the mountains are broken steppes of wild grass and stunted scrub oaks. There are many small ravines and rock shelves, gullies, and the like. There are plenty of places to hide, both for the party and any monsters which may be in the area. Trolls and orcs are common, but there are other creatures as well. These are also the lands of the Bauml Halflings.

DOOST PLAINS (# 15 ON MAP)



his encounter is set for higher-level characters. It involves travel over broad plains that stand between the Shadow Mountains and the Mammoth Ridge. The dwarven Wernher Road officially ends here and there is little trace of it aside from an occasional pylon in the grassy steppes beyond.

The Doost are very flat, covered in thick, rich grass in spring and summer; in fall it turns brown quickly and by winter, snow begins to blanket the region. It is harsh but not unlivable. Many creatures eke a living out of the steppes by shoveling snow aside and chewing at what nutrients remain.

The Plains are home to vast herds of elk that roam the length and breadth of the region. Wolves hunt them, and a recent addition to the arena are growing packs of kimer steppe devils, beasts that haunted the eastern lands but have spread to almost all locales.

The grasslands are wild and dangerous, more for wandering monsters coming from the mountains than anything else. The weather too is harsh, though when the sun is out, travel is pleasant and often uneventful.

SPOTTED

A clan of halflings have recently moved into the region, traveling from the south, up from the Crowley River region. Following the kimer, they have spent several years capturing and taming these creatures, turning them into mounts. These mounts they in turn sell to the clans to the south or even occasionally into the towns of Oss and Most.

The nature of their business requires that the halflings keep

careful watch on the steppes, in constant look-out for raiders from the mountains, trolls from the south, and whatever crawls from the tundra seeking greener pastures. They always keep a careful eye on the Wernher Road for frost giants.

The scouts range from hill to hill, traveling in bands of three to four. They ride kimer steppe devils, stopping frequently to survey the land. There is always a group watching the road. When the party leaves the shelter of the mountains, traveling onto the plains, the scouts spot them and take cover as best they can. They watch for a great long while until they have determined how many are traveling and roughly how they are armed and armored. This takes several minutes.

Each character in the party who is paying the least bit of attention is allowed a spot check (CL 9).

Like an ocean, the grass shifts and moves, currents of swaying grass bending to the whim of the winds rolling off the mountains behind you. Long leagues of grass lie before you, nestled in the shadow of the mountains. To the south, atop a small hill, a motion catches your attention. All around the hill the grass moves to the wind's beat, but on top of the hill its currents break up, swirling around what at first glance appears to be an outcrop of rock.

READ ON IF HALFLINGS SPOTTED: On closer inspection you realized those rocks are figures, mounted figures. Small creatures mounted upon some wolf-like beasts appear to be watching you. They carry spears and wear leather armor and hide-bound shields. Even as you spy them, they turn and melt into the grasses beyond, vanishing behind the hill.

Regardless of being spotted, the halflings turn their mounts around, leave the hill and head due west, heading for their band which is encamped some five leagues away. They follow natural contours, keeping themselves well hidden from the party, and move at maximum speed to put as much distance between themselves and the party as they can.

If the characters travel to the hill where the halflings stood, they readily discover the tracks of the kimer steppe devils. Unless they have encountered these creatures before it is unlikely that they have knowledge of them.

The creatures are four-legged, but their feet have three long, clawed toes and one back claw, leaving four indentations in the ground. Their weight is a little unevenly distributed, revealing to anyone with tracking skills that the creatures are bearing mounted riders that are not carrying very much weight. They are relatively easy to track (CL 4).

THE FOR-DU

Regardless of what the characters do, the halflings, members of the Bauml Clan, return home to warn their people. This takes a day and a half. As soon as they are alerted, the wagons are loaded up and sent south. They work very hard in disguising their tracks. Several rangers follow the caravan, clearing the trail; more take four wagons filled with stones and head north, making a more obvious path. The largest part of the band, about 50 in all, mount their kimer and range out after the characters to determine who they are and what business they are on.

Depending on the direction the characters travel, it should be a day or so before the war band finds them.

The halflings send several scouts ahead in order to spy the characters from a distance. Once they have found them, they wait until the following day, approaching in the early dawn. During this time enterprising characters can spot the halflings if they are looking. The CK must determine the challenge level, but the halflings possess a greater knowledge of the terrain and how to use it to hide themselves. Granting at least a CL 6 is advised.

Once they have determined their line of approach, the halflings range out in a broad half-moon shaped formation. Two lines form, 25 in each line, and the second some 40 feet behind the other. Each halfling is spaced about 15 feet apart. They approach to within a few hundred feet of the party, at which point one breaks free and trots forward.

The sun is not over the horizon when you catch sight of mounted figures approaching. Small men, probably halflings, adorned in leather, rings, and shirts of chain ride four-legged, striped beasts. The halflings carry shields and spears or short bows. All wear swords and axes on their belts. The mounts are the size of small horses, long-legged with lean, long necks. They range in color from gray to yellow, with dark stripes. They have no tail to be spoken of and their necks end in wicked curved beaks. Leather saddles possess all the trappings of normal riders. The whole outfit is well armed and obviously highly mobile.

The halflings are not aggressive and only attack the party if attacked themselves. The one that moves forward freely gives his name as Elru, son of Gelru. He asks the party from whence they come and to where they travel. He doesn't ask their business. If they seem mean, surly, or disagreeable, he breaks of the conversation and returns to the others. Unless overly threatened they shadow the party as it travels but do not interfere with them.

If the characters are friendly, the halfling returns to his chiefs who then ride forward. They treat with the characters, sizing them up to determine if they are safe or not. Their captain Barun, a 12th level knight, strikes up a friendly conversation about the plains, mountains, weather, or whatnot. He does so to gauge their response as he possesses a keen ability to see into people's motives. Barun is allowed a wisdom check (CL 5); if successful he determines their alignment.

If the characters are friendly they are invited to feast together. Assuming the characters accept, the halflings range out and capture game, bringing it back to the character to feed them. The halflings have a wealth of information about the lands to the south, the Halmsroof Pass and the giants that occupy it, as well as the wilds beyond. They offer to aid the characters in any way they can, even so much as guiding them to the mouth of the pass.

If the characters travel with the halflings for several days the two groups can get to know each other. Only at this time do the halflings offer to take the characters to their laagers, the large wagons their clan uses as homes and for travel. Otherwise they guide them to the pass, give them several days of rations and steer them south.

THE HALFLINGS OF BEORMOT RIDGE

The Wernher Road puts the party just north of the Beormot Ridge, the first and most defining terrain feature in central Gottland. If Dietrich is still with them (or Elru or another of the halflings from the Plains of Doost encounter), he is determined to bring them to his people, the Laager of Erul Troll Bane of Clan Bauml. These halflings are nomadic, traveling from the sea to the mountains, but generally staying in and around the ridge. There are three major bands of the clan which travel in caravans, or laagers, of wagons. Erul is their lord and he leads the largest group. It is to Erul that Dietrich is heading. If Dietrich is not with the party, they stumble on the following encounter.

There are about 700 in the clan, of which about 210 are able fighters, ranging from 1st to 15th level. Many of the women are part of this warrior arm. They travel in large wagons pulled by oxen and horses. The clan possesses about 500 kimer devils in herds that they use as mounts. They are quite wealthy, well-armed, and able to travel, even encumbered, up to 15 miles in a given day. They circle the 18 wagons at night, many sleeping on the ground, in tents, or the wagons themselves. Very friendly and communicative, they help the characters, selling them supplies at fair prices.

The clan is nomadic so the CK should place the following encounter whenever it suits the story, one to three days from the Wernher Road and the mountains.

Before you, spread out over two small hills, stands a large assortment of huge wagons. Some are double-tiered, others small and covered with canvas only. They are linked in a loose circle, in the middle of which are scores of stout halflings, drinking and eating. Some manner of feast is afoot. You see in the neighboring ravines several herds of oxen and horses. In all you guess there are five to six hundred halflings here.

As the party approaches, a horn sounds; immediately, scores of male and female halflings rush to arms, donning shields and helms, and scooping up swords, crossbows, and some few firearms (if your campaign allows these). Dietrich (or Elru, etc.) calls out in his own tongue. A stout, fat halfling in a breast plate shouts back and the two talk for a minute. Tensions relax and the party is invited into the camp.

As friends of Dietrich/Elru, the Halflings welcome the party with open arms, offering them food, drink, and shelter (beneath a canopy attached to one of the wagons). They are little interested in the party's troubles or needs, having a host of hardships of their own, but if one of the party offers to tell a tale they gather around and listen, shouting "huzzahs" when appropriate, or "booning" at the bad guys. Laager-dwelling halflings live more for the moment than most folks, and a good tale over warm mead is a welcome thing.

Eventually Erul calls the group to him. He is an old gray-hair, who still commands a stout frame. He wears a magical chain shirt and has dark, blood-stained leather breaches. He leans on a halberd when standing, and it is in his lap when sitting.

Erul queries the party about what they are doing in the Gottland and what they are looking for. He is 84 years old and knows the land very well. He lived in the country during the final years of the Winter Dark and is well acquainted with all its legends as well; he can speak of the Troll Downs, the Stone Giants, and the Kleberock as easily as any other topic. Above all else, he knows about the *The Codex of Winter* and the Paths of Umbra. Erul should serve the CK as a tool to supply the party with necessary information about the Void, the Rune Lords, etc.

He knows that good as well as evil may come of their use, and if he determines the party is good, he aids them. He resupplies them with food and drink, equipment, and weapons. Too, he offers them a safe haven should they need somewhere to mend their wounds.

He knows that the Maiden of Winter's Blight took the *winter rune*, and the staff that held it, and took it to her castle in the

Shadow Mountains where she rules her White Kingdom. He remarks the following or something similar: "*There she pays homage to the Horned God and commands the forces of the Void, bringing winter to her small corner of the world. It has wreaked havoc in these lands. Her creatures stalk our trails and hunt down the goodly folk. While all the rest of the world has moved on, thriving in the new world, our little corner, Gottland-Ne, the land without gods, is the last corner of the Horned God's winter.*"

He offers any rune mark in the party one high-level rune stone. He has several in his possession. Choose as needed.

The party is allowed to stay with the halflings as long as they like. They are never asked to leave, nor hurried on their mission. When they do leave, they are given a fond farewell. If the

encounter went well, each party member is given a horn. When they are in need they have only to sound the horn, and its note will carry with surety to the nearest friend, bringing the message of their need. See Horn of the Halfling in **New Magic Items** below. They can resupply with most basic equipment and weapons. No livestock (or horses, etc.) are available.

The journey to the border of the White Kingdom takes the characters down the length of the Plains of Doost or over Mammoth Ridge. In any case, the journey should take a week or so, unless the party has secured mounts through some other means.

The Crowley River Country, the watershed around the Winter Wood, is a wild country with nothing but ruins and wild beasts. Consult the Encounter Chart daily, or if a set encounter is desired read the following description.

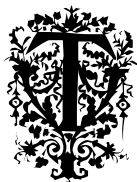


The long day at last winds to a close. Your path leads you down into a deep wash, about 40 feet down and 100 feet wide. A clear pool of water lies at the bottom. All about the area are huge grey stones calling to mind the stone giants that are rumored to dwell in the mountains to the north. Moving along the wash, you are stopped dead when you notice a boulder's shadow move; it swirls like dark liquid, coiling around the base of the stone, where it begins to take the shape of a large-winged beast. Other similar shadows rise from the stones beyond.

These are belkers and they attack immediately. The CK should allow as many belkers as is challenging to the party.

BELKER (This neutral evil creature's vital statistics are HD 7d8, AC 22, and HP 28. Its primary attributes are physical. It attacks with 2 wings (2d4), 2 claws (1d4) and a bite (1d6). The belker can assume a smoke form as well as attack with smoke claws for a further 2d4 points of damage.)

OF THE HORNED GODS WINTER (# 16 ON MAP)



The lands of the Winter Kingdom encompass the Winter Wood, its immediate environs, and the slopes and hills of the Shadow Mountains, up to but not including Dante's Pass. Most of the power of the Maiden of Winter's Blight lies in her own castle, Kalogreant, and the forest. These lands are locked in winter's embrace, the temperature never rising above 20 degrees Fahrenheit. Snow blankets the realm, turning to ice and slush on the borders during the spring and summer. Normal encounters should be rolled for the Winter Wood. If the Maiden herself is encountered, she watches the party from a distance, recognizing that they are powerful and choosing only to study them rather than engage, then returning to her castle.

Travel through the Wood should take four to five days if entered from the east, or one to two days if entered from the north or south. The land is difficult to cross, as the trails that do exist are largely for animals, and the snow at times becomes very deep.

Roll normal encounters.

Ainoja, the Maiden of Winter's Blight, dwells in Kalogreant upon a long narrow finger of a ridge overlooking the Winter Wood. Visitors must travel up a long, winding road, roughly three miles in length, that coils back on itself three times. Those further up the road can easily see travelers coming up, and those in the tall white main tower of the castle can see much of the whole road. The path is open to the south, though steep and narrow. Trees are generously placed all about, but not so much

as to block the view. Looking up, one can see the white walls of the tower itself. The castle consists of a high curtain wall, 22 feet high and 15 feet wide at the base, and large gates; beyond are the keep and three towers, each taller than its neighbor. The walls and towers are white; the double gates and shingled canonical roofs are blue. A single pennant flies from the high tower. It is blue with three stars emblazoned upon it.

After many days of travel and hardship, they come to the long road that leads up to the towers of the castle.

The trail unwinds before you. With tired legs, you at last come face-to-face with the white towers of an amazingly beautiful castle. The tall white walls stand out against the dark backdrop of the lonely peaks of the Shadow Mountains. All is quiet; the large blue gates to the keep are shut. Heavy, snow-laden clouds hang over all.

Even as the party begins to unlimber itself or even speak, Ainoja causes the snow to start falling. Huge flakes fall, slowly at first, but soon picking up speed so that visibility drops to a dozen feet or so. She then summons a wind from the south to hound the party. She does this using the *Winter Rune* magic item.

Upon a successful wisdom check (CL 7) any magic-using class may notice that this is a magically-summoned storm.

As they approach the castle, read or paraphrase the following:



The doors swing wide, unseen hands pulling them open and revealing a small courtyard that ends in steep steps. The winds whip snow about the yard and it seems as though a corridor is opened in the blinding white sheets of falling snow, at the end of which stands a woman of surpassing beauty astride a huge heavy war horse. Her long red hair is pulled back in a tight bun from whence it tumbles down her back. Her many colored cloaks envelop her, though you note that her feet are bare. She sits astride a horse of alabaster skin, whose main is woven gold. There is a deadly look in the woman's eyes and a power in the staff in her hand.

Ainoja commands four invisible stalkers, all of whom are further hidden in the snow, beneath the awnings. Any character able to detect invisible creatures through sight must make a spot check against the conditions and monsters (CL 20) in order to notice the stalkers.

If the party attacks her, Ainoja calls upon the stalkers to attack the party, closes the corridor of snow and launches herself forward, riding her steed upon the winds of snow. She strikes any who are near her as she tries to leave. She then uses the power of the Snow Horse (see below) to break free of the party. She retreats to the woods, calling a blizzard to fall upon the castle and attempting to bury all in snow. In the woods she summons the dread monsters of Unklar's making. Three score Ungern come to her, a dozen trolls and one rhemoraz. These she uses to hound any who survive the blizzard. She waits for the party to leave the castle before returning.

If the party treats with her, she invites them into the castle for a warm meal and drink. She offers them accommodations for a short while, but begs their forgiveness for not being able to house them for more than a few days, as food is in short supply.

The castle itself is almost wholly empty. The rooms have no furniture, the halls no tapestries. Only her room has a large four poster bed, wardrobe, and a vanity with a mirror. She gives them free reign of the castle as there is truly nothing to steal or be had. The castle is old and largely locked in ice. Few of the rooms are heated, and those with fireplaces have not seen flame for many long years. Wonderfully constructed and largely in good shape, the castle conjures images of a time gone by, as of a world locked in ice, much like the ancients of the Winter Dark.

In her feast hall is the greatest portion of her wealth, a *Gonfalon Standard*. These magical banners inspire men to follow whoever carries them, to push beyond their normal means and give the bearer true service. This standard bears the likeness of a great owl, with wings spread and facing the viewer. It is blue with silver markings, and the main figure is surrounded by wondrous designs.

If they mount the high tower on a clear day, they can see all the Winter Wood and the Beormot Ridge beyond. Too, Dante's pass and the twin mountains of Gardrim and Iseldrim are plain to see.

Ainoja is of course the sister to Valyana and Freyja. She is the youngest, and left home in search of her two sisters. She found the pillar of Unklar's Iron and took from it the magical *Winter Rune*, which seemed to fit perfectly on the head of her walking staff. The rune, mounted thus, opened vistas for her, exposing her to the Void and the subtle manipulation of the powers that dwell there. In time it came to possess her every thought and twist her way of thinking. To her came visions of the orderly world of the Winter Dark and these appealed to her, moreso as the quest for her sisters ended in failure. Eventually she wrote them off as dead, and in her bitterness sought to change the world to one where chaos did not hold sway, where she could hold happenstance at bay.

As a mordius dryad she possesses the ability to control the weather in her native wood, she has done this, mimicking the Winter's Dark. Thus was born the Winter Wood and its mirror image of the Winter Dark. Though not evil herself, she channeled corrupt powers, and the Winter Wood became an evil place, soon harboring many refugees of Unklar's folk. Ainoja housed them as harbingers of a world yet to come, of the world that had been before. In her timeless life, their evil deeds accounted for little, and thus in time all those around here were creatures dark of heart or filled with malice.

She does not know the power of the Void nor has she ever crossed the Wall of Worlds; she has not used the *Winter Rune* very much. She knows its *dimension sight* ability and its *recall* ability.

She does know that the party is a latent threat to her and her world of ice and snow. With that in mind she directs all their queries to Dante's Pass, hinting that there lies the source of the power they want. She proceeds to tell them that in those high mountain trails is the gate to the Void; she even tells the story of Dante Wilson, how he fell and why. He was a rune mark of surpassing ability and fell with his relic and his runes in the mountain pass (see above).

Unless the characters speak of her sisters, her intent is to send the party into the pass and once they are gone to bring a mountain of snow down upon them, calling upon the forces of the *Winter Rune* to bring about a blizzard, at the very least driving them into the wastes beyond.

If the characters talk with the Maiden for any length of time they are likely to note her melancholy nature. She speaks of her sisters frequently and names them Valyana and Freyja. She knows that Valyana is imprisoned by giants in the high mountains of the Holmgrads, but has no knowledge of her location, nor does she know that Freyja lies in the Dunhollow Pools. These worries seem to be the source of her agony. If the party has met them or knows of their whereabouts and if the party offers up any of this information then Ainoja's attitude softens considerably. If the party offers to reunite the sisters she promises to pay them well. They have but to deliver Valyana to Freyja's Home in the Dunhollow Pools to earn the reward. Once the quest is fulfilled, and the party returns to Kalogreat Ainoja offers them the *Gonfalon Standard* as payment, further she gives each party member four *threads of law* and the *Winter*

Rune. After that she immediately mounts her steed, leaves the party the keys to the tower and heads north to find her sisters.

AINOJA, MORDIUS DRYAD (*This chaotic good creature's vital statistics are HD 7d8, AC 17, and HP 41. Her primary attributes are mental. She attacks first with spell use, but if pressed wields a curved tulwar +4 dagger of dancing that acts in all respects like a dancing sword for 1d8+4 points of damage. She has symbiosis with Dunhollow Wood, allowing her connections with greater areas than normal dryads and the ability to awaken plant life. She also has spell-like abilities that allow her to dimension door as a 7th level caster. For more information refer to New Monsters below.*)

She rides a magical horse, a snow steed (*see below*). The beast is almost always with her.

If the party fails to unravel the Maiden's true desires she sets them on the path to Dante's Pass and to what she believes is certain doom. If they have aided her in reuniting with her sisters, she freely tells them of the treasure lost upon the pass and offers to guide them to its beginning. She also warns them of the treacherous conditions there as well as the air elemental who makes the pass his home.

MOUNTAINS HIGH TO BANDS OF STONE

A five-day trek up the broken rocky slopes of the mountains, following only goat trails and the like, brings the party to the wide, saddle-backed ridge that is Dante's Pass. The pass is blanketed in snow, the first of many to come from the Maiden of Winter's Blight, assuming they have not befriended her. Obviously, if the party arrives here before they have met the Maiden, no blizzard occurs. Roll for normal weather conditions. It is cold, always windy, and the whipped-up snow decreases visibility considerably.

Roll encounters as per any normal adventure.

The wind has been building steadily as you climb further into the highlands, but now as you break the visage of the wall of rocks and the land unfolds before you, it seems to pick up. It is bitter cold as the wind rises from the east and thunders between the two giant cloud-capped peaks of Gardrim and Iseldrim, mighty pillars cut from the stone of the earth and set to hold up the very roof of the world. Between the mountainous pillars lies the twisted wreckage of time, where the wind and ice has wreaked havoc upon them, for between them the ground is broken and split with deep fissures and narrow, razor-sharp ridges tumble on into the north. Heavy clouds hang over all. It is a grim welcome for weary feet.

To traverse the whole pass can take up to 20 days; the broken country leads the party in and out of deep fissures, unstable snow packs, massive drifts, and the like. There is little cover, less wood, and no water but for the snow and ice. Few manage this trek; most die in the offing.

Travel here is difficult and slow. At best the party can manage a quarter-mile an hour, which equates to about two miles a day traveling eight hours each. The weather can cut that even more. If Ainoja brings her snows upon the party travel is cut to one-eighth of a mile each hour. No firewood can be found, and unless the party has some manner of magical means to stay alive, they are soon buried in the snow. Improper gear, a shortage of food or water, or any other similar shortcomings will cause frost bite or death. Temperatures drop to below zero. The snows come from the east, with the winds driving the party into the wastelands of Nectanebo's Trough if they don't kill them.

Roll normal daily encounters. The weather should always be a problem and the terrain made challenging.

Their steps eventually bring them to a low path that traverses the flanks of Iseldrim. This path can hurry the journey greatly, being unobstructed by rock or debris and sheltered from the snow. Crossing this path brings the party into contact with the area where Dante Wilson fell so many years ago.

Oddly, in the corner of your eye, you spot a dark figure about a hundred feet down a deep crevice. Whatever strange happenstance of the weather has uncovered the body, you can see that it is horribly broken, probably from a fall. The body is well-preserved, a tall man, adorned in heavy travel gear. His packs are strewn about him.

If the party chooses to investigate the body, they soon discover that it is Dante Wilson himself, long dead, long frozen. He wears a small box around his neck and in his packs is a small scroll case. He has +4 leather armor, boots of climbing, a +4 dagger of wounding, a +2 short composite bow and 10 +1 arrows and 20 regular arrows. Along with his camping gear is four weeks' worth of rations and a small keg of wine. In the scroll case is a small sheet of paper; scribed on it reads the following:

From where Trolls rose
To trample stone
Upon the backs of giants
Lies a gate of brass
A band of stone.

This stanza alludes to Stone Band, a sacred land to the stone giants in the south and east. A successful intelligence check or legend lore reveals this (CL 6). The box on Dante's chest has an Airhdian rune in it (choose one rune the rune mark may not have).

If the party lingers around the area of Dante's death they become subject to the object of his demise. Ainoja's constant rift in the planes has opened the gates for strange creatures to pass through. A huge air elemental has found his way from his own plane to the Prime. Upon sighting the party, the enraged beast falls upon them, pummeling them into oblivion.

ELEMENTAL, AIR (These neutral creatures' vital statistics are HD12d8, AC 19, and HP 96. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with slam for 2d8 damage and whirlwind that is not subject to a modified save for 2d6 points of damage. They possess all the properties of an air elemental as presented in *Monsters & Treasure*.)

The whirlwind is 5 feet wide at the base, up to 30 feet wide at the top, and up to 50 feet tall, depending on the elemental's size. The elemental controls the exact height, but it must be at least 10 feet.

Once the party negotiates the pass, whether going north into the Trough or back south into the Gottland, they should know now that the final object of their quest lies in the Troll Downs at that ancient site, Stone Band. Whether the journey is long and brings them back through the Kleberock, or short, straight down to the Downs, they should come at last to Stone Band.

The overland journey should take several weeks and CKs should roll normal encounters.

WHERE GIANTS LIE

The journey ends in the low-lying hills known as the Troll Downs, upon the steps of an ancient edifice known as Stone Band.

Before you stand 12 grey, oblong pillars of stone arranged in a wide semi-circular pattern, facing the dark mountains to the north. In the middle of the circle lies a huge boulder, laced with black-red, the color of spent life. Beside the boulder stands a huge tree, twisted and gnarled, its roots like dirty fingers driven into the ground. Both stand upon the edge of a clear, blue pond. Upon the branches of the tree and all about the boulder and roots are tall flowers, Gottland Delphinium. Sitting upon the rock is a large, fat, ungainly troll, upon whose back rests a giant contraption of wood and bindings that resemble a wheel; stretched across the wheel, bound and bloodied, is a stone giant yearling. The Troll Lord wears the whole device to include the giant like a crown.

This is a holy site for trolls and giants. Too, it is a gateway to the planes, particularly the Void, the remnants of which can still be seen with a successful intelligence check by any rune mark, wizard, or cleric in the party (CL 7).

The Troll Lord stands and looks at the party. He attacks immediately.

The stone giant yearling is tied in the wheel, which is in turn mounted on the troll's back in such a way as to place the wheel high above the troll's head. The giant faces the way the troll does. Furthermore, there is a hook embedded into the giant's sternum, and to it a chain is hooked into the lower lip of the Troll Lord. If the troll should open his mouth to its full extent it will pull the chain and hook down, splitting the stone giant from chin to navel, killing it instantly.

TROLL LORD (This lawful evil creature's vital statistics are HD 9d10, AC 18, and HP 81. Its primary attributes are physical. It attacks with 2 fists for 1d6 points of damage, a bite for 2d8 points of damage, or with its giant cleaver for 1d10 points of damage. It can change stone, stomp to cause minor earthquakes, rend flesh, has darkvision, scent, twilight vision and regenerates 3 HP per round. If it changes stone it can transmute rock to mud like the spell; the stomp acts as an 18th level cleric spell, earthquake.)

The Troll Lord was on a hunting expedition when he found two giants at Stone Band. He killed the adult and took the child as a trophy. The troll has little treasure other than the bands of gold and silver with which he decorates his arms and legs, these being worth collectively 2000gp.

The giant, however, if rescued, is invaluable. He speaks the Vulgate and has some knowledge of rune lore; he grants them each a rune, that he writes upon their bodies (wherever they choose). Any stone giant will recognize the rune and know them as friends.

A careful investigation of Stone Band reveals that it has a permanent *mirror* rune inscribed on one of the stones; as explained in detail in the description for *Stone Band* this rune, if opened by the command word or touched by the *Winter Rune*, opens a magical mirror in the stone. The mirror, if entered, leads down a path to an identical mirror; this is the nexus rune at Unklar's Iron. Anyone with the *Winter Rune* can activate the gate, opening it for any to step through, all at their own risk. This gate is the remnant of the Lord of Sorrow's gate of old (see *Codex of Aihrde*) and this hill a holy place.

The tree and rock upon the hill are the fallen bodies of the Stone Giant King and a great warrior troll of the old world. After a long and brutal contest, the troll slew the stone giant and left him where he fell. It time the giant's body melded with the earth. The troll marveled at his own feat of arms and stood fast by the body of his fallen foe. So long did he glower upon his foe that time passed him by; he aged and as with all his folk, his feet became rooted to the world (see *Gottland Trees* below) and he slowly passed into stasis. His feet rooted to the ground and eventually he became like a tree, as is the fate of all the trolls of this world.

THE TREES OF THE GOTTLAND: Lonely things, these dead husks stand with feet firmly rooted to the ground. Folks say that these are none other than the souls of dead trolls. As is common knowledge, trolls do not die like mortals, but live on until their life's evil deeds weigh them down, planting them to the ground. The most ancient of trolls, though they speak, cannot move for the weight of their own evil deeds. Many argue that trolls are in fact the spirits of evil trees that walked the world in the Days before Days. The trolls, the tales relate, are really the manifestations of the souls of those evil trees and when a troll dies, the twisted tree's soul rises to feed upon the corpse, to grow again into the trees of yesteryear. Around the base of the "Gottland Trees" grow small patches of violet flowers, and when pulped into a mush and used as a salve they can heal wounds (1d4).

APPENDIX A – NEW MAGIC ITEMS

BOOK OF YEARS

The *Book of Years* possesses the powers to answer a single question and grant wisdom. To those who can read magical text, the book is filled with scribbled questions and answers, many of them personal and useless but some very potent. The writings are everywhere, written in normal left to right, in the margins, in print small and large, filled from cover to cover. Anyone who cannot read magical languages sees only blank pages. To use the book a question must be written inside; the answer appears beneath it.

Any attempts to twist a question or gain more than one answer results in the magic of the book being broken and the book refuses to answer. The character cannot repeat the request or try again; if he does so the book remains responsive. The *Book of Years* can be read only once by a character. The question can be great or small as the characters deem; the CK should answer to the best that the situation and their own knowledge allow.

Anyone who writes a question gains a point of wisdom. Those enterprising characters who don't want to ask a direct question, but simply read the book, gain a point of wisdom as the book reveals the knowledge of the comings and goings of many people, places, and many particular events. The point of wisdom is automatic, but the characters should not be told until all characters have used the book.

One can only write in the *Book of Years*, or read it, once.

Value: Nil **Experience:** See Above

CROWN OF THE STONE GIANTS

The stone giants prize this lost crown over all their creations. Wrought of stone, shaped and twisted in multiple colors, and capturing the contours of a mountain in growth, the crown is beautiful to behold. Mounted along its crest are seven diamonds, set to blend with the stone work. Each diamond represents an elder of their people and possesses the power of that creature. The crown is magical. It allows the wielder to speak the language of stone, and converse with any stone giant.

Each diamond imparts to the user a particular power. However, to use the crown one must master the strength of it by mastering the stone in which it is set. To use the individual power the wielder must make a successful strength check (CL: 16).

All abilities, once mastered, are cast at 10th level; each ability can be used once per day.

DIAMOND	CL	POWER
1	CL: 15	Create Wall of Stone
2	CL: 17	Transmute substance to stone as the spell
3	CL: 19	Merge with stone, as spell sequester
5	CL: 21	Repel Stone (as druid spell)
6	CL: 23	Animate Stone (create stone golem)
7	CL: 25	Command Stone Giants

The crown weighs about 50 pounds. Wearing it for any normal creature is a laborious task. If someone keeps it on their head for more than a few hours it strains the neck, causing all manner of problems. Anyone wearing the crown suffers a -2 to their initiative rolls and a -1 on any surprise rolls. Violent turns of the neck may cause damage; a failed strength save (CL: 6) wrenches the neck and the victim takes 1 point of damage.

Value: Nil **Experience:** See Above

CRYMYR'S RING

This magical ring allows the wearer to shape stone or wood similar to the 3rd level druid spell. If anyone other than a druid wields the ring it takes three rounds to shape one cubic foot of wood or nine rounds to shape one cubic foot stone. The ring can only affect a 10 square foot area. If a druid uses the ring, its power enhances his own. In that case, it affects 20 cubic feet +2 cubic feet per level of the druid, and one-half a round to create one cubic foot of wood, or one and a half rounds to shape one cubic foot of stone.

Value: 1500 **Experience:** 5000

GOSSAMER OF DREAMS

When gods walk the minds of men they leave an echo of their presence. That echo escapes into dreams and those so blessed often wake with the gossamer of dreams upon their brow. The gossamer is thin, almost translucent, and utterly weightless. The strands are impossible to break, magical, and are used by the learned for a great many tasks. If laid upon a blade or weapon, the gossamer merges with the steel, honing the edge, or strengthening the head in such weapons as a mace. The gossamer grants the weapon a +1 to hit and damage for the next five swings (hit or miss). If placed in torn armor it grants that armor a +1 to AC for the next five strikes. Gossamers can bind clothing, backpacks, or any normal gear to permanently fix them. The gossamer can heal as well; if laced into a wound it merges with the wound and instantly heals 1d4 points of damage. The gossamer can also capture the minds of men, if laced into a standard knot or scroll, any who view the item gain a +1 to all morale checks or charisma saves. This effect only occurs once.

Value: They cannot be Sold **Experience:** 200 each

KNIFE, HARVESTER

The halflings of the Gottland are fierce people who enjoy fighting like few others. As such they prize close quarter weapons, hand axes and knives. A favored is the harvester, a heavy set, singled edged, curved knife. The blade ranges near 10 inches in length, with an S-shaped cross-guard and the handle usually made of bone or ivory. The harvester is a +1 knife, however, the magic blade can actually feed its wielder as the *offering* rune bound within it draw out the life force of whomever it strikes. For every six points of damage the blade inflicts the wielder gains 1 HP back; only the knife's +1 bonus counts toward the damage, the wielder's strength does not.

Value: 6000 **Experience:** 2500

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NORD STONE

Over the long course of time, the ebb and flow of glaciers produced rich veins of this highly prized stone; where the ice grinds against sandstone the two merge, crushed together by the weight of the frozen water and fused by the light of the sun. In long light blue veins the stone stretches through the rock. The veins are long, usually only a few inches wide. Large chunks of the rock are very rare. Nord stone flakes with ease and is very light to the touch; consistent rubbing or massive pressure grinds it away very quickly.

Nord stone possesses an altogether peculiar quality; when exposed to the sun, it replicates, growing, much as ice does in the water. Nord stone will not grow permanently, usually only expanding to double its original size at which point it stops. However, the wise have discovered that if one breaks off a piece of nord stone, the original piece will grow again so that one piece of rock can almost continually replicate itself.

What makes the stone particularly desirable are the nutrients bound within it. The stone is edible and possesses a healing quality. A simple flake of the stone heals one 1-2 points of damage. This makes the stone very valuable and highly sought after by travelers and adventurers.

Value: 500 **Experience:** 1200 (first use only)

ORACALCUM METAL

Earth elementals are powerful creatures who animate the very earth, passing their power through it. Within them lie many minerals and ores, all charged with the magic of their being. Containing these creatures or slaying them shatters the animated earth but leaves some of it magically charged. Culling the metals from these creatures is an almost herculean task, taking many days to gather even a few ounces. However, the metal itself is possessed of extraordinary magic. Its base is +3. If cast into any armor or weapon it gains a +3 to AC, hit and/or damage. The metal is weightless. Any earth elemental confronted with an item made of the oracalcum metal will not attack the wielder unless the elemental makes a successful mental save.

Stone giants favor the metal and often trade far beyond its normal value for the material.

Value 100gp per square inch **Experience:** Varies

PELLETS (WINTER'S FLAKES)

The Greater Ungern were sorcerers of some ability and possessed powers beyond the keen of other folk. They loved war most of all, and they loved the pain of suffering brought with it. For this reason, they crafted many items of fell purpose. One of the least were the Winter's Flakes. They took up handfuls of small stones and cast their breath over them. Their breath, impregnated with the magic of the horned god, enchanted the stones. These they cast at their foes, causing mayhem and chaos.

The Pellets resemble small sling stone bullets. They are long and taper at both ends. They are a bluish white in color and very

heavy, each weighing about the same as a gold coin. When cast or shot they leave a trail which resembles a white tracer through the air. There are usually two to eight of the pellets in a bag.

The Pellets can be hurled from a sling, thrown by hand, or even laid upon the ground as a trap. A successful hit unleashes the power inside and each one that successfully strikes an opponent causes 1d4 points of damage. Anyone who fails the required constitution save suffers a further 1d6 points of cold damage. The Pellets strike like ice, are wickedly cold, and sting the flesh as if frostbit. Once unleashed the power of a pellet is gone and cannot be restored.

Value: 50gp **Experience:** 50

SHREW'S HARNESS

This long belt and buckle is a favored item of hunters and plains travelers. By placing the harness around the neck of any herd animal, the beast is tamed. The beast must make a successful mental save (CL: 10) or become calm, viewing the wielder as a protector. So long as the harness is about the creature's neck the creature suffers the wielder to lead it, use it as a pack animal, or to ride it. The harness does not work on creatures with an intelligence of "average" (9-12) or better.

Value: 1500 **Experience:** 1500

THREADS OF LAW

When Rune Marks fashion the Roan ot Eluet, the rune of threads, they perforce create a great many strands which are not wholly made, which are cast aside more often than not. Some, however, are possessed of magical qualities. The threads of law are long, thin, golden strands which end in a perfect tip without fray or tear.

The threads of law bring order to the chaos of sorcery. Anyone who holds a thread, or wears it upon his person on clothing, armor, or weapon, sees the world as it really is; the thread possesses the abilities of a *true seeing* spell as if cast by a 10th level caster. Once the thread is used it discharges its magic and is little more than an average thread.

These threads are commonly referred to as Todknots ("tod" is Dwarven for Unbending).

Value: 1000gp per thread **Experience:** 350

THREADS OF CHAOS

Like the Threads of Law, the Threads of Chaos are a magical by-product of fashioning the Roan ot Eluet. These threads, however, are thick and hollow, and curl in on themselves with continually fraying ends. They resemble strands of wool, and are silver in color.

These threads are light and float weightlessly on the wind, and unless contained in a locked container, they float. Touching or striking one, even accidentally, can cause confusion and doubt. Anyone coming into contact with the thread must make a successful wisdom save or

suffer the effects of a *confusion* spell as cast by a 10th level caster. It also discharges all its magic in a single use.

These threads are often called Shinknots (“Shin” is Dwarven for chaos). An encounter with such a thread often leaves one baffled and annoyed for no rhyme or reason.

Value: 1000gp per thread **Experience:** 350

TOMAHAWK, THRUSH HEAD

This weapon is rare, but prized by the halflings in their close quarter actions. When forged, the rune of lure is written in the folded metal, so that in battle it draws the weapons of the others to it. Anyone wielding the tomahawk gains a +1-4 to their AC as the axe deflects blows. It is important to note that the deflection is not actually an action in the combat round, meaning the wielder can swing it, even while it grants the AC bonus. It strikes as a weapon with a magic bonus equal to its defensive bonus, but does not actually receive any bonus to hit or to damage.

Value: 1000-4000gp per thread **Experience:** 250-1750

TUL STONE

Stone giants revel in their mastery of stone. They do not shape it as others do with pick and axe, but rather they take it in hand and breathe magic into it. The Tul Stone is such a stone. The giants find river stones, or those lodged in ice or snow. They cast the rune of fire into the long-cold rock, awakening in the stone a desire for warmth. Thus it lingers, warm to the touch but when struck upon a similar stone, sparks and flame ignite one or both. The Tul Stones burn for a many hours until the memory of the cold is gone and the magic of the rune passes away. The giants almost always have a stone well-shaped to their palm and grip, which they use to strike other stones. Once used the stone takes on a darker shade and is discarded, often in the fire pit where it was last used.

Anyone experienced in the crafts of giants knows the purpose of the stone, whether used or not. The giants often make more stones than they need, so their campsites may be littered with up to half-dozen of them.

Value: 250gp **Experience:** 200

SWEET GRASS

Sweet grass grows in small patches in most cold-climate plains. The grass is deep green year round, single-bladed and stands about four inches high. When cooked over an open non-magical fire, the grass puts off a thick smoke and a very sweet smell. When inhaled it heals the bodies of minor aches, pains, sores, exhaustion, thirst, and even hunger. The relief offered by the scent allows one to fully rest, healing 1-3 HP after a night’s reset. Sweet grass does not actually replace food and water.

It has extremely long roots and therefore cannot be transplanted. It must be cooked fresh-cut, otherwise it does not work.

Value: Nil **Experience:** 50

WINTER RUNE

Nulak Kiz Din fashioned the Winter Rune; even as the All Father fashioned life from his own being so did Nulak create the Winter Rune. With slivers of his own essence he wrote them into the magic of the Winter Rune, passing his power into it. The runes that made up the Paths of Umbra, which later men called the Winter Runes, he carved into the head of the staff, granting it many abilities and powers.

This rune were written on a stone and bound in a heavy three-pronged staff. He shod the staff in Oracalcum metal, for this metal alone could hold the power of the runes. With the rune-staff in hand, Nulak found that he had but to activate the staff and he could breach the Wall of Worlds through mirrored portals, freeing up his mind and resources for other tasks.

The +5 staff is five feet long, one inch in diameter and made of highly polished cherry wood, with a single length of oracalcum metal bound around it; the rune-staff glows a golden-copper color. The head of the staff is capped by three prongs, these fashioned of plastered dragon wing which serve as a focal point for the runes themselves; these are etched in tiny detail upon a copper tube which sits magically suspended between the three prongs. When the winter rune-staff is activated, each prong sends forth tendrils of gas and electricity, each inter-acting with the other. After they have all connected to the tube held in the middle, the runes begin to glow.

The Winter Rune staff-head has 50 hit points; a will of 21. It is able to speak telepathically, and has the sight and hearing of a normal human.

The Runes are as follows: *breath (1/day)*, *bridging (1/day)*, *dimension sight (3/day)*, *fold space (2/day)*, *light (3/day)*, *minor dimension (see runel)*, *mirrors (see rune description) or 1/day*, *mystic orb (1/day)*, *recall (2/day)*, *tether (see rune)*, *somnoblulate (1/day)*, and *summon planar ally (1/day)*. The wielder can cast these runes at will. For rune descriptions consult the Codex of Winter Rune Lore.

Once recalled to Unklar’s Iron, refer to that section in the book. The Winter Rune has access to 110 portals, as determined by the Castle Keeper or in Aihilde refer to description.

In order to actually use the *mirror* rune the recall must be cast first; the recall instantly teleports the user to Unklar’s Iron where the mirrored nexus rune was cast; the wielder need only touch the pillar or the desired rune on the pillar and open the nexus rune, gaining access to the 110 portals located there (note: if not in Aihilde the CK must designate a point where the staff recalls the wielder). With possession of the Winter Rune they do not need the key word to open the mirrors. If they find another mirror portal, simply touching the Winter Rune to that mirror rune opens the portal and a path to the original mirror, the nexus (see mirrors for details). Such a mirror-rune portal lies in Stone Band.

The item itself is intelligent, with a will of 21. It is able to speak telepathically, and has the sight and hearing of a normal human.

Value: 1,000,000 **Experience:** 250,000

APPENDIX B – NEW MONSTERS

ANU BEAST

NUMBER APPEARING: 1-6

SIZE: Large

HD: 5 (d8)

MOVE: 60 feet

AC: 16

ATTACKS: Bite (1d10)

SPECIAL: Captivate, Speed

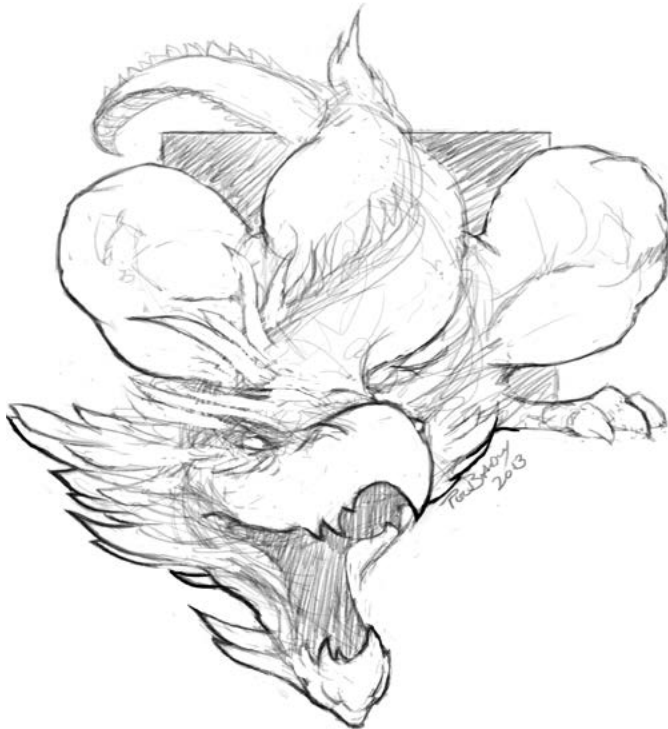
SAVES: M

INTELLIGENCE: Animal

ALIGNMENT: Chaotic Evil

TYPE: Magical Beast

TREASURE: 9 EXPERIENCE: 320+4



The anu beast is a bi-pedal predator that stalks cold-climate grasslands. Walking on thickly muscled legs, its heavy-set body and long neck are balanced by a broad tail. Short wing-like arms help to steady the creature when it runs down its prey. It is entirely covered in short feathers; those on its tail broad and flat while those on its wing-arms are short. Its long snout is lined with fangs and resembles an alligator's. The anu beasts are generally a light grey, or dull white, or brown; they molt, losing their non-seasonal feathers twice a year.

They are decidedly aggressive and kill for the sport of it, not the flesh.

Combat: The anu beast runs down its prey, taking advantage of its superior speed. As it closes in, it rises to its full height, craning its neck, opening its mouth and extending all its feathers. The brilliantly colored inner feathers become visible, creating a captivating array of colors.

Captivate: Any creature looking on the feathers in the sudden rush of the anu beast's attack must make a successful intelligence save or be captivated for that round and the following.

IN AIHRDE

The anu beast is a beast of the Red Duke's making, a creature made to hound the men of the northern realms in the days of their youth. It spread far and wide, traveling in packs. Kobolds favor them as mounts, though they are very unpredictable and too often fall upon their riders and kill them.

CARADULZ (LADY OF THE DEEP)

NUMBER APPEARING: 1

SIZE: MEDIUM

HD: 4 (d8)

MOVE: 40 feet (swimming)

AC: 13

ATTACKS: Slam (1d8)

SPECIAL: Shape Change, Water Mastery, Summon Fish, Weather Control

SAVES: M

INTELLIGENCE: High

ALIGNMENT: Chaotic

TYPE: Fey

TREASURE: 9

EXPERIENCE: 320+4

The caradulz, the Lady of the Deep, appears as a human woman with a shapely form and comely face. Her hair reflects the waters in which she swims; long and flowing, it merges with the sea until it is indistinguishable from the foam. Her eyes are hollow, with little color to them. She wears no clothing nor bears any armament. The caradulz dwells in deep fresh or salt water. She prefers wide, open expanses, such as oceans, seas, or large lakes, and avoids the running water of rivers.

Her kind have no mates, and there are no males of their species. To mate, they seek out humans and cajole or bargain with them in order to bring them into the surf and bed them; once they have mated they usually leave the victim to drown or swim to safety as chance allows. The mating itself is draining on the victim and any who fall into the caradulz' arms lose one point of constitution. Once mated the caradulz "dies" while laying her egg; she is reborn when the egg hatches and seeks a new victim. They mate often.

Their lairs are found in rocky caves deep in the ocean. The caradulz is immortal and therefore her cave is usually filled with all manner of treasure.

Combat: When the caradulz seeks a mate, she travels to the shore. There she haunts the waters until a likely victim presents himself. Wreathing herself in water-like clothing she approaches and attempts to seduce him. Once embraced, she pulls him into the water with her water mastery. Once completed, she abandons him, or if convinced otherwise, helps him to shore. In battle she pummels her victims with waves.

Shape Change: Once a day the caradulz can change her form into a large bed of kelp. The long tendrils of sea weed cling to the bottom of the ocean and pull any victim beneath the waves. In this form she gains four attacks. A successful hit requires the victim to make a successful strength check or be pulled under water. A strength check must then be made for each round the victim is underwater, or drowning will occur. Each kelp arm that strikes the victim adds one CL to the attribute check, to a maximum of 4 (the total CL is the HD +1 for each kelp arm that strikes the victim).

Summon Fish: Three times a day the caradulz can summon a large fish. The fish has an HD 8, AC 16, and attacks with a bite for 1d8 points of damage. If she desires she can summon eight smaller fish to attack for 1 point of damage with an AC of 12.

Water Mastery: A caradulz gains a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls if both it and its opponent are touching water.

Weather Control: The caradulz can cast *weather control* as a 10th level caster, once per day.

IN AIHRDE

In Aihrde the caradulz are of the order of the Val-Austlich, being spawn of the water god's making. Ea-Lor crafted them of his own being to enjoy their company, but growing bored of him, they fled one by one into the deeper water and Ea-Lor, as Lord of the Deep Quiet, forgot them. They spread across the world to haunt men upon the shores of many islands and lands. They are rarely encountered in the north climes as the water is too cool.

Sailors venerate them and pay them in slaves as mates when the opportunity allows, for the caradulz can summon the weather and help founding ships upon the seas.

BLETUK

(Speaking or Hearing Bird)

NUMBER APPEARING: 1-4

SIZE: Small (3'+)

HD: 1 (d8)

MOVE: 80 feet (flying)

AC: 15

ATTACKS: Bite (1d4)

SPECIAL: Speech

SAVES: P

INTELLIGENCE: Average

ALIGNMENT: Neutral

TYPE: Magical Beast

TREASURE: Nil

EXPERIENCE: 22+1

The bletuk, or "speaking birds," are large birds, roughly three feet from beak to the end of their feathered tail. They are dark grey on top with a lighter grey, almost bluish underbelly. When they spread their wings however, the drab colors are contrasted by stark-white feathers. They dwell in the plains in the northern

climes, nesting in deep tufts of grass. They spend most of their time flying, gliding on the cooler air currents.

The bletuk possess a greater intelligence than most other fowl; long ago they adapted to the habits of men and learned to parrot the speech. They can, when they choose, speak the common tongues, the vulgate. Nomadic people favor them, using them as scouts and guides, paying them in food and protection. They rarely survive captivity, dying in a few weeks if confined, and for this reason the nomads never keep them against their will.

Combat: They do not generally attack, preferring to flee from any threat, but if cornered or imprisoned they can deliver a wicked bite.

IN AIHRDE

Many of the free folk of Aihrde establish symbiotic relationships with the bletuk, feeding them as they travel, and relying upon them for guidance, directions to hunting grounds, enemy threats, etc. The halflings frequently build sodded roofs upon their large wagons in order to entice the creatures to stay with them.

IGNITH DOGS

NUMBER APPEARING: 1-100

SIZE: Small (2'+)

HD: 1 (d6)

MOVE: 40 feet

AC: 14/16 (tail)

ATTACKS: Bite (1), Tail (1d4)

SPECIAL: Electrical Attack, SR 1

SAVES: P

INTELLIGENCE: Low

ALIGNMENT: Chaotic Evil

TYPE: Magical Beast

TREASURE: See Below

EXPERIENCE: 15+1

The ignith dog looks like a dog in general shape, however, it possesses six legs and a much longer, flat tail. Scales cover the creature's torso and the lower part of the legs; hair, long and coarse, runs the length of the creature's back and down its tail. A short neck sprouts a wide snout filled with misshapen fangs; it has no nose but two eyes that burn white or blue with a glassy stare.

The ignith beast is a magical creature created when gods wage war upon one another. The ignith dog is a ravenous beast with an insatiable desire to kill living things, mirroring the rage of their creation. They hunt in packs usually, though sometimes alone or in pairs. They do not den up and have no treasure; however, the wise understand that their eyes are solid glass, containing a powerful charge of electricity. Removing them is easily done. The small marble puts off a few feet of dim white light. They have other uses, often in experiments, but in battle they are prized by slingers because when they hit, they explode and discharge their power for 1d6 extra points of damage. The eyes act as magical weapons with a +2 bonus, though they do not impart that bonus to any hit or damage rolls.

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Combat:The creature attacks with a running leap, attempting to strike its target with a bite. Its bite discharges a blast of electrical current so the opening attack can be deadly. After its initial attack it pivots, striking with its tail as the charge regenerates. The tail's thick plates serve to protect the creature better than its normal hide.

Electrical Charge: Upon a successful hit with its bite attack, the ignith dog discharges a jolt of electrical current. This jolt causes 1d4 points of damage. The victim is allowed a constitution save. If successful the jolt has no affect. The dog can do this once every four rounds.

IN AIHRDE

These creatures are common where gods war; their divine magic creates the creatures. They roam the world in packs, hunting living creatures. There are those who make their living from hunting the ignith dogs, knowing the value of their eyes. These hunters travel with clerics or druids, following the signs of the gods to bring them into contact with the beasts. The eyes, once carved out, bring 250gp on the open market.

The creatures are most commonly found on the Roof of the World, but range through the lower Lands of Ursal.

JOLNOCH

NUMBER APPEARING: 1-4

SIZE: Large (6+')

HD: 5d8

MOVE: 40 feet

AC: 16

ATTACKS: 1 Gore (1d4), Bite (1d8), Head Butt (1d4)

SPECIAL: Scent, Trip

SAVES: P

INTELLIGENCE: Animal

ALIGNMENT: Neutral

TYPE: Animal

TREASURE: Nil**EXPERIENCE:** 160+5



The jolnoch are large boar-like beasts, down to the hooves and snout. Barrel-chested, these massive creatures stand up to six feet at the shoulder. Their light brown fur is very thick and short; spots intermix with two distinctive white stripes that run from the shoulder or the tail. Unlike regular boars these creatures are predators, hunting the plains for prey large and small. They prefer cold climates, though on occasion range into warmer regions.

The jolnoch hunts by scent, tracking its prey over great distances.

They are prized for their skin, for once it is properly cured it makes an astounding cloak, offering the wearer the same protection against the cold as an endure elements (cold); this affect wears out over time.

Combat: The jolnoch stalks its prey; once located, it breaks into a charge, slamming the victim with its massive head and then rending it with fangs.

IN AIHRDE

The creatures are found largely in Hunlands and Gottland and further north. Their skins bring 50gp in the open market. Halflings love to hunt them for the challenge is tremendous, as is the risk.

MAMMOTH

NUMBER APPEARING: 1-20

SIZE: Large

HD: 9d8/12d8 (bull)

MOVE: 40 feet

AC: 18

ATTACKS: 2 Tusk (1d10 each) or Stamp (3d6) or Head/Trunk (1d8)

SPECIAL: Crush, Scent, Trip

SAVES: P

INTELLIGENCE: Animal

ALIGNMENT: Neutral

TYPE: Animal

TREASURE: Nil

EXPERIENCE: 1000+9/1375+12



Mammoths dwell in arctic or sub-arctic environments on the tundra and steppes. They feed on long grasses, avoiding mountains and forests when they can. They are communal in nature, traveling in herds of up to 20, the cows protecting the young when threatened. The bulls are usually solitary animals and very aggressive if threatened. During mating season they are highly charged and attack almost anything they see.

Combat: The mammoth avoids combat unless provoked or the male is in rut. When they attack they charge their victims, attempting to push or knock them over. Once done, they crush victims with their heads or tusks.

Crush: Victims knocked over suffer a crushing blow. The mammoth crushes its victim upon a successful hit following the round of the trip. If the victim is still prone, the mammoth gains a +10. Upon a successful hit the mammoth inflicts 3d8 damage per round the victim is being crushed. The mammoth does not have to swing to hit after that; however, the victim can attempt to break free and does so with a successful strength check.

Trip: The mammoth uses its great size to push a victim over. Upon a successful hit with its head, the victim must make a successful dexterity check or be knocked down. In the following round the mammoth leans forward to crush the victim.

IN AIHRDE

The mammoth is prized by the troll lords and they routinely hunt the creature, the bulls being the most desired. The stone giants, eternal enemies of the troll lords, often tame mammoths and ride them to war.



MORDIUS DRYADS

Dawn's Maidens

NUMBER APPEARING: 1

SIZE: Medium

HD: 8d8

MOVE: 30 feet

AC: 17

ATTACKS: By weapon

SPECIAL: Charm, Control Weather, Twilight Vision, Spell-like Abilities, Symbiosis

SAVES: M

INTELLIGENCE: High

ALIGNMENT: Neutral (good, evil or true)

TYPE: Fey

TREASURE: See Below

EXPERIENCE: 1250+8

These dryads are very comely fey, with perfect form. Their clothing and armament varies from individual to individual. They differ from their lesser kin in that they are not wild, born of god and man, so that they can dwell near towns or castles. They do not, however, interact with men often, living aloof or in utter solitude as their conscience dictates. At times they enslave others to serve them.

These dryads are far more powerful than their normal kin. They command the weather, or some facet thereof, and they can charm the hapless into a life of servitude. The few who have been rescued from these Dawn's Maidens, as they are known by men, speak only of an abiding happiness or contentment and rue for the greater part of their mortal lives their passing from the dryad's home.

The Mordius dryads are bound to a particular region, such as a forest, a grove, a ridge line, or a mountain. They have been known to bind themselves to huge forests, but generally they occupy smaller regions of only two or three dozen square miles. They build homes for themselves or occupy abandoned ones.

The most well known of these are the three sisters; Valyana, The Maiden of Sorrow, Freyja, The Maiden of Dunhollow, and Ainoja, The Maiden of Winter's Blight.

Combat: Mordius dryads possess many of the traits of their weaker cousins as they can charm and cast sorcery. They do not favor battle, but can, unlike their cousins, take up arms.

Charm: A Mordius dryad can, knowingly or unknowingly, cast a Charm Person spell. The spell acts as the *charm person* spell, however, it is only cast after the victim has done three "things" (as prescribed by the CK) in the dryad's presence; three meals are eaten with the dryad, three nights spent in her home, three kisses and so on. Those Mordius dryads who wish to charm people use their ability cleverly. They give the victim three drinks or lead him to a great oak three times and ensnare them. The spell is cast as a 12th-level spell and the victim must make a successful charisma save or be charmed. The charm is broken by a *dispel magic* or similar spell. There is no limit to those charmed and they are released only after one year and a successful charisma save. If they break the spell they can leave, if not they remain another

year. If the dryad dismisses them for whatever reason, they are left with a longing for her/him that never leaves them.

Control Weather: The dryad is able to control the weather in the forest with which they are symbiotic, up to several hundred square miles. The ability acts in all other respects but for duration like the *spell control weather*.

Spell-Like Abilities: Speak with animals (at will), speak with plants (at will), dimension door (3/day), charm person, control weather as spell (1/day).

Symbiosis: The Mordius dryads are bound to forest or an area which they have settled. Unlike normal dryads, the Mordius dryad is only restricted by the borders of the region or wood where they dwell. If attacked she can summon the spirit of the land around her to give her aid. For 100 feet around the dryad, the air thickens, choking those who breathe for 1 HP of damage per round; the ground becomes loose and treacherous, roots tangle on feet or rocks and anyone standing there must roll a dexterity save or suffer a fall (CL 4). Vines, plants, rock, mud, snow or any other natural object clings to anyone in the area and after four rounds a strength check (CL 4) is necessary to avoid being entangled, with another every four rounds after that.

IN AIHRDE

When the world stood upon the moment of creation, the Lady Mordius walked beneath the eaves of the woods. She marveled at all things, from the greatest of beasts to the smallest of elements. She loved the world and she gave herself freely to it and it blossomed at her hand, for she was a goddess of supreme power, but her brother Leathriun, whom men call the Red Duke, cruelly slew her, and Mordius' physical form passed from the world.

As with all gods or goddesses, she still lives in the hearts and minds of those who call to her. Her spirit touches the world from time to time. On occasion, as she passes through the world, she comes upon one whom her heart cannot resist, and she takes mortal form and lives the life of a human by taking the part of a wife and lover. Any children born of this union are powerful creatures from the land of Faery and they manifest as Mordius Dryads. The vast majority of them are female, but once in a great while, a male is born.

PANDAREEN

NUMBER APPEARING: 10-100

SIZE: Small (6"+)

HD: 1

MOVE: 40 feet

AC: 18

ATTACKS: Nil

SPECIAL: Sleep, Web

SAVES: M

INTELLIGENCE: Low

ALIGNMENT: Chaotic

TYPE: Fey

TREASURE: 5

EXPERIENCE: 25+1



The tiny pandareen fly upon sylvan wings; with light or dark green skin they hide in the shadows of trees, perching upon branches or trunks. Sexless creatures whose voices sound like ringing bells, they dwell in deciduous forests in very moist climes. They prefer areas near brooks or dead-end paths, where animals or men are likely to stay and drink.

They have no intelligence but are possessed of a wicked jealousy for those who carry any sort of tool, from a hammer to a spear.

They have no lairs but the victims of their song often lay upon the forest floor, snared in the webbing the creatures cast.

Combat: The pandareen begin by singing songs, first one, then the next, and another and so on. The song ensnares the victim, lulling them into sleep. Once asleep, they cast the webbing over them to "preserve" them, but of course the victim dies of thirst in a few days.

Song: The song of the pandareen is magical and sounds much like bells gently ringing. Any who hear it must make a successful constitution save or fall into a deep sleep. They can be awoken but will remain groggy and suffer a -4 from all rolls for the next eight hours. There must be at least 10 pandareen singing to affect this charm.

Web: As soon as one person falls victim to the song, a quarter of the pandareen stop singing and swoop down upon him, spewing webbing from their mouths. They cover the victim entirely in 10 rounds; this can take longer if there are fewer of the creatures. Ten pandareen cover one foot of victim per round. Anyone webbed and not rescued dies of dehydration in three to four days.

IN AIHRDE

The pandareen are common in the old forests of the world. In the Lands of Ursal they are encountered in the Eld Wood and Darknefold forests as well as the Aenochian and Grosswald. They are prized as pets by many far and wide for their songs lull one to sleep. They are generally sold in small cages containing four to eight of the creatures, and usually harbored in large cages housed in arbors where they sing but can do no harm to those they lull to sleep.

SABERTOOTH TIGERS

NUMBER APPEARING: 1-3

SIZE: Large

HD: 8d8/10d8 (male)

MOVE: 40 feet

AC: 17

ATTACKS: 2 Claw (1d4), Bite (2d10)

SPECIAL: Rake, Scent, Twilight Vision

SAVES: P

INTELLIGENCE: Animal

ALIGNMENT: Neutral

TYPE: Animal

TREASURE: Nil

EXPERIENCE: 375 + 8/900 + 10



Sabertooth tigers are large cats with long, curved fang teeth. They range up to eight feet long and can weigh up to 800 pounds. The saber-like teeth range up to a foot in length. They are solitary hunters, though a female, slightly smaller than a male, may have two to four cubs with her. Cubs are up to half her HD. The beast hunts in almost any environment but prefers large prey animals. The male is extremely aggressive and attacks with little provocation.

Combat: The sabertooth stalks its prey like any predator, but unlike other cats it does not pin its prey down. It uses its long canine teeth to rip the animal open, crippling it. After it has disabled the prey it retreats until the poor creature bleeds out,

returning only to defend it from other predators or scavengers. They have powerful back legs that allow a rake attack once they've bitten their prey.

Rake: If a sabertooth successfully bites, it can take two rake attacks with its hind legs. These attacks have an additional +4 bonus to hit, and inflict 1d4+2 HP of damage.

IN AIHRDE

The sabertooth ranges in the northern climes, particularly in the Holmgrad Mountains, Hunlands, and Gottland. In the Gottland they follow the mammoths on their treks, hunting the young. They are prized by the minotaurs as pets. These bovine gods raise them from cubs, teaching them commands and often making armor for the creatures. Such pets are very responsive to the minotaurs and serve them in the hunt.

STONE GIANTS

NUMBER APPEARING: 1-12

SIZE: Large (16'+)

HD: 10 (d10)

MOVE: 40 feet

AC: 24

ATTACKS: 2 Fists (2d8), Stone Weapon (2d6+6)

SPECIAL: Rock Throwing, Rune Magic, Stone Shape, Twilight Vision

SAVES: P

INTELLIGENCE: Average

ALIGNMENT: None

TYPE: Giant

TREASURE: 7 (hoard)

EXPERIENCE: 1500 X 10

Stone giants are large bipedal creatures that range up to 16 feet tall. They have long arms and legs, large chests and hands. They do not wear clothing, but are often covered in lichen, some completely. There are no "roles" in a stone giant community, as females and males have the same standing; they have the same HD and armor class. They are judged on their stone-shaping abilities and skills. The stone giants dwell in small bands of a dozen to a score, led by a chieftain, the greatest stone-shaper in the group.

They are not unfriendly to others though they rarely actively seek out the company of any. It is rare that they attack unprovoked for they have little desire to own the treasures of others. They do have a great love of games, wrestling most of all. Dwarves and gnomes occupy a special place in their social networks as they possess skill with stone work and can offer the giants the only wealth they treasure: gems, especially gems set into jewelry. They have a great hatred for trolls of all types.

The stone giant dwells upon the flanks of shaped pillars, open to the weather. They have no wealth, aside from gems carefully hoarded. These they set into the pillars, often designed to catch the rays of the sun or moon, whichever the particular giant prefers.

Combat: Stone giants have little truck with virtues of honor and as such do not hesitate to hurl rocks from afar to smash their enemies. Often they do little more than that, having little interest in closing with enemies, pleased enough if they smash them or send them fleeing back from where they came. When forced to close, they fight with the disinterested passion of animal; so long as they are threatened, they fight, but if offered quarter they often take it.

Rock Throwing: Stone giants can hurl boulders up to 510 feet. A successful attack inflicts 3d10 points of damage.

Rune Magic: The greatest of the stone giants, the chieftains, possess the abilities of a 10th level Rune Mark.

Stone-Shaping: Through their rune magic they are able to shape stone into almost any shape they desire. They rarely shape it far from its natural form, though will at times make long pieces of stone into spears, or a flat stone into a door or bench. Any weapon they design using stone-shape inflicts 2d6+6 points of damage. They can shape up to 10 cubic feet of stone per day if left uninterrupted.

IN AIHRDE

When the All Father made the first peoples he gave them many shapes and sizes. The first were the *faul*, the “folk”, the bearded dwarves who in later ages created the foundations of the world’s civilizations. From these early beginnings rose many of the peoples of Aihilde, both giants and men. The *taonu muen*, the “tall stones that live”, the stone giants, stood out from the others for they were aloof in their quiet solitude.

In those days many creatures followed the works of the All Father, invisible armies living in his shadows, fearful yet adoring, curious yet arrogant in their own power. Burok was one such, a powerful spirit of the order of the Val-Ehtrakun; he suffered not the arrogance of his fellows, but he listened to the All Father and watched all that he did in his labors. He understood little of his language or the act of creation, excepting the nature of stone and rock. Whenever the All Father worked in stone, Burok could see it and grasped it readily. Burok harbored the knowledge and learned to master the stone. In time, the All Father set aside his labors upon the *faul* and moved to other tasks, and the folk scattered far and wide. Burok remained however, and he gathered a great host of the *taonu muen* to him and taught them what he knew. He gave them the “gift of stone” and ever after they worshiped him and the early fathers and mothers as gods.

At first the *taonu muen* did not move as did the other folk. They dwelt in the Stone Mountains, far to the north of Mount Austrien in the lands of the westering sun, learning from Burok. They traded with few of their kin, retreating into the high mountains to work their own magics to shape their world of stone, but in later years they grew curious as rumors came to them of greater mountains to the east, and peaks so high they looked down upon the Stone Mountains. Thus, they began to travel across the world.

Forged in the fires of the All Father’s youth, the stone giants stand tall, with long arms and legs and narrow torsos beneath barrel chests. Their necks are thick and faces wide, with large eyes and noses and broad mouths. They range in color from a light brown to a deep gray; their skin is tough, though not like stone as some imagine. They wear no clothing though their habits are such that they sit for days without moving allowing all manner of lichen to grow upon their hides. Some revel in the warmth provided by the lichen, for it dulls the sharp mountain winds and they encourage its growth so that it covers them almost entirely. Some sit for many months and even years until until the giant is utterly lost to view. They do not favor weapons, armor or even tools but use their mastery of the ancient tongue of the All Father to shape their world; they cast life into stone to awaken it and shape it thus to their own design.

Stone giants eschew the dark, loving the warmth of the sun, the wind and open skies. For this they love high places most of all. They use their knowledge of stone to awaken it, building wondrous dwellings unlike any in the world of Aihilde. They heap stone upon slag and shape it, twisting it like ropes and tethers, binding the mountain’s slopes to the sky’s heavens. There is no inside for the giants; the pillars possess carefully wrought ledges that provide perches for the giants to sit upon and rest when they are not at their labors. The giants climb them and settle upon their flanks so that they can see the wide world and feel the weather upon their brow. The greater giants perch atop the highest points, the lesser clinging to the pillar at its base.



NEW EQUIPMENT

ARMOR, SHIELD, HELM	COST	AC	EV	
Four-in-One Ring Mail	add 50gp to any chain	adds +1 to any chain		
Mammoth Bone Armor	30gp	+3		
Shield, Hide	2gp	+1		
Shield, Iron Bound (wooden)	5gp	+2		
Helm, Walrus skin/tusk	5gp	+1 head		
Helm, Ram Horn	15gp	+1 head		
WEAPONS	COST	DMG	RNG	EV
Atgeirr (a type of Glaive)	10gp	1d10		
Axe, Bone	2gp	1d4		
Cleaver, Large	2gp	2d4		
Gladius	10gp	1d6		
Mace, Bear-claw	3gp	1d4		
Saxxe (single edged short sword)	7gp	1d6		
Tomahawk	5gp	1d6+1	30	1
MISSILE & RANGED	COST	DMG	RNG	EV
Bow, Cable Backed	80gp	1d8	150ft.	3
Harpoon, Toggling	2gp	1d8	20ft.	3
TRANSPORT & TACK	COST			EV
Anchor	5gp			2
Boat, Faering	250gp			n/a
Boat, Karve	3000gp			n/a
Boar, Knorr	8000gp			n/a
Boat, Long	12000gp			n/a
Boat, Skin (of hide, bone/wood)	75gp			23
Feed Sack	2sp			1
Mast	400gp			75
Oars	5gp			3
Rudder	12gp			3
Sail	50gp			20
Sextant	5gp			1
Sleigh	35gp			n/a
Sled Runners	5gp			2
Wagon, Laager	70gp			n/a
ANIMALS	COST			EV
Dog, Guard	10gp			n/a
Dog, Hunting	8gp			n/a
Dog, Snow	14gp			n/a
Bear	300gp			n/a
Elk	20gp			n/a
Goat	Free to Good Home			n/a

Leopard, Snow	400gp		n/a
Yak	25gp		n/a
PELTS OR SKINS	COST		EV
Bear	4gp		2
Beaver	3gp		1
Caribou	3gp		2
Coyote	1gp		1
Elk	3gp		2
Fox	2gp		1
Goat, Mnt.	3gp		2
Ibar (M&T of Aihrde)	4gp		3
Leopard, Snow	7gp		2
Lynx, Giant	2gp		1
Otter	1gp		1
Moose	3gp		3
Mountain Lion	4gp		2
Owlbear	5gp		3
Raccoon	3sp		1
Seal	1gp		2
Walrus	3gp		2
Wolf, Winter	6gp		2
Wolf	3gp		1
Wolverine	1gp		1
Yak	5gp		3
EQUIPMENT	COST		EV
Bedroll, Fur Lined	1sp*		4
Bladder, Owlbear (holds 3 gallons, won't freeze)	3gp		3
Chock, anchor pin (for climbing)	1gp		1
Coalpot (holds coal, warms tent, bedding)	5sp		1
Crampons (climbing)	5sp per		1
Ground Cloth, Oiled	4sp		1
Ice Axe	1gp		1
Mucket (pail/cup/bucket)	5sp		1
Net, Fishing	3gp		5
Pulley, Light	5sp		1
Pulley, Heavy	1gp		1
Skillet	3sp		2
Skis	3gp		4
Ski Poles	2gp		4
Sleeping Roll (Bag), Fur Lined, Seal Skin	10gp		2
Tarp, Seal Skin	3gp		1

Yurt (opening for fire, keeps heat in) 25gp 7

*For bedrolls that have fur lining, refer to the cost of the fur itself in the previous table and add that to 1sp.

MEDICAL EQUIPMENT	COST	EV
Arrow Spoon (extracts arrows with no additional damage, also called Spoon of Diocles)	6gp	*
Bone Drill, with Screw handle (to remove weapons from bone)	3gp	*
Bone Lever (setting bones)	1gp	*
Cupping Vessel (to draw poison, blood or puss)	3sp	*
Forceps	3gp	*
Hook, Long handled to hold back flesh	1sp	*
Needle	3sp	*
Pyxis (pill bottle, tin)	3sp	*
Scalpel (to probe, heat and burn)	1gp	*
Scissors	1gp	*
Spatula Probe	2gp	*
Thread	1sp	*
Zinc Tablets (clears eye wounds, toxins, poisons, +1 to attribute check for eye)	2gp	*
Medical Kit & Box (all the above)	25gp	3

CLOTHING	COST	EV
Amauti (atiqik with pocket for a child)	1gp	1
Atiqik (parka made of seal skin and down)	2gp	1
Boots, Spiked	2gp	2
Boots, Fur Lined	1gp	1
Gaiters (wrapped around top of boot to keep snow out)	5sp	1
Gloves, Fur Lined	1gp	1
Gloves, Seal Skin (waterproof)	1gp	1
Gloves, Wool	5sp	1
Hat, Sherpa	5sp	1
Hood	2sp	1
Inuktituk (bone snow goggles with slit, lined with soot)	2gp	1
Kamiks (seal skinned boots, don't suffer from wet)	5gp	1
Mittens, Wool	4sp	1
Ringpin	1sp	*
Shirt, Fleece	5sp	1
Shirt, Wool	1gp	1
Snowshoes	2gp	2
Snowshoe Deckings (the material used to "float" on the snow)	5sp	1
Socks	1sp	1
Travois	3gp	3
Underwear, Wool	1sp	1

All worn clothing has no EV value, while worn.

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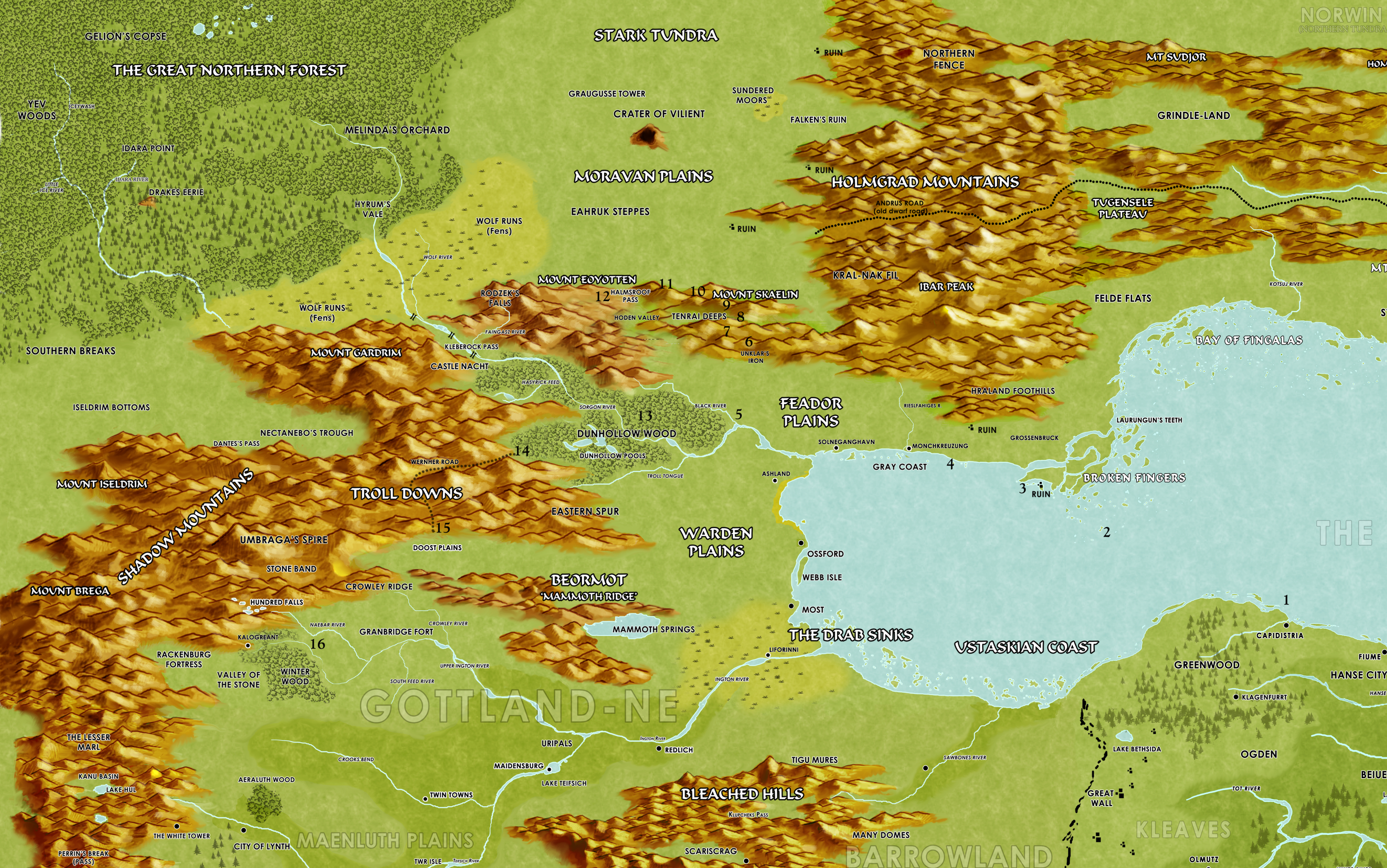


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1

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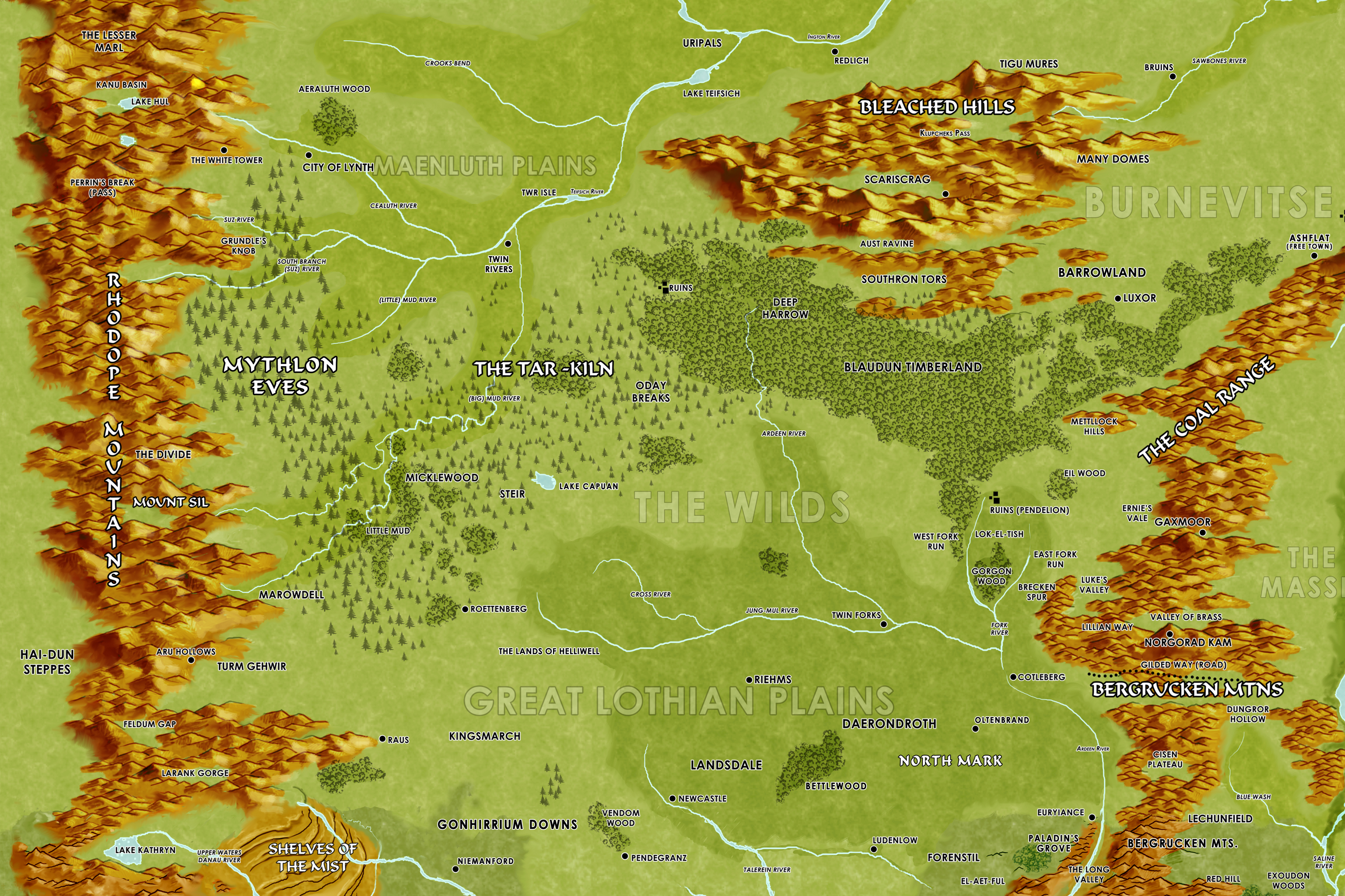
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