

# DUNGEON CRAWL CLASSICS LANKHMAR

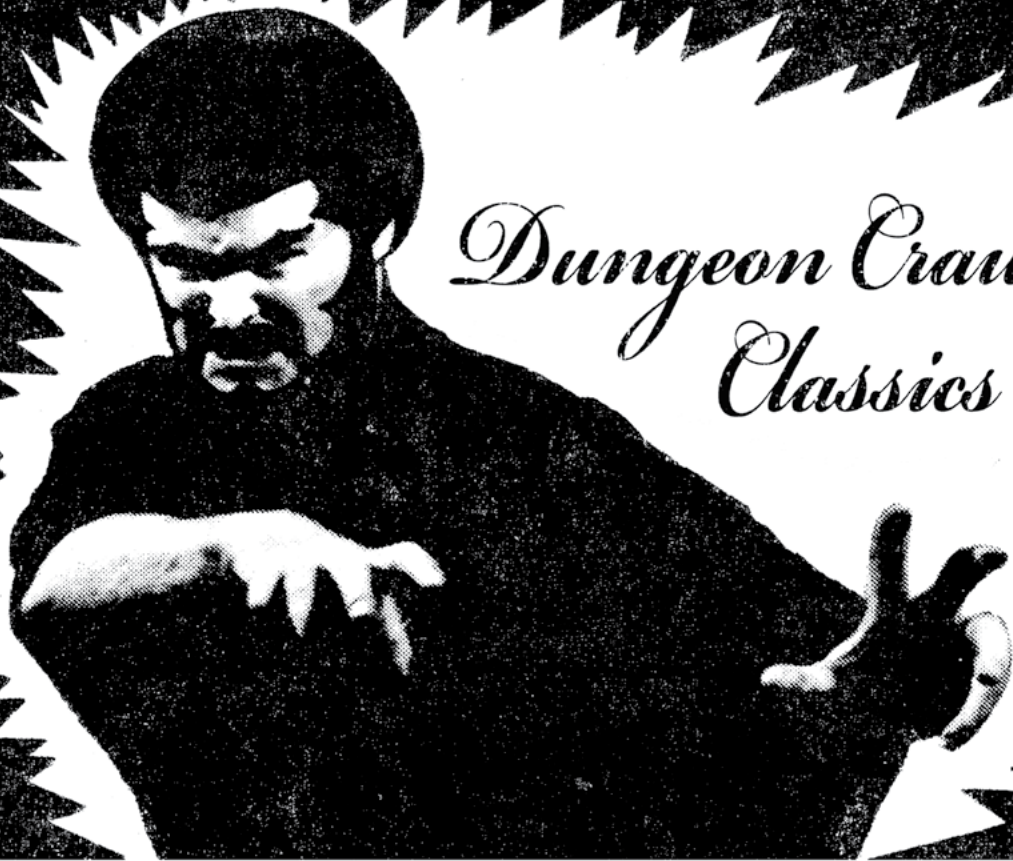
## THE LAND OF THE EIGHT CITIES

#8: A SOURCEBOOK AND  
LEVEL 3 ADVENTURE  
BY MICHAEL CURTIS

AUTHORIZED BY THE  
ESTATE OF FRITZ LEIBER



William M. Axford  
2018 [WMA]



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# MYSTERIES OF THE GREAT FOREST

## The Land of the Eight Cities Sourcebook

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### INTRODUCTION



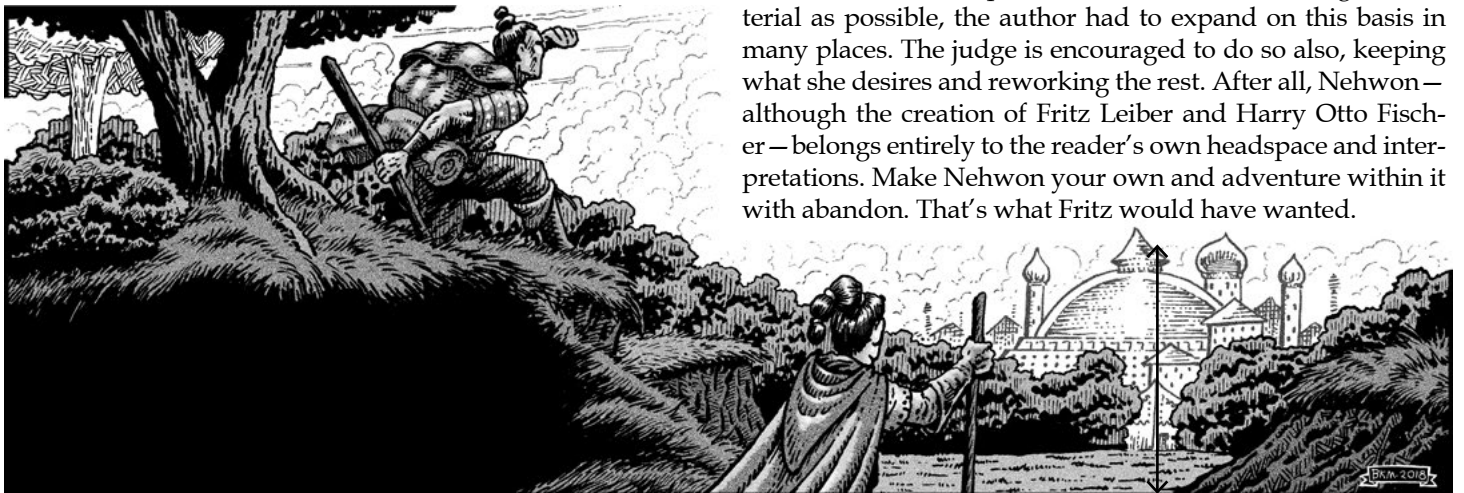
North of the Inner Sea, opposite the grand city of Lankhmar, stands its neighbor and rival, the Land of the Eight Cities. A relative newcomer when compared to other nations of Nehwon, the Land of the Eight Cities nevertheless occupies an old and resource-rich region, one with a history as varied as the cities that now stand upon it. This DCC Lankhmar supplement is the first to take a detailed look beyond the crenellated walls of the City of the Black Toga at other locales for further exciting adventures.

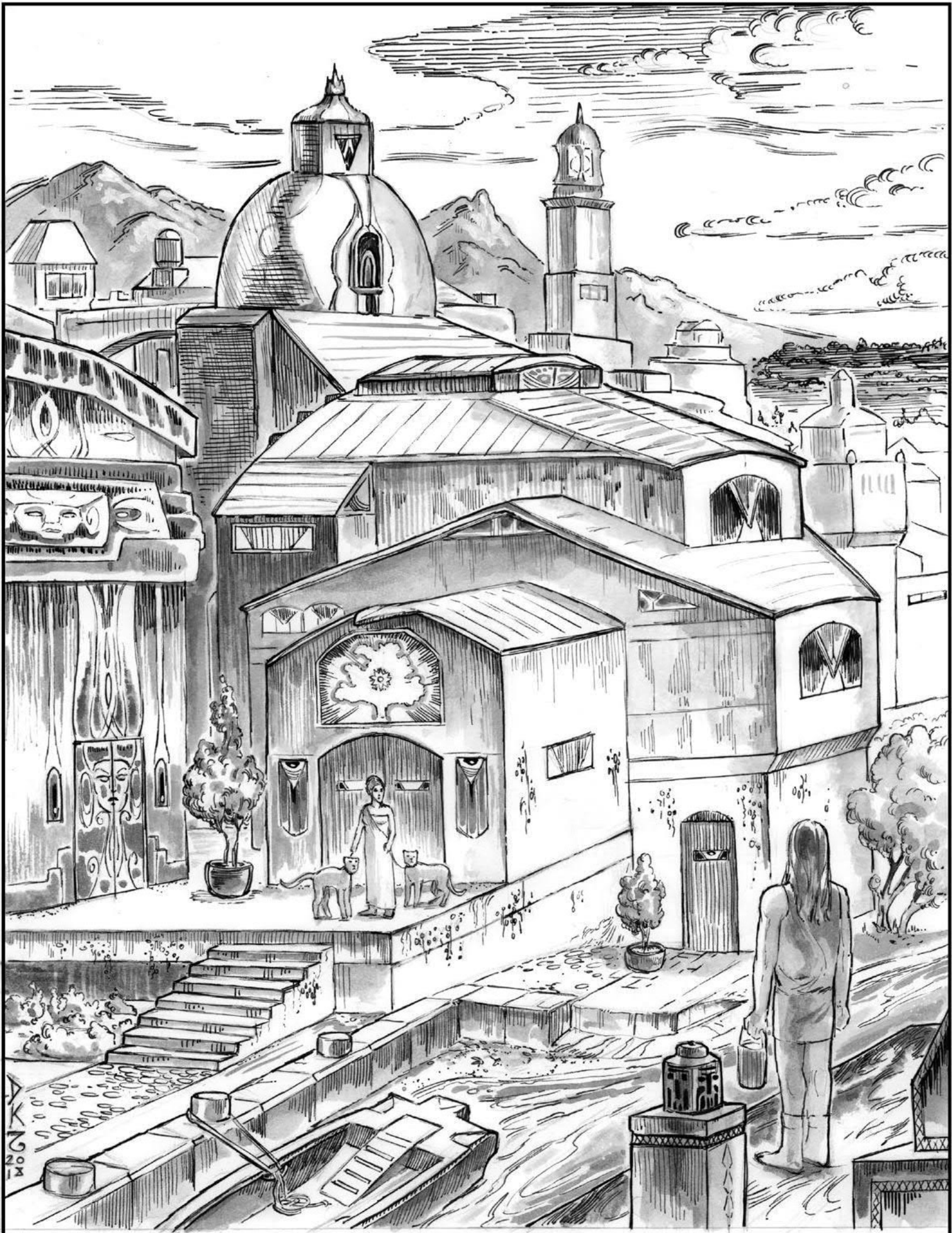
The Land of the Eight Cities appears in several of the Fafhrd and Gray Mouser stories, yet seldom plays an important role. This is both a blessing and a curse to the judge. On the one hand, canonical information about this region is scant, but on the other, this gives the game master vast latitude for populating the nation the way she and her players envision it.

The main themes and details found in this work are based on Leiber's own writings, some of which are difficult to find in print. The central premises and history of the Land of the Eight Cities are inspired by an unpublished draft produced by Leiber during the early evolution of the characters of Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser. The author discovered this draft while undergoing research at the University of Houston, perusing the Fritz Leiber Papers Collection housed at the University library.

The unfinished draft is an early attempt to write a Fafhrd and Gray Mouser novel. It ends after 80 pages, but contains many of the ideas that Leiber would ultimately develop into the *The Swords of Lankhmar*. However, there are a number of elements that never saw use in other Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser tales and have remained overlooked for decades. Upon reading this rough draft, the idea of writing a Land of the Eight Cities supplement sprang instantly to mind, utilizing material never before seen in the role-playing hobby.

While this book incorporates as much as Leiber's original material as possible, the author had to expand on this basis in many places. The judge is encouraged to do so also, keeping what she desires and reworking the rest. After all, Nehwon—although the creation of Fritz Leiber and Harry Otto Fischer—belongs entirely to the reader's own headspace and interpretations. Make Nehwon your own and adventure within it with abandon. That's what Fritz would have wanted.





# SECTION ONE: AN OVERVIEW OF THE FOREST LAND



The Land of the Eight Cities, also known as the Forest Land, is a nation on the northern shore of the Inner Sea. A young realm by the reckoning of hoary Quarmall and ancient Lankhmar, it possess a wildness that is long absent from the decaying and staid countries south and east of the Inner Sea. In other words, an excellent place for adventure to be sought and riches to be won...and lives to be lost. This section provides an overview of the nation and peoples of the Land of the Eight Cities to better help the judge incorporate this realm and its features into her DCC Lankhmar campaign.

## THE HISTORY OF THE LAND OF THE EIGHT CITIES



Cons ago, the northern hemisphere of Nehwon was covered in ice. Great, mile-high glaciers extended south from what is now the Cold Waste to past where Lankhmar currently stands. Life was brutal and short for the savage tribes that eked out an existence in this frigid world. But at length, whether by the will of the gods in tropical Godsland, or by a lucky shift of the world bubble, Nehwon warmed and the glaciers retreated, carving out vast gouges in the ground as they receded. The largest of these scars in Nehwon's surface filled with melting ice water and formed the Inner Sea. In time, the Outer Sea's waves ate away at the thin barrier of land separating the two, creating the immense ocean known today. Ningauble of the Seven Eyes says—at length—that the Sinking Lands also formed during this time of geological upheaval.

When the glaciers returned to their icy homes, life crept north in their wake. The mighty ice had pushed vast deposits of soil south, and trees and plants sprouted in the rich earth. The entire northern shore of the Inner Sea, from the beaches to the Trollstep and Barrier Mountains, became a mighty forest that drew countless animal species to shelter within its dark interior.

Wildlife was not the only inhabitant of the forest lands, though. Tribes of men followed the herds north and settled here as well. These peoples were a simple folk, dwelling in the sylvan glades in huts of mud and hide, fearful of the darkness that crowded their cookfires at night. Working no stone or metal, they left no mark upon the land except perhaps the rare burial mound and the faded spirits that haunt them in the darkest glades of the Great Forest. These nameless tribes vanished in time, and the woodlands remained unoccupied by man.

Where these first peoples went or what became of them remains a mystery. Some sages say that the forest tribes were driven out by calamity or sickness, and headed into the Cold Waste to become the progenitors of the northern barbarians.

It has been noted, however, by Srith of the Scrolls, that certain ageless and strange structures have been sighted in the

oldest parts of the Forest Land, buildings that resemble the crypt-like Temple of the Gods of Lankhmar. Perhaps that unknown race which raised the ancient black fanes upon the banks of the River Hlal, those ebon temples that served as the foundation of the City of the Black Toga, also ventured across the Inner Sea for their own inexplicable purposes and found the forest tribes in their way, but this is only speculation. Incautious scholars might find more insight within those overgrown buildings in the dark and old woods north of the Inner Sea.

If the builders of the Black Temples did indeed drive out the forest tribes, they too vanished in turn, leaving only their structures as relics. For long millennia, the Forest Land remained unoccupied by men, visited rarely by wanderers from the Cold Waste or the servants of the Invisibles of Stardock.

For many long ages, the northern forests remained desolate of men. In those intervening centuries, the realm of Lankhmar arose in the south. From humble village to thriving town to growing metropolis, Lankhmar City swelled in size on the shore of the Inner Sea. And with its growth came a great hunger for resources. Six hundred years ago, Lankhmar first looked across the waves, seeking to feed its further growth. Their earliest ships, crafted from the scant woods and forests along the River Hlal, discovered the arboreal paradise of the Great Forest. Small settlements, initially intended as lumber camps to harvest the timber stands of the woodlands, were built along the coast. The greatest of these was Hwarshmar, now known as Kvarch Nar.

The woodmen quickly discovered gold, silver, and gems in the myriads streams and rivers flowing through the forests and a new lust sprung up. The Lankhmarts' hunger for precious metals and gemstones swiftly outstripped their desire for timber. The lumber camps transformed into boom towns filled with prospectors and those who preyed upon them. These settlements ultimately became the foundations for most of the Eight Cities, built where precious metals and gems were close at hand and conditions for transport most efficient.

The discovery of gold, silver, emeralds, and sapphires enriched the already prosperous nation of Lankhmar, funding great civic works in Lankhmar City and drawing more Lankhmarts to the new colony cities of the Forest Land. There was no shortage of nobles from Lankhmar seeking to establish villas and estates in the cool forest climes to escape the heat and growing congestion of the City of the Black Toga. The remains of these country villas still stand in the Land of the Eight Cities, now repurposed by the nation's newest inhabitants.

For three hundred years, the Great Forest was under the dominion of Lankhmar. But the Lankhmarts were not the only people who looked upon the northern forests with hungry eyes.

Almost three centuries ago, eastern nomads from the Steppes and the deserts pushed west through the gap between the Barrier Mountains and the Inner Sea. They came first as raiders, led by their great hero-leaders, Glaggerk and Lanch. The two mighty warriors reduced the defenses of the fortress-town of Hlelchmar (now Kleg Nar) and swept into the interior of the Great Forest, seizing Hwarshmar before the Lankhmarts could react. With their major port under the eastern nomads' control and cut off from their homelands, the Lankhmarts' efforts to hold their colonies were doomed. One after another, the other cities fell. Only Ool Hluss, present day Ool Hrusp, endured, but Lankhmar abandoned their last hold in the north after a generation of constant siege and warfare.

Glaggerk was slain in battle at the crossing of the Mangrshik, leaving his comrade Lanch to take the title of first Overlord of the Land of the Eight Cities. Under their new Overlord, the nomads traded their tents for houses, allowing their conquered Lankhmart slaves and servants to keep the roads clear, rebuild sacked cities, and work the prosperous mines. In time, the eastern peoples married with the conquered, and their language similarly became a hybrid thing. The liquid syllables of Lankhmarese took on the gutturals of Mingolish, changing the old names of the cities to those they're now known by.

The no-longer nomads became Eight-Citymen and Eight-Citywomen as they embraced civilization. Their newly-gained mineral riches and overabundance of housing gave the now-settled Foresters both the opportunity and the inclination to pursue higher arts and sciences. The Eight-Citymen took to the crafts of woodworking and metalsmithing, but more so to the art of music, reading, and philosophy. Looted scrolls left by the Lankhmarts kindled interest in the natural and occult sciences as well. Before long, the Land of the Eight Cities flourished with a hunger for arts and culture and this trend continues to this day.

## PEOPLE OF THE LAND OF THE EIGHT CITIES



Physically, the Foresters still tend towards their eastern heritage. Their skin tone is dusky and their hair and eye color is commonly dark. The Eight-Citymen and -Citywomen are taller than their eastern cousins, however, only being somewhat smaller than the Northerners of the Cold Waste. This is due to the influx of Lankhmart blood, which also accounts for the occasional lighter skin, hair, and eye color found among some of the Foresters. Lighter complexion Eight-Citymen are most commonly found in the western end of the Forest Land in regions that see a greater interaction with Northerners and where Lankhmar endured the longest.

The Eight-Citymen and -Citywomen have a deep reverence for their arboreal home, perhaps stemming from ancestral memory of the desolate and treeless expanses of the Steppes and eastern deserts. They venerate a collective pantheon known as the Gods of the Forest (see below) and consider structures of stone to be unsightly and improper. The For-

esters, true to their name, see the choked forests as holy places. Proper sacrifices are made whenever they are forced to fell trees and strict religious regulations exist in regards to replanting. The graveyards of the Eight-Citymen are long corridors under the trees where the dead are interred, silent and peaceful among the forest shadows.

Only second to their veneration of the forest is the Eight-Citymen's respect for their women. Originating in the matriarchal family clans of their eastern kin, there is no faster way to end up beaten or slain in the Forest Land than to insult or strike a woman. Any Eight-Cityman witnessing that act would instantly rise to teach the offender a lesson in Forest Land etiquette.

Clothing in the Forest Land is woolen, spun locally and often dyed bright colors. It is easy to tell the social class of most Eight-Citymen by observing the coloration of their garments. Those of the lower class, who often make their livings close to the Great Forest itself, tend to dress in greens and browns, as do the soldiers. Merchants and nobility prefer brighter colors and have a fondness for brilliant yellows and vibrant reds only somewhat complimented by rich browns and greens.

As a people, the Foresters disdain agriculture and herding anything larger than sheep. Both require the clearing of forest to accomplish, meaning that only small farms and pastures in naturally clear land are found in the Land of the Eight Cities. This disdain comes at a cost, however, making the Forest Land overly-dependent on the grain shipments from Lankhmar to survive.

The Foresters speak Kvarchish, which remains close to Mingolish, albeit spoken with a Lankhmarese accent. Mingols and Foresters can understand one another if each speaks clearly and slowly. The Land of the Eight Cities' proximity to the Cold Waste and their constant trade with Lankhmar assure that many Foresters are also fluent in Northspeak and Low Lankhmarese. The nobles of the Eight Cities are tutored in High Lankhmarese as well, and often send their children across the Inner Sea to gain higher education in Lankhmar.

The Foresters enjoy hunting and sports, being adept at both the bow and javelin. Horsemanship is only practiced among the noble class, as are the various games of strategy imported from Lankhmar. Among the lower classes, gambling is popular and, in addition to the omnipresent dice of Rat-Snake, the Eight-Citymen enjoy Sixes-and-Sevens. This simple wagering game is played by holding either six or seven coins in a single clenched fist and requiring one's opponent to guess which amount is held. A simple game, but small fortunes can be made in side bets in the gold-rich Eight Cities.

## GOVERNMENT IN THE LAND OF THE EIGHT CITIES




Like Lankhmar, the Land of the Eight Cities is ruled by an Overlord. The title was in fact claimed from the Lankhmarese form of government when the

nomads invaded the Great Forest. Although the title may be from Lankhmar, the government in the Forest Land is based on the clan system from the nomadic days.

The Overlord is the highest ruler in the Land of the Eight Cities. In turn, he or she sits at the head of a quasi-democratic system dating back to the time of the Steppes and the deserts. A collection of nobles advise the Overlord. Among these advisors, the Lords of Council, are the Lord High Quartermaster (responsible for overseeing the grain dole and shipments), the Lord Military (in charge of the Forest Land's soldiers), the Overcaptain (admiral of the Land of the Eight Cities' fleets), and the Lord of Mines (responsible for the nation's mineral resources and mining).

In turn, the Overlord and the Lords of Council are held accountable at a yearly assembly of the various Dukes, Duchesses, and Lord and Lady Mayors who rule the Eight Cities. In theory, the city heads can strip the Overlord and his advisors of title and station if they deem their governance a threat to the overall well-being of the Land of the Eight Cities, but this has only occurred once in the Forest Lands' three centuries of existence.

## GODS OF THE EIGHT CITIES

ith their inherent, ancestral respect for the forest around them, it's little wonder that the inhabitants of the Land of the Eight Cities look to the ancient trees and the verdant wildlife for their spiritual needs. To them, the forest and all it contains is sacred, interconnected in the cycle of life and death. To honor one part of the wood while disrespecting another is unthinkable to the Foresters.

This divine interconnection of forest life is personified as the Gods of the Forest, an indistinct pantheon of divine entities represented as masculine and feminine, animal or human, tree or stream, depending on the whims of their worshippers or the myths told about them. The Eight-Citymen honor individual manifestation of the Gods of the Forest as needed. A woodsman might make an offering to the Gods in the form of a mighty bear, hoping that they/it imparts upon him great strength before felling a massive oak. Similarly, a huntsman would say a prayer to the Wolf of the Forest, asking for its keen senses before embarking on a hunt. The temples of Gods of the Forest are largely erected around groves of the sacred ilrisk trees, being more raw nature than constructed buildings, and most are left in as natural a state as possible. Wooden idols depicting the Gods of the Forest in various sylvan incarnations are the limit of human decoration within these forest fanes.

While the Gods of the Forest attend to the spiritual needs of the majority of the Eight-Citymen, another god finds supplicants among a select few: the Red God. This deity, a god of blood and slaughter, is a common one in the ranks of the Mad Duke's gladiators and the Forest Lands soldiery. The martial entertainers of Duke Lithquill, either willingly employed or pressed into fighting duty to please the Mad Duke, know that each fight may be their last. The soldier knows that his sword arm might be insufficient to save his life in battle. To this end, practitioners of both these profes-

sions pay homage to the Red God, calling on him for protection, strength in battle, or at least a good death. The Red God has no temples in the Land of the Eight Cities, but numerous shrines to the Blood God are found in gladiators' quarters, the homes of those who've survived their time in the Mad Duke's arena, and military barracks around the nation.

## RELATIONS WITH OTHER NATIONS



As a relatively young nation in comparison to its neighbors, the Land of the Eight Cities remains in a tenuous position. It is resource-rich, blessed with timber and precious metals, making it a desirable acquisition for hostile realms. Yet, due to its wildness—its dense forest, high mountains, and wide rivers—anyone seeking to claim the Land of the Eight Cities for their own face a number of natural defenses that must be overcome. These defenses are further bolstered by a people who live as one with their land and are willing to spill all their blood to protect it. This has protected the Land of the Eight Cities from serious conquest, but whether it will safeguard them forever remains to be seen.

Of all the Forest Land's neighbors, the Land of the Eight Cities has the most complex relationship with Lankhmar. The Forest Land was once a realm of Lankhmar and the Overlord and his nobles have never forgotten this fact. A common fear in the Land of the Eight Cities is that Lankhmar is biding its time before launching an attack to reclaim its former lands. This fear cannot be dismissed as mere paranoia. There are many Lankhmart nobles, especially those whose former family estates are now occupied by the Foresters, who seek to turn the Overlord's thoughts to reconquering the Land of the Eight Cities.

In the meanwhile, the Forest Land and Lankhmar enjoy a symbiotic relationship. Lankhmar is mineral-poor and greatly desires the metal ore of the Land of the Eight Cities. In turn, the Forest Land suffers from a lack of arable land to feed its citizens and imports the majority of its grain from Lankhmar. For now, neither nation can do without the other. Diplomats from either side of the Inner Sea make regular sea voyages to ensure trade continues without interruption or miscommunication.

The Land of the Eight Cities has a similarly complex relationship with the barbarian tribes of the Cold Waste. The Foresters love the furs, amber, and ivory the Northerners bring south over the Trollstep Mountains, but are less fond of their piratical enterprises. With several coastal cities and a sizeable merchant fleet, the Forest Land suffers losses each year to the Northerners' pirate expeditions. The Foresters' general attitude is that the Northern barbarians are boon trading partners when encountered on a solitary basis, but once more than a handful gather, they become an enemy to be watched.

Northwest of the Land of the Eight Cities lies the cold city of No-Ombrulsk. This lonely city-state serves as a trade-hub for the Cold Waste, drawing merchants from as far south as



Klesh and Quarmall in search of exotic wares found only in the arctic reaches of Nehwon. Overseen by their Lord Logben, the 'Brulskers are shrewd traders, wringing every last coin out of visiting merchants. In turn, the 'Brulskers are taxed by both their Lord, who seeks to complete the White Throne, a massive seat of state constructed from the rarest ivories and white gems, and the Priest of No-Ombrulsk to maintain the temple of No-Ombrulsk, the great whale god from which the city takes its name. This taxation leads to periods of civic grumbling and the Land of the Eight Cities has agents in No-Ombrulsk. Word is that if the populace ever grows too tired of Lord Logben and the Priest, the Forest Land stands ready to take the city-state under its own banner and become the Land of Nine Cities.

East of the Land of the Eight Cities lies the Mingol Steppes and the savage horsemen who inhabit it. Despite a shared heritage, the Mingol hordes are a source of concern for the Eight-Citymen. They know the lure of shade and forest when one dwells on the wild steppes and in the scorching deserts, and the Forest Land has done its best to seal passage into the Great Forest from the east. Despite the fortress that guards the narrow gap at Kleg Nar, the Land of the Eight Cities is still subject to Mingol raids. The Mingols have been

known to attack the city of Kleg Nar and carry off timber houses piecemeal to their wood-starved homeland. The Foresters take this loss in stride, seeing the benefits in assuaging the Mingol timber-hunger in small meals rather than being subject to the feast-sized hunger for blood, flesh, and wood an entire Mingol invasion would bring with it.

Most of the desert tribes remain too far from the Forest Lands borders to have much impact on the wooded nation. One tribe, the Kilyolsho, strays past Sarheenmar and into the Barrier Mountains, causing conflict between the Eight-Citymen defenders and the desert nomads, but the desert tribe is too small to pose a danger to the Forest Land aside from the occasional stolen sheep or two from the foothill pastures beyond Kleg Nar. The Lord Military encourages communication between the Foresters and the Kilyolsho for the purpose of gathering news from the desert people. This intelligence helps the Land of the Eight Cities anticipate when the Mingols may turn their eyes west once more and prepare for the horsemen's raids.

## COMMERCE IN THE FOREST LAND

As mentioned previously, the Land of the Eight Cities lives on its mineral resources which it uses to purchase the necessities it does not produce. Agriculture is so scant in the Forest Land that no surplus exists for export. Ool Hrusp does export a small amount of wine, but this accounts for only the smallest percentage of the city's revenue.

In addition to the gold, silver, tin, and iron that the Land of the Eight Cities produces, the nation also exports sail canvas, caviar, mead, and woodcrafts. These latter goods are luxury items, often masterful examples of woodworking, intricately carved and destined for the noble villas and manors of Lankhmar.

The Land of the Eight Cities mints its own coins. These are the *mlier* (a gold coin inset with a cut sapphire much like the Lankhmar diamond-in-gold glulditch), the *gront* (a solid gold coin), the *vrolp* (a holed silver coin), the *wrool* (a square bronze coin), and the *stuss* (an iron and tin bead). Although the exchange rate varies, for game purposes treat the coins as having the following values:

**Table 1-1: Coin Exchange Rates**

Land of the Eight Cities' Coinage	Comparable Value to Lankhmart Coins	DCC RPG value
Stuss	Iron Tik	1/10th cp
Wrool	Bronze Agol	1/5th cp
Vrolp	Silver Smerduk	1 sp
Gront	Gold Rilc	1 gp
Mlier	½ Diamond-In-Amber Glulditch	50 gp

# SECTION TWO: THE EIGHT CITIES



The Land of the Eight Cities gets its name from the octet of settlements, big and small, that stand within its boundaries. While these are far from the only communities in the nation—countless villages, hamlets, and towns lie within the forest's eaves—they are the ones of note and have the largest impact on both the nation and its relations with external powers. The Eight Cities are Kleg Nar, Kvarch Nar, Gnamph Nar, Illik-Ving, Ool Hrusp, Ool Plerns, Ool Krut, and Mlurg Nar.

## GENERAL FEATURES OF THE EIGHT CITIES



Each of the Eight Cities share a number of similarities, enough that it's best to point them out at once rather than repeat them in the following descriptions.

The Eight Cities are without walls, a fact many southern travelers find both amazing and foolish. The Foresters allow the woodlands to grow right up to the borders of their cities, making each metropolis an island of civilization in an ocean of green. What these travelers fail to realize is that, despite appearances, the Eight Cities are far from defenseless. Not only would invaders have to either march down the few forest-lined roads undoubtedly housing guerilla soldiers picking off their numbers from the safety of the Great Forest, but each city is surrounded by hidden ditches and brush-concealed and spike-topped fences capable of gutting enemy cavalry. Archer platforms are concealed in the tree-tops, allowing snipers to thin the enemy's ranks. The Eight-Citymen also know their land like few others do; they are woodland warriors without peer.

The Eight-Citymen build their structures from wood, finding stone to be unseemly and abhorrent to their love of the forest. The Foresters inherited many of their buildings from the original Lankhmart settlers, who constructed from timber as an expedience. Only Ool Hrusp has any stone buildings of note.

Buildings in the Eight Cities are steep-roofed, shingled with wood and with low eaves hanging close to the ground. Low-set windows provide light and outside view. The Eight-Citymen favor bright colors and paint their homes with vibrant blues and sunny yellows whenever possible, even if it's just the trim.

The Foresters tend to build their homes close together to avoid the need for cutting down more trees than is necessary. This leads to tightly-packed cities with narrow roads winding through them. A roof-traveling thief could easily leap from house to house were it not for the sharp pitch of the roofs making such aerial traversing nearly impossible.

Numerous, closely-packed buildings of wood make the threat of fire a real one in the Foresters' minds and all the Eight Cities judiciously watch for fire hazards. Wrought-iron lanterns are used for street lighting instead of burn-

ing brands, and anyone caught being incautious with open flame is punished by both a stiff fine and a public flogging. A hue and cry of "fire" will cause all within earshot to quickly respond, buckets, shovels, and axes at the ready.

Roads in the Eight Cities are paved with gravel to help prevent them from turning to a morass in raining weather. Only the grandest streets, such as High Street in Kvarch Nar, are paved with cobbles.

## GNAMPH NAR



Sometimes called the "Caravan City," Gnamph Nar is the second largest of the Eight Cities. While Kvarch Nar is larger and has a busier port, Gnamph Nar is where land trade congregates in the Forest Land. Caravans and merchants coming from Lankhmar, Ilthmar, the Eastern Lands, Sarheenmar, and even from distant Far Kiraay arrive at the Great Market of Gnamph Nar. Countless warehouses crowd the edges of the Great Market, holding cargo destined for the marketplace or bound for the further reaches of the Land of the Eight Cities and beyond. Horse-flesh, oxen, mules, and even the rare pack bear all go for a premium in Gnamph Nar, for it is here that caravans form and reform, before departing for farther off destinations.

Gnamph Nar is a rougher city than Kvarch Nar. Lacking the Overlord's direct presence like Kvarch Nar does, the Duke rules with a freer hand and the criminal underworld operates with cautious insolence. Smugglers and pirates frequent Gnamph Nar's port, meeting with shady traders and contacts in the harbor-side taverns and social clubs, while thieves and alley-bashers prey on foreign merchants laden with coin. The city watch of Gnamph Nar is easily bribed and could even teach their Lankhmart confederates a thing or two about graft.

The Overlord is aware of Gnamph Nar's reputation, but has yet to make any serious efforts to tamp down on the city's criminality. So long as the Duke of Gnamph Nar keeps the underworld in some semblance of restraint, the Overlord is content to let business function as it will in the Caravan City. However, anything that either threatens the trade lifeblood of the Land of the Eight Cities or endangers the food shipments from Lankhmar and other foreign parts would be crushed in an instant by the Duke, knowing that failing to do so would result in his immediate replacement.

The Thieves' Guild of Lankhmar has several secret operatives in Gnamph Nar tasked with funneling information back to the City of the Black Toga. Characters in good standing with the Thieves' Guild might find themselves ordered to help these agents, act as couriers between the two cities, or serve as deniable (and disposable) assistants to the Thieves' Guild in Gnamph Nar. PCs with the Guild's enmity might find these isolated brethren of Thieves' House easy pickings and a way to strike back at the Guild without fear of an overwhelming and immediate response.

## ILLIK-VING



he smallest of the Eight Cities, Illik-Ving barely qualifies as a metropolis. In an older land, it would be a modest town, but in the youthful Forest Land, its age earns it the designation of city.

Illik-Ving is seldom a destination, but instead a stopover on a long journey. Travelers and the occasional mule caravan pass through the frontier city on their way to No-Ombrulsk or the Cold Waste when sea passage proves too costly. On rare occasions, the more worldly Northern barbarians bring amber, furs, or pirated goods through the tiny city on their way to the larger markets of Gnaph Nar, Kvarch Nar, or Ool Hrusp.

As a distant outpost of civilization, Illik-Ving is a staunch and self-sufficient community. It knows that when the winter storms blow down off the Trollstep Mountains, bringing with them months of snow that choke the roads south, Illik-Ving stands alone. This trend towards self-reliance manifests itself in the frugality of its residents. Travelers to the city often complain of the small portions one receives at a meal, but the residents know that a small bowl of porridge now means all the more grain in the granaries when the cold months come. But if one is willing to overlook the scant meals, there are plenty of opportunities for wealth in Illik-Ving.

While the Land of the Eight Cities owes its wealth as a whole to the mineral resources it commands, few of the cities are as well-positioned as Illik-Ving to profit from the rare metals of the Forest Land. The Trollstep Mountains stand just beyond the city's boundaries, and every year sees prospectors returning to the mountains and new mines sunk to draw out the gold, silver, tin, and iron that run through the Trollstep's veins. Goods and services are commonly bought with tiny bags of gold dust in Illik-Ving and the taverns are business places where older prospectors sell their claims to younger, wider-eyed newcomers each spring.

This trade in precious metals draws adventurers, mercenaries, and dreamers to Illik-Ving like shimmer-sprights to treasure. Many seek to stake their own claims in the mountains, hoping to strike the motherlode leading to a life of ease. Others, perhaps more pragmatic, earn their wages as caravan guards protecting mineral shipments south to Kvarch

Nar or watching over assayers' houses in the city. Yet others make their fortunes by preying on those same caravans or lonely prospectors working in the foothills.

Illik-Ving keeps order and dissuades robbers and raiders by sending out patrols to watch over the roads and mountain passes. These patrols work in groups of four, armed with spears and wearing boiled leather or newly-wrought chain-mail. The training of these guardsmen varies, however, and many know only the rudiments of martial skills. Most were simple shepherds who traded in cold, lonely nights of watching their flocks for cold, lonely nights keeping an eye on their fellows.

Illik-Ving is home to the witch, Shuneel, who dwells in an aged leather tent down one of the city's twisted side streets. Shuneel, a hag of modest power, makes a comfortable living telling fortunes, providing restoratives, and otherwise catering to the prospectors and Eight-Citymen desperate for supernatural aid. It is said that, while willing to practice her art for anyone with the coin to pay her, she'll never work magic again for the "insolent-tongued and tent-stealing snakes known as Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser." Although she'd love seeing the Twain punished for their insults, Shuneel's magic is no match for the adventuring duo's supernatural mentors, Ningauble and Sheelba, and she has no wish to cross those archmagi.

## KLEG NAR



he easternmost of the Eight Cities, Kleg Nar is both city and fortress, a timber bulwark against predation deeper in the Great Forest. Situated in a three-mile gap between the last foothills of the Barrier Mountains and the rocky shores of the Inner Sea, Kleg Nar began life as *Hlelchmar*, built by Lankhmar to watch the eastern flank of their woodland colonies. It performed this function admirably, fending off the smaller, less-advanced desert tribes like the Kilyolsho for three hundred years. Then the nomads arrived and *Hlelchmar* fell, overcome by the cunning of Glagerk and Lanch, and the howling horde behind them.

It was *Hlelchmar*'s failure that led to the current fortified nature of Kleg Nar today. The Foresters remember how their ancestors overcame its defenses and are unwilling to make the same mistake.



Circumstances of topography affect the design of Kleg Nar. Just west of a low, flat bowl of land flanking a deep water cove along the rocky shore, are two tall hills separated by a narrow pass. The fortress of Kleg Nar straddles the two hills, the Sea Road running through the pass. The fortress consists of a timber palisade built atop an earthen embankment that runs north-south, its long wall extending across the road. Traffic heading toward the Forest Land's capitol or east to Sarheenmar must pass through a wooden gate set between the hills. While the woods grow close the city of Kleg Nar, a cleared killing field is maintained beyond the fortress' walls, the better to winnow attackers intent on laying siege to the defensive wall.

The city of Kleg Nar exists in the lowland surrounding the harbor and as such does not benefit from the protection of the fortress' palisade. Houses collect along either side of a north-running road that connects with the main trade road, dividing the city into its East and West Quarters. The West Quarter is largely devoted to serving ships landing in the harbor and the garrison of the fortress with equal enthusiasm. The East Quarter is a mixture of private homes, businesses, and civic government buildings.

Kleg Nar has been sacked in the past by Mingol raiders coming around the southern tip of the Barrier Mountains or up from Sarheenmar. The residents of Kleg Nar respond by sending their women, children, and elderly to seek safety in the fortress while the watch and Eight-Citymen defend their homes in fierce street-to-street fighting. The city has been rebuilt several times and the scent of fresh sap in the air, leaking from the newly-rebuilt timber buildings, indicates a Mingol raid has recently occurred.

The Lord Mayor of Kleg Nar is an appointed position, its official usually chosen from military officers who've served on the garrison of the city's fortress. As a result, the Lord Mayor is typically concerned with order and discipline in the city, and the watch is well-trained. The crime rate of Kleg Nar is low and opportunities for criminal ventures are few. Few with criminal or adventurous minds spend much time in Kleg Nar, moving quickly through the small port town in the fortress' shadow.

## KVARCH NAR



Kvarch Nar is the oldest of the Eight Cities, founded by Lankhmar as a foothold into the Great Forest when the City of the Black Toga turned its attentions across the Inner Sea. Originally named *Hwarshmar* in the Lankhmar tongue, the city is built on a high bluff overlooking a deep water harbor at the mouth of the Mangrishik River, one of the few places along the rocky headland where ships can anchor. A series of flag signals are used to control traffic into the port, giving permission to captains when berth space allows for mooring or forcing them to wait beyond Kralk Island, an isle that forms part of the harbor's breakwater.

Cargo is quickly unloaded by the cadres of longshoremen working the city's harbor. From the docks, two winding

roads make their way up the bluffs to Kvarch Nar, but several windlass-powered elevators haul freight from the docks below up to the city as well. This second method of transportation is faster and more efficient, but a toll is applied to each cargo-load heading up the lifts. However, for some goods, the financial benefits of getting cargo quickly to market outweighs the additional cost.

Also situated at the harbor are the Fleet-Docks, home to the Land of the Eight Cities' naval forces. Double-masted, red-sailed ships and bireme war galleys moor here when not on active patrol, usually ferreting out pirates and Sea Mingols on the Inner Sea. Many of the fleet's captains have sought training in Lankhmar and are well-versed in that city's naval tactics. It's almost as if they see naval conflict with the City of the Black Toga as inevitable.

Kvarch Nar is the capital of the Land of the Eight Cities, home to the palace-house of its Overlord. The ruler dwells in a sprawling mansion, many-storied and bearing a number of wings seemingly added in haphazard fashion. Mica-paned windows look out over the city and harbor, while green-clad troops dressed in leather and hide armor and bearing copper-worked iron helms keep watch over the Overlord. It is here that the Overlord meets with his Lords of Council, setting policy for the governance of the Forest Land.

Like all of the Forest-men cities, Kvarch Nar lacks a defensive wall and the Great Forest grows right up to the city's verge. At the margin between city and forest stands the Temple of the Gods of the Wood, a gigantic enclosure surrounding sixteen sacred ilrisk trees. The temple is open roofed with clusters of shrubbery planted about the top of it, attended to with pious devotion by the Priests of the Forest Gods.

The buildings of Kvarch Nar are packed tightly together, turning the streets of the city into little more than close, winding alleyways. Only a few roads, such as High Street, running from the Great Market to the Riverway, and Granary Street, which bisects it at Golden Square, offer clear traffic ways for wagons.

The Mangrishik River bisects the city, a pair of bridges crossing over the deep ravine that runs down to the harbor. The Mangrishik is a fast-moving river that only slows just before reaching the sea, its length strewn with rapids and cataracts. No river travel is possible past a few miles north of Kvarch Nar.

As suggested, Granary Street and Golden Square are the center of the Forest Land's grain storage and distribution. The grain ships of Lankhmar regularly dock in Kvarch Nar, unloading their golden cargo in the city. The grain supply is stored in the granaries of Kvarch Nar, distributed to citizens in a daily dole and sent by wagon to other cities throughout the Forest Land. Given the granaries' importance in the stability of the realm, the silos are well-guarded by both man and cat, and regular inspections keep loss to theft and rot at a minimum.

## OVERLORDS OF THE LAND OF THE EIGHT CITIES

Like Lankhmar, the Forest Land has had its share of rulers in the time of Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser. The most famous is Lord Morval, who ruled during the Rat Plague that nearly ruined Lankhmar and whose plotters sought to undermine the grain trade between the two cities. However, the judge may set her DCC Lankhmar campaign during other time periods, both before and after the exploits of the Twain. The following list contains four additional Overlords for use in campaigns set in other times.

**Table 2-1: Overlords of the Land of the Eight Cities**

Name	Gender	Notes
Ulkyeen	Male	One-eyed, Ulkyeen was a former soldier who embraced higher learning later in life, beginning the trend of Eight-Citymen sending their children to Lankhmar for formal education.
Antgya	Female	"The Forest Mother," Antgya served as a priestess until she had a vision from the Gods of the Forest. She devoted her later life improving the lot of all Foresters and their servants. Stern but fair best describes her reign.
Anyoryach	Male	A poor ruler who succumbed to the worst of civilization's vices. Many of Antgya's civic advances were overturned by Anyoryach's proclamations. He was eventually deemed unfit for the Overlordship and exiled to the Dragon Rocks. It is believed he was devoured there.
Morval	Male	A cunning ruler who was well-skilled in diplomacy. He spent much of his early reign righting the ship of state, but once done, proved an admirable Overlord. Morval maintained good relations with Lankhmar, but secretly prepared for what he believed was the inevitable war with the southern nation.
Kranarch	Male	An inward-looking Overlord, Kranarch undid some of Morval's efforts to defend the Forest Land from Lankhmar aggression, instead fixating on possible Mingol threats. He was well-loved by the common people of the Land of the Eight Cities, but angered merchants with his high tariffs on imported goods.

Kvarch Nar is the most cosmopolitan of the Eight Cities and peoples from around Nehwon can be encountered in the markets, dock, and the twisted city streets. While small in comparison to Lankhmar, Kvarch Nar nevertheless has a wide variety of services—legal and otherwise—available for sale, as well as some of the finest and worst specimens of humanity Nehwon has to offer. Almost any city adventure might begin in Kvarch Nar and it makes a great place for PCs to lay low for a while if Lankhmar ever become too hot for them to handle. Here, they'll find a number of expatriates from Lankhmar and can quickly assimilate themselves into urban life in the Forest Land.

### MLURG NAR

**L**ike its sister city of Illik-Ving, Mlurg Nar is a frontier metropolis of small size, poised on the boundary between the civilized realm and the barbaric hinterlands. Those who come to Mlurg Mar are either in search of their fortune or have run out of options in the more settled southern regions of the Forest Land. The result is a rough-and-tumble city of men (and women) quick to violence and looking for riches. In other words: the perfect place for adventurers.

Mlurg Nar is a mining city, eking out its livelihood from the copper, silver, and gold deposits in both the Trollstep and

Barrier Mountains. Fortunes change hands overnight in the Rat-Snake games held in the city's countless taverns and gaming houses, and the murder rate is equal to Lankhmar once one adjusts for population. Whereas the mines outside of Illik-Ving are somewhat registered by the assayer's house, the claims of Mlurg Nar are wildcat operations, held only by those strong enough to defend their mines from rival claim jumpers. It is said that if all the murdered prospectors whose bones lie in forgotten defiles or shallow graves in the mountains suddenly stood up, Mlurg Nar would triple in size.

Mlurg Nar is a cosmopolitan city for its small size. It's common to see Eight-Citymen, Mingols from the Steppes, and Northerners from the Cold Waste in town, all trying to eke out their share of the mineral wealth flowing through the city. As the anchor point to the Gnamph Nar-Mlurg Nar trade route, the mining city is also the last supply point for merchants and traders heading into the Cold Waste. A number of caravansaries exist in Mlurg Nar to cater to these commercial expeditions.

One of the most popular (if raucous) nightspots in Mlurg Nar is the Ilrisk Bough, an inn and tavern catering to the wildest of the city's visitors. A cellar under the inn houses a pit arena where bare-fisted brawlers face off for the entertainment of others. On some nights, the pit sees bear-baiting

and dog fighting in addition to man-against-man bouts. Recruiters from Duke Lithquil's arena often visit the Ilrisk Bough looking for new talent, and an adventurer looking for employment (or just a means to gain access to the Duke's palace-house) might find the pit fights a way to do so.

The Duke of Mlurg Nar runs his city with a mixture of *laissez-faire* government and iron-fisted autocracy. So long as business is booming and the people are distracted by the violence and vast riches the mines provide, the Duke allows things to continue. However, if any faction or party within the city threatens the status-quo, the Duke's troops—brutes one and all—quickly, decisively, and demonstrably, put them down.

## OOL HRUSP



Resilient Ool Hrusp began life as Ool Hluss when Lankhmar carved it out of the forest. Even in the years before the Foresters came west, Ool Hrusp has been a city somewhat different than its peers. Of all the cities, Ool Hrusp is the only that bears any buildings of stone—old structures erected by the Lankhmarts when they laid claim to these lands. These stout, defensible buildings encouraged Lankhmar to hold onto Ool Hrusp for a full generation after the other seven cities had fallen to the eastern nomads. Ool Hrusp is also unique in that it is a walled city, a defensive necessity given the cleared ground outside its boundaries. This wall makes the streets and housing within the city even more cramped than most Forest Land metropolises. Lankhmarts feel much more at home in Ool Hrusp than the other Eight Cities.

Ool Hrusp is one of the few of the forest cities that actively practices herding and agriculture, granting it a higher level of self-sufficiency than its sister cities. Vineyards that produce the wine known throughout Nehwon climb the hills overlooking Ool Hrusp. Herds of cows graze in the plains outside the city walls. These plains are small, but are considered large meadows by Forest Land standards. The Priests of the Forest mutter darkly about the felling of the trees to create these fields, but the herdsmen tithe enough of their annual profits to the temples' coffers to calm ecclesiastical waters.

Like Kvarch Nar, Ool Hrusp does its part to combat piracy in the Inner Sea. The city's navy regularly sends out "bait ships," modestly-sized vessels appearing to be nothing more than ordinary trading ships, but filled with marines. This tactic has sunk more than a few Sea Mingols and privateers who've mistaken a bait ship laden with marines as a defenseless merchantman ripe for plunder.

Ool Hrusp's most infamous resident is its ruler, Lithquil, the so-called Mad Duke. Duke Lithquil enjoys gladiatorial games for his amusement, holding them in a special arena attached to his palace-house. From around Nehwon, the Duke's agents procure the most interesting, but not always

the most talented, warriors found, shipping them to Ool Hrusp for the Duke's entertainment. Theatrical or skilled warriors and other adventurers can make a decent living acting as the Duke's gladiators, but at the risk of sudden death should Lithquil ever cease being entertained.

The Tower of the Buried Prince is a curious landmark in the city. This lofty stone minaret rises high over the city, dwarfing even the palace-house of Duke Lithquil. Once known by another name, the Tower of the Buried Prince was erected by a Lankhmart noble, scion of one of the Overlords. The thought of burial, especially a premature one, so terrified the prince that he spent his whole short life in the uppermost room of this tower, far from the earth he so abhorred. A sorcerer had foretold that he would be buried alive and the prince sought to thwart such a fate. His efforts came to naught, however, when a tremendous sandstorm, carried on typhoon winds from the Poisoned Desert, crossed the Inner Sea to enshroud Ool Hrusp in a maelstrom that obscured the sun. The wind-born sands filled the prince's lofty room, suffocating him and proving the sorcerer's words to be truth. The tower stands abandoned, and purportedly haunted by the restless spirit of the prince and his slain servants. Other stories tell of the prince's hidden treasure vault somewhere within the turret, as yet unbound...

## OOL KRUT



Ool Krut lies furthestmost along the northern coast of the Inner Sea. It is a modest-sized city situated on coastal highlands above a deep water harbor. Northeast of Ool Krut, the land is boggy and wild flax grows in abundance on the borders of these marshes. The people of Ool Krut turn this natural resource into linen canvas and Ool Krutian sails are considered some of the finest in Nehwon. A vessel trimmed with Ool Krut canvas enjoys a +2 bonus to all seagoing rolls, including saving throws against damage. Fitting a ship with Ool Krut canvas runs 250 gold rilks (or equivalent) per mast.

A small shipyard fronts the harbor, constantly busy as vessels dock in Ool Krut for refitting or repair. Costs are high at the shipyard, due partly to the quality of work, but also because the Lord Mayor demands a percentage of the shipyard's annual profits. This shakedown has resulted in a movement among the shipyard's owners to possibly form a Lankhmar-style guild with other merchants who make their living off of the sea trade. They hope that such a mercantile syndicate might prove formidable enough to match the Lord Mayor's political might. A few Lankhmart "advisors" are at work in Ool Krut, ostensibly to assist in the formation of this new guild, but whose true motives may be far more questionable and to the benefit of Lankhmar.

A sea-green painted temple rests atop a small island in Ool Krut's harbor, accessible only by boat. This tabernacle is devoted to the Sea King and is staffed by a quartet of aquama-



rine-clad priests and priestesses. A long dock extends from the island, and vessels outbound from Ool Krut often moor there briefly to make a donation to the temple before embarking on a long ocean voyage. It is said that a fortune in pearls, including rare black and blue pearls, are stored in a submerged treasure chamber beneath the temple, guarded by exotic aquatic beasts.

Adventuring parties looking for a change of pace from the criminal underworld of Lankhmar will find plenty of opportunities for political and mercantile skullduggery in the otherwise placid city of Ool Krut. Those seeking the usual nefarious antics might pit their talents against the Sea Priests and hope to come out richer as a result.

## OOOL PLERNS



ool Plerns, like Illik-Ving, would scarcely be counted as a metropolis in more civilized lands. However, as the only seaport on the Outer Sea, Ool Plerns' importance in trade more than makes up for its size.

While all the settlements of the Forest Land exist surrounded by vast woodlands, Ool Plerns is a tiny oasis in a thick and tangled forest. The woods surrounding Ool Plerns are bountiful to the point where the tiny city makes its living first and foremost in the timber trade, making it an oddity in the Land of the Eight Cities. This industry is sternly and

righteously overseen by the Priests of the Forest who ensure that the traditional sacrifices and religious replanting of fallen trees is practiced without fail. As such, the Priests hold a power in Ool Plerns even greater than its Duke. Merchants hoping to benefit from the Ool Plerns timber trade are advised to bring gifts to the grand and intricately-carved Temple of the Woods located at the city's center.

Ool Plerns is also home to a small whaling yard, from which three small sloops operate. These vessels ply the shallow waters along the coast, spearing small whales and the rare young leviathan, bringing their catches back to the yard for rendering and butchering. The priests of No-Ombrulsk are aware of this business and have denounced it from their northern temple. It is possible that they make take more direct action against the whalers in the near future.

In later years, the Gray Mouser helps establish a thriving timber trade between Ool Plerns and treeless Rime Isle, marking an economic upturn in the tiny Forest Land city and a building boom in remote and semi-mythical Rime Isle.

Recently, an ancient building of stone has been discovered in the oldest woods northeast of Ool Plerns. This structure is half-buried beneath the roots of titanic, antediluvian trees and the forest around it seems to whisper. Shadows appear darker around the stone building and the Priests of the Forest warn any from exploring the "accursed ruin."

# SECTION THREE: THE SECRETS OF THE FOREST



The Land of the Eight Cities contains beasts and plants unseen anywhere else on Nehwon. This section details those unique forms of life, alongside some more human threats adventurers might encounter in the Forest Land. Also provided is information on the Gods of the Forest and the Red God, as well as a customized carousing table for adventurers looking to regain Luck while visiting the Land of the Eight Cities.

## NEW ADVERSARIES

### Gladiator of the Mad Duke

Coming from countless lands and trained in a variety of combat styles, the gladiators of Lithquill, the Mad Duke of Ool Hrusp, range in competency from debtors sentenced to battle to master warriors seeking honors beyond the bloody battlefield. Some are more theatrical than deadly, while others know only how to kill—swiftly and brutally. The following stats are suitable for a mid-line gladiator, one with a mixture of both panache and skill-at-arms. The judge can increase or decrease the gladiator's power to represent other types of combatants.

**Gladiator of the Mad Duke:** Init +4; Atk bearded axe +1d5+1 melee (1d10+deed die+1) or spear +1d5+1 melee (1d8+deed die+1) or net +1d5 ranged (entangle); AC 15; HD 2d12+2; MV 25'; Act 1d20; SP d5 deed die, net attack entangles opponent if a Reflex save vs. the gladiator's attack roll fails (DC 13 Strength check or 4 points of damage to the AC 12 net frees the target), flamboyance (performs outlandish combat display as an action to entertain or distract; failing a DC 10 Will save causes a single opponent to suffer a -2 penalty to AC and saving throws for 1 full round due to distraction); SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +1; AL N.

### Kilyolsho Tribesman

The Kilyolsho are a desert tribe that occasionally wander into the eastern edges of the Land of the Eight Cities, coming down from the foothills of the Barrier Mountains or up the road from Sarheenmar. The Kilyolsho are ambivalent to the Foresters and have been known to raid outlying communities for livestock as well as trade with the Eight-Citymen in Kleg Nar. Young, wild Kilyolsho warriors wouldn't hesitate to ambush a small party traveling through the lands, looking for easy plunder. The Kilyolsho hate the Mingol hordes, making them potential allies against the steppe horsemen if properly wooed to the cause of the Land of the Eight Cities.

**Kilyolsho Tribesman:** Init +2; Atk scimitar +2 melee (1d8+2) or shortbow +2 ranged (1d6+1); AC 13; HD 1d8+1; MV 30'; Act 2d20; SP none; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +1; AL N.

### Luhr-beast

Luhr-beasts are said to be relatives of bears. Their bodies are similar, but luhr-beasts are rangy and long-legged creatures, standing 5' tall at the shoulder. Like their ursine counterparts, luhr-beasts can stand on two legs, giving them greater reach to grip prey, climb trees, or knock down bee hives. They tend towards black or brown in coloration, but gray patches or stripes along the neck and back are common. They fight with finger-long claws and powerful jaws. Because of their ferocity and power, luhr-beasts are considered the most challenging prey a hunter can face, and one who brings down a luhr-beast holds great honor among the Forest-men. It is custom to drink a toast to a slain luhr-beast's cub so that they may grow up healthy and replace their parent in the Great Forest's circle of life.

**Luhr-beast:** Init +2; Atk bite +4 melee (1d6+1) or claws +4 melee (2d4); AC 14; HD 3d8; MV 40'; Act 2d20; SP charge (gains +2 to attack and damage if it can move it full speed towards a target at the start of its initiative); scent tracer (beast can follow scent trails and has a +4 bonus to detecting hidden creatures); SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will -1; AL N.



## Ool Hruspian Marine

These marine soldiers man the “bait ships” and naval vessels that ply the Inner Sea, seeking out pirates and Sea Mingols who prey upon the Forest Land’s seagoing tradesmen. They care more for sinking privateers than capturing culprits for trial, regularly employing burning oil to set their foes’ ships alight. Pirates diving into the sea to escape the flames are then speared to death.

**Ool Hruspian Marine:** Init +3; Atk spear +3 melee (1d8+1) or sling +3 ranged (1d4+1); AC 13; HD 2d10; MV 30’; Act 1d20; SP burning oil (1d6 damage and target must succeed in a DC 10 Reflex save or catch fire; oil can be hurled with slings up to 20/40/80’); SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +1; AL varies.

## Pack Bear

A few rare individuals—some say they have the blood of bears in their veins—have the gift of teaching the brown bears native to the Forest Lands to serve as beasts of burden. Not only are these ursine bears capable of carrying supplies, but are trained to fight for their masters, providing assistance mules cannot. Their great claws also aid the bears in moving through treacherous terrain and it is said that some pack bears are capable of scaling mountains at their master’s command.

**Pack Bear:** Init +1; Atk bite +4 melee (1d6+1) or claws +3 melee (1d6); AC 16; HD 3d10; MV 40’; Act 2d20; SP bear-hug (if both claw attacks strike a target, the bear “hugs” for an additional 2d6 damage), natural climber (+8 to all climb checks); SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +1; AL N.

## NEW PLANTS

### Blood-herb

Blood-herb is a low-lying plant with jagged, fuzzy leaves, and numerous small, blood-red blossoms. It is renowned for its medicinal properties and greatly sought after by healers and herbalists. Folklore among the Foresters says that the blood-herb plant only grows in earth that has soaked up the spilled blood of animals and men.

Anyone with the Healer benison or otherwise trained in the art of herbalism can make a strong restorative with blood-herb. This restorative can either restore 1d6+1 hit points (if used as a poultice and applied to a wound) or allow the drinker to make a second saving throw against an ongoing disease or poison effect if drunk as a tea. Whether the herb is made into a poultice or a tea must be decided upon when the healer prepares the fresh plant.

A single blood-herb plant makes one poultice or tea mixture, so long as this medicine is prepared within three days of its harvesting. Making either requires 1 hour. Fresh blood-herb sells for up to 5 grunts per plant if sold in one of the Eight Cities (less in smaller towns and villages).



### Ilrisk Tree

The ilrisk tree is a deciduous tree native only to the Great Forest. It grows up to 60’ in height and possesses smooth bark similar to the beech tree. Ilrisk trees produce oval leaves with small serrations. These leaves turn silver-gray in autumn, developing a glossy shine that gives them an almost metallic appearance. Ilrisk trees are hearty and highly resistant to disease or infestation. These properties and their uncommon leaf coloration make the ilrisk a sacred tree in the eyes of the Foresters and they are considered living embodiments of the Gods of the Forest. Most temples dedicated to the woodland deities are erected around groves of living ilrisk trees.

The Priests of the Forest practice a form of divination each autumn, looking for patterns in the fallen leaves of the ilrisk

trees within their temples. This divination acts as a modified form of the second sight spell. The priest can determine with 85% accuracy whether a single proposed undertaking will prove beneficial or baleful to the petitioner. Note that beneficial and baleful do not always mean success or failure and the judge should be certain to allow some leeway for the interpretation of possible outcomes when playing out the divination.

Normally, the Priests of the Forest only perform these divinations for adherents of the faith, but the clergy might make an exception for a sizeable donation to the local temple or the promise to undertake a quest or geas in service of the Gods of the Forest.

Anyone who harms an ilrisk tree automatically fails all attempts to cast *patron bond* or *invoke patron*, and may not roll their patron die if the patron sought is the Gods of the Forest. Only a Priest of the Forest can absolve them of their sin, usually by performing a great deed to the benefit of the forest deities or their mortal followers.

## NEW BENISONS AND DOOMS



The Land of the Eight Cities offers new advantages and disadvantages to characters born there or spending a prolonged period within its borders. The following can either be used to replace some of the listed benisons or dooms on Table 1-3: The Land of the Eight Cities found in the *Compendium of Secret Knowledge*, or acquired through adventuring in the Forest Land.

### Benisons

**Bear-Blooded (3 Luck):** Ursine blood flows in the PC's veins, the product of the pact between their forefathers and the Gods of the Forest. This benison manifests in two ways. First, the PC can cause non-magical forest animals to flee their presence by roaring. Any animal with 1 HD or less must succeed in a Will save (DC 10 + Personality modifier) or run away for 1d6 + PC level rounds. If unable to leave the vicinity, they cower and do not attack. Attacking a cowering creature breaks the fear, and they fight fiercely, making no morale checks, to defend themselves. The PC can roar in this manner 1 time per day.

Secondly, if the PC begins play with a loyal pack bear: this creature follows simple commands, can carry the same weight as a pony, and will fight if commanded. It never makes morale checks. If slain, the pack bear can be replaced, but this requires the PC to either find or buy a replacement bear, possibly by undergoing an expedition to find a wild bear. Taming a wild bear requires a number of days (30 minus Personality score) to accomplish.

**Mining Claim (2 Luck):** The character owns the claim to a small mine in the Trollstep Mountains. If worked for one month, they can make a Luck check to determine how much wealth the mine produces. On a successful check, the claim produces 1d6x100 gronts' worth of precious metal. On a

failed check, you eke out 1d6x10 gronts of ore. At the end of each month, a DC 10 Luck check must succeed or the ore runs out and the mine becomes worthless. Note that the PC must work the full month to benefit from the mine. Taking more than a few days away from the claim results in no wealth gain for that month.

### Dooms

**Blasphemer:** The PC has offended the Gods of the Forest, perhaps by inadvertently defiling one of their temples, cutting down an ilrisk tree, or slaying a forest creature without performing the required rites and observances to honor their spirit. Word has spread and the PC is now an apostate in the eyes of the Priests of the Forest and their followers. He can never receive assistance from the priesthood, devout followers (most Eight-Citymen) shun him or refuse him service, and hails of stones, filth, and rotten vegetables assail him when he walks the streets. This doom can be lifted, but nothing less than an epic quest or absolution from the Gods of the Forest, themselves, will serve.

**Treader in Ancient Dust:** The PC has ventured—if only briefly—inside one of the strange and ancient structures built long ago by unknown hands in the depths of the Great Forest. He remembers little of what he found there, but *something* noticed him and was lured by his beating heart from within the ruin. It now follows him, hungry for something he has not yet deduced. Calamity strikes around him, eerie events unfolding with him at their center, drawing glares and hushed whispers in his direction. Once per adventuring session, at a time the judge deems appropriate, the PC must make a Luck check. If the check fails, some strange occurrence strikes him. This might be a shadowy tendril that chills his flesh, imparting Stamina or Strength damage; a stray animal with cold burning eyes attacks him; or inexplicable and sinister magic strikes, causing him harm. On a successful Luck check, unnatural events occur around the character, striking another in his stead. It is apparent, however, that the PC is somehow to blame and the victims and their associate hold him responsible, seeking recompense or vengeance. The cause of these events is left for the judge to design. It could be a restless spirit, an otherworldly horror, or an ancient curse. It is possible to lift this doom, but it isn't an easy task (judge's discretion on how it can be removed).

## PATRONS OF THE EIGHT CITIES



The Gods of the Forest and the Red God are venerated in the Land of the Eight Cities. Adventurers hailing from the Forest Land or those who spend time there may easily find themselves agents of either (or both) these two supernatural entities. This section provides patron tables for each. Due to space limitations, however, patron spells are not included. Suggestions for possible patron spells are provided, allowing the judge to create a version best suited for her own DCC Lankhmar campaign.



## THE GODS OF THE FOREST

**T**he sylvan deities of the Great Forest are manifold and venerated as a collective pantheon known as the Gods of the Forest. These woodland deities encompass both flora and fauna, and possess the powers and properties of animal and vegetable. Those who serve them must abide by sacred promises to respect both wood and beast. That does not mean they are prohibited from falling trees or slaying animals, but certain rites must always be performed in doing those acts. Failure to abide by the proper rights results in the Gods of the Forest turning their backs on the servant until proper absolution is sought. A servant or agent in the bad graces of the Gods of the Forest cannot *invoke patron* or use their patron die until restitution is performed. The judge will decide what the proper apologetic actions entail.

**Patron Influences:** Protection, Rejuvenation.

### *Invoke Patron* check results:

- 12-13 All non-magical animals ignore you, ceasing to attack you, track you, or otherwise pay you any notice so long as you do nothing to attract their attention. This effect lasts for 1 hour per CL.
- 14-17 The strength of the sacred ilrisk tree fills your body, granting you a +4 Strength bonus for 1d6+CL turns.
- 18-19 The Gods bless you with the grace of the willow, granting you a +4 Agility bonus for 1d6+CL turns.
- 20-23 You gain the resilience of the mighty oak. You gain a +4 AC bonus, a +2 bonus to Fort saves, and take half damage from lightning attacks. This effect lasts for 1d6+CL turns.
- 24-27 The Gods of the Forest dispatch a luhr-beast (see p. 13) to defend you. The creature follows all your spoken commands to the best of its ability and accompanies you for 1 hour per CL. If slain, its body turns to green leaves and blows away.

28-29 Mystical roots grow from your feet, sinking deep into the earth, burrowing through stone and wood if needed to reach it. While these roots remain, you cannot be knocked prone or moved, you enjoy a +4 bonus to all saving throws against spells, gain an additional 1d20 action die that can be used to attack or cast spells, and regain 1d4 hit points each round. You cannot move while the roots connect you to the ground, but can dispel them any time you choose. Otherwise, the mystical roots remain in place for 2d10+CL rounds.

30-31 A tree animates to defend the caster or bursts from the earth if no trees are in the caster's vicinity. The tree-man remains for 1d3+CL rounds. **Animated tree:** Init +2; Atk slam +10 melee (2d6+4); AC 16; HD 5d8; MV 20'; Act 2d20; SP vulnerable to fire (double damage); SV Fort +7, Ref +1, Will +7; AL N.

32+ As result 30-31 above, but two animated trees appear

## **PATRON TAINT: THE GODS OF THE FOREST**

The servants of the Gods of the Forest entwine their existence with the forces of the wood. This supernatural connection both empowers them and makes them dependent on the vitality of bough and beast. When patron taint manifests, this sylvan association becomes all the more apparent. When patron taint is indicated, roll 1d6 on the table below. When a caster has acquired all six taints at all levels of effect, there is no need to continue rolling.

### **Roll     Result**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | The caster develops an infatuation with living creatures and growing plants. The caster feels uncomfortable whenever he cannot see greenery or observe animals. If this result is rolled a second time, the caster suffers a -2 penalty to spell checks when in a locale barren of plants or animals. If this result occurs a third time, the caster loses 1 point of Stamina each hour they find themselves unable to see plants or animals. |
| 2 | The caster thrives on rainwater and must drink it whenever able to. When rolled a second time, this dependence grows, requiring the caster to consume fresh rainwater once per week or suffer a point of Stamina loss. If this effect is rolled a third time, the caster must drink fresh rainwater a number of times each week equal to his CL, losing 1 point of Stamina for each failed required drink at week's end.                      |
| 3 | The caster suffers aches and pains if he ever injures living plants (cutting a branch, harvesting crops, etc.). These pains are uncomfortable but inflict no penalty. If this result is rolled a second time, the caster takes 1 hit point of damage each time he intentionally harms plants. If rolled a third time, even unintentional harm (stepping on a seedling, for example), causes the caster to take damage equal to his level.     |
| 4 | The Gods manifest their vitality through the caster. Each time the spellcaster works magic, tiny sprouts appear around him, taking root in soil or sand, but growing from cracks in stone or other unwelcoming places   |

if no other suitable site is present. If rolled a second time, any vegetation already present grows 10% in size in a 20' diameter area centered on the caster. If this result occurs a third time, the size increase grows to 50%. In already-verdant spaces, the growth could easily lead to the caster, his allies, and his enemies becoming entangled in the suddenly-increased undergrowth.

5 The caster develops a dependency on sunlight. At night or in shadows, the caster becomes lethargic or drowsy, but can be stirred to action if need be. If this result is rolled a second time, the dependency increases, causing the caster to suffer a -2 penalty to his actions when in complete darkness. If this result occurs a third time, the penalty increases to -1d. Only exposure to sunlight (not torchlight, magical light, moonlight, etc.) prevents the penalty. An overcast day, however, does not impose any negative modifiers.

6 The life of the forest becomes entwined with the caster's magic. When this effect first occurs, working spells with a casting time of 1 action outside of a wooded environment takes a full round. Other spells with longer casting times are unaffected. If this result occurs a second time, in addition to the first effect, casting spells outside of a forest or other wooded area suffer a -1 penalty to the spell check. If this result happens a third time, the spell check penalty increases to -3.

## **SPELLBURN: THE GODS OF THE FOREST**

The Gods of the Forest are most concerned with the preservation and health of the Great Forest. As such, they are more prone to help the magic of those equally interested in the vitality of growing tree and prowling animal. When a caster utilizes spellburn, roll 1d4 and consult the table below or build off it to create customized events specific to your DCC Lankhmar campaign.

### **Roll     Spellburn Result**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | Glowing roots spring from the ground, sapping the caster's life force as he powers the Great Forest in return for the Gods of the Forest's power. This supernatural fertilization manifests as stat loss.   |
| 2 | If the spell is a threat to the well-being of plant or animal, the caster's attempt at spellburning fails entirely, but he still suffers the stat loss. Magic that helps living things or injures those that would harm them gains double benefit of any spellburn (e.g., 1 point of spellburn adds +2 to the spell check). |
| 3 | The spellcaster's blood waters the ground beneath his feet, causing plants to appear. The blood loss manifests as stat damage. There is a 5% chance per CL that the plants are blood-herb with their normal properties (see p. 14 above).   |
| 4 | The Gods of the Forest are most powerful in the woodland homes. The spellcaster gains +1 point of spellburn anytime they employ spellburn in a forest environment. The caster must spellburn at least 1 point to gain this bonus.   |

# THE RED GOD



The Red God came out of the east with the nomadic tribes, venerated by them for his ferocity in battle and the protection he grants against one's enemies. It is said that each clan bore an iron idol that they bathed in the blood of their foes, turning the metal divinity a scarlet red. Although veneration of the Red God has slackened since the Foresters came to the Land of the Eight Cities, the deity remains respected among the gladiators of the Mad Duke and others who make their living by war and bloodshed.

**Patron Influences:** Battle, Rejuvenation.

## *Invoke Patron check results:*

- 12-13 The caster gains a +1 bonus to AC and all physical attack and damage rolls for 1d6+CL rounds.
- 14-17 The caster gains a +2 bonus to AC and all physical attack and damage rolls for 1d8+CL rounds.
- 18-19 The caster gains a +3 bonus to AC and all physical attack and damage rolls for 1d10+CL rounds.
- 20-23 The caster gains a +4 bonus to AC and all physical attack and damage rolls for 1d3+CL turns.
- 24-27 As result 20-23 above, but the caster also gains an additional 1d16 action die that can only be used to attack. This effect lasts for 1d6+CL turns.
- 28-29 As result 20-23 above, but the caster also gains an additional 1d20 action die that can only be used to attack. The caster also applies his damage bonus to all harmful spells. This effect lasts for 2d6+CL turns.
- 30-31 As result 28-29 above, plus the caster suffers only half damage from non-magical weapons. This effect lasts for 2d6+CL turns.
- 32+ **Might of the Red God.** For 1 turn, the caster enjoys a +5 bonus to AC and all attack and damage rolls. He becomes immune to non-magical weapons. He also gains additional 1d20 and 1d16 action dice that can be used only to attack or cast spells of an offensive or defensive nature (e.g., magic missile or magic shield). Finally, the caster scores critical hits on attack rolls of 18-20, rolling 1d20 on crit table IV.

## **PATRON TAIN: THE RED GOD**

Blood is the nectar of the Red God and those who serve him are forever marked by the gore of life. Several legends of blood-drinking creatures owe their origins to servants of the Red God who've been touched by his power. When patron taint is indicated, roll 1d6 on the table below. When a caster has acquired all six taints at all levels of effect, there is no need to continue rolling.

### **Roll Result**

- 1 Blood becomes the preferred form of sustenance for the caster. At first, the caster enriches his normal meals

with a bit of blood, mixing it in with his food. When this result is rolled a second time, the craving increases and the caster must drink a cup of fresh blood once per day, suffering 1 point of Strength damage each day he goes without. If this result occurs a third time, the caster no longer gains nourishment from normal food and lives entirely on blood. A pint of fresh blood must be consumed each day to prevent Strength loss. The caster also requires water as normal and the blood only replaces his need for solid food.

- 2 The caster's complexion takes on a ruddy hue when this result is rolled the first time. If the result is rolled a second time, dark red patches mottle his skin, looking like clots of blood. If this result occurs a third time, the caster's flesh constantly weeps blood like sweat, staining his clothes and imparting a permanent loss of 2 points of Personality due to his gory visage.

- 3 The caster's eyes are permanently bloodshot. When this result occurs a second time, the whites of the caster's eyes become blood-red, granting him a sinister appearance. If rolled a third time, the caster weeps blood instead of tears.

- 4 The Red God demands tribute! When this result first occurs, the caster must dedicate the death by bloodshed of one creature each month to the Red God. This creature must have at least 1 HD. If this taint occurs a second time, the dedicated death must be devoted to the Red God once per week. If rolled a third time, the creature dedicated to the deity must be sentient and known to the caster. Failing to devote a proper sacrifice to the Red God causes the spellcaster to suffer a -1d penalty to all spell checks until the correct sacrifice occurs.

- 5 Are you worthy of serving the Red God? He will test you to see. When this effect is first rolled, the caster becomes the target of random, unexpected attacks singling him out. Once per game month, the caster must make a Luck check or find himself attacked by a single opponent of less power than himself. This opponent will fight the caster physically, using no spells or magic. On a successful Luck check, the month passes without incident. Re-check each month. If this result occurs a second time, the Luck check must be made each week with the above results. If this taint happens a third time, the opponent is equal to the caster in power and may potentially use magic in the attack. The Luck check is made each week as above.

- 6 Glorious doom! Second chances at life are rare for those who serve the Red God. When first rolled, the caster "bleeds out" in half the normal time, rounded down (minimum of 1 round) whenever reduced to zero hit points. If this result occurs a second time, the caster must make two Luck checks when rolling over his body, taking the worst of the two. If this effect happens a third time, the caster is automatically slain if he bleeds out (no rolling over the body check allowed). The caster's spirit is called away to Godsland to personally serve the Red God, never to return to the realms of mortals.



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## SPELLBURN: THE RED GOD

The Red God cares only for blood and violence. Those who wish to draw upon his aid in their sorcery had better be prepared to offer either or both in return for magical power. When a caster utilizes spellburn, roll 1d4 and consult the table below or build off it to create customized events specific to your DCC Lankhmar campaign.

### Roll Spellburn Result

- 1 The caster stabs herself with a special dagger forged purposely for self-inflicted wounds. The knife does 1d4 damage and an equal amount of stat damage, each of which manifests as spellburn..
- 2 The caster cannot spellburn until he has wounded a foe in battle. Once at least 1 hit point of damage is inflicted with a weapon (not a spell or through other means), the caster may utilize spellburn as normal. However, in order to spellburn again, he must inflict harm once more upon another. Note that the injury

must be caused in battle. An ally willingly accepting a wound does not count. The Red God craves war, not pity.

- 3 The caster goes into a berserk spasm, rending her body and punching herself in the face with her bare hands. The consequences of this spasm of self-abuse manifests as ability loss.
- 4 The Red God is pleased with what the caster has wrought with his gifted power. The caster heals 1 point of spellburn for each damage die the cast spell inflicts on his enemies. For example, a *magic missile* for 1d4 damage restores 1 point of spellburn. The spellburn restoration is always based on the most powerful attack done. A *magic missile* spell producing multiple missiles inflicting 1d4 damage each only restores a single point of spellburn, while a *fireball* dealing 6d6 damage heals 6 points, not 6 points per damage roll to each person in the area of effect. The caster can only benefit from this spellburn result once per day.

## CAROUSING IN THE LAND OF THE EIGHT CITIES



Adventurers in DCC Lankmar know how important a good carouse can be. A night on the town can help regain Luck and heal wounds—but also lead to happy or unfortunate circumstances. The DCC Lankmar boxed set contains a table suitable for carousing in Lankmar, and that chart can be used in other lands as well. However, different cultures allow for unusual happenings and a drink-happy adventurer in a strange land might find themselves facing unique ramifications for their actions. This and other future DCC Lankmar supplements will provide customized Carousing Tables to encourage Nehwon-wide pub-crawling and provide new and interesting happenings when hitting the town in other lands.



**Table 3-1: Carousing in the Land of the Eight Cities Results**

Roll	Luck Points Recovered	Carousing Consequences
1	1d3	Miraculously - boringly - you begin the adventure unscathed.
2	1d4	You begin the adventure with a legendary hangover. -1d to all actions until you have more to drink. You are also broke.
3	1d5	You generously tithed to the Temple of the Forest Gods in an act of arboreal charity. Lose half your carried wealth. In return, you've been blessed by the Priests of the Forest and no wild animal will bother you for the next week. This protection fails utterly if you antagonize any animal or do harm to living wood.
4	1d6	The victim of a prank, you awaken in bed in the company of (roll 1d4): (1) a russet heifer from Ool Hrusp; (2) a shaggy goat from the Trollsteps; (3) a writhing mass of fresh eels; or (4) the bloody carcass of a luhr-beast. Rumors spread about your choice of bedmates and you find yourself either a laughing stock or shunned as a pervert among the locals.
5	2d3	You find yourself floating atop a crude raft either offshore or in a nearby body of water. Strange paints adorn your body and your clothes have gone missing. You automatically succeed in the next saving throw you must make to avoid damage. Perhaps some watery spirit has taken a liking to you?
6	1d7	Something you did left an Eight-Citywoman insulted. Perhaps you rebuffed her advances or mocked her accent. In any event, her brothers, cousins, and a few Eight-Citymen who observed the slight are out for your blood. If they find you, expect street justice.
7	1d8	You defeated all comers in a night-long game of Sixes-and-Sevens. Increase your wealth by 2d20 gronts, then make a Luck check. If the Luck check fails, your opponents are sore losers and are looking to recoup their losses, taking lumps of your flesh if the gold isn't forthcoming.
8	2d4	You awaken in the boughs of a sacred ilrisk tree in a temple of the Gods of the Forest. The priests of the woodland gods weren't pleased, and a mob of devout followers search the streets looking for the heretic who defiled their sacred tree.
9	1d10	The curious beggar gave you a stick in return for the alms you placed in her bowl. It seems to tingle when you grasp it. The stick is (roll 1d6): (1) a dousing rod that detects buried treasure; (2) the key to an enchanted door located deep in the Great Forest; (3) the stolen wand of a sorcerer; (4) a sacred bough from an ilrisk tree that wards off the un-dead; (5) a homing beacon that draws the restless dead; (6) a weird insect's cocoon that will soon hatch into something dangerous.

Roll	Luck Points Recovered	Carousing Consequences
10	2d5	One shouldn't use open flame near a grain silo. The explosion of grain particles in the enclosed space was spectacular and wiped out a month's worth of the grain dole. An angry populace and the local soldiery are out for your blood.
11	1d12	Your money is gone but you now own a prospector's claim to a mine outside of Illik-Ving. You dimly recall the man who sold you the claim say something about "gold," "fearsome monster," and "curse." But it was a good idea at the time. Now if you can just find the mine!
12	3d4	You gained a new tattoo, a strange symbol that you don't recognize. Roll 1d5 to determine its meaning: (1) no special meaning. It just looked cool at the time; (2) you've been initiated into a tree-hewing cult seeking to overthrow the Gods of the Forest; (3) a Mingol sorcerer has bought you and marked you as her property. She is displeased you've fled her man-seraglio; (4) it marks you as a potential participant in the Mad Duke's games. Expect visitors coming to collect you for an upcoming bout; (5) you've been chosen as a sacrifice to Kos of the Dooms. A band of devout Northerners seeks you to bring you to your doom in the Cold Waste.
13	2d6	Somehow you acquired a ship over the course of last evening and awaken with a vague notion of promising its crew a voyage to vast riches. The crew awaits orders to sail and will be most displeased if you try and weasel your way out of the proposed voyage. They'll be even more displeased if the trip doesn't result in monetary gain!
14	1d14	Your insult to that heavily-armed and dangerous character who calls himself the Blood-Sworn of the Red God was meant in jest, but he seems to not get the joke. He has sworn blood vengeance upon you and all who aid you, and is probably ready to strike any moment now. Maybe you should lay off the hard stuff for a while?
15	2d7	You saved the offspring of the local Duke during your nocturnal exploits. The good news is that the Duke insists on meeting and rewarding the hero who saved his beloved scion. The bad news is he might want to make it your full-time job, and given from what you remember of the heir, they're not prone to good decision-making.
16	3d5	Some Mingols taught you their Rite of Manhood last night, which involved leaping through a great fire. Determined to show yourself better than them, you insisted on a larger fire – much to the misfortune of an entire neighborhood. 2d20 houses burned down, you took 2d4 damage from the flames, scorched off your eyebrows and beard (if any), and have an angry, soot-covered mob after you.
17	1d16	You awake hungover but with 1d4-1 loyal Mingol followers pledged to your service. You don't remember what you did to earn your loyalty (and they might not either), but they seem willing to go wherever you lead. Each have a unique quirk or talent, but also possess some odious habits and prejudices that might reveal themselves at inopportune moments. The judge determines the Mingols' strengths and ill habits.
18	2d8	A conjurer either duped you or his spell went awry. Now you're the conduit for restless spirits from the Shadowland. Constantly haunted, and subject to their life-draining power (DC 10 Fort save each evening or lose 1 random ability point), the ghosts have a fell purpose they need you to perform before they'll let you be. Of course, performing that action might lead to further dangerous consequences.
19	3d6	You awake in a strange bed in a strange place. Roll 1d6 to determine your current circumstances: (1) a lavish mansion whose owners are currently away; (2) the palace-house of the local Duke or Lord Mayor, with someone singing and bathing in the next room; (3) the bough-curtained bower of a hamadryad; (4) locked inside the impenetrable vault of the local usurious money-lender; (5) the boudoir of the city's most powerful sorcerer/sorceress; (6) inside a closed sarcophagus in one of the weird stone structures that dot the Forest Land. You may or may not be alone.
20	1d20	You awaken chained to the drowning rocks or to the Tree of Slaughter, punishment for last evening's events. Hungry beasts edge closer to your bound form, eager to feed. How are you going to get out of this one?

# SECTION FOUR: INTRODUCTORY ADVENTURE THE TOOTH OF NO-OMBRULSK



This adventure is intended for 2 to 3 3rd-level PCs originally from Lankhmar, but can easily be adjusted to accommodate adventurers from other locales. Guidelines are also provided for scaling the adventure for up to six PCs. The events of this adventure lure the party from their home in the City of the Black Toga to an abandoned watch tower on the coast of the Inner Sea, not far from Ool Hrusp. After completing this scenario, they may find reason to further adventure in the Forest Land, serving as the perfect introduction to the material found in this supplement.

## BACKGROUND



Centuries ago, not long after Lankhmar lost control of the lands north of the Inner Sea, a band of thieves heard rumors of a rich treasure in the distant city of No-Ombrulsk: a massive piece of scrimshaw carved from the tooth of a mighty sea beast. Inlaid with gold and platinum, and dusted with diamond chips, this treasure, the Tooth of No-Ombrulsk, was gifted to the priests of No-Ombrulsk as ransom for a captured warlord. The thieves schemed to claim the Tooth for their own.

The thieves snatched the Tooth from the fane's most secure vault and made off with the treasure, but not before they were discovered by the priesthood. The priests, enraged by the sacrilege, relentlessly pursued the thieves back south. The two parties clashed again and again in an ongoing series of ambushes, skirmishes, and counter-attacks, until only a single thief remained.

Having made it back to the Forest Land, the thief knew that possessing the Tooth would only lead the priests to his doorstep. He therefore schemed to hide the sought-after relic until the priests abandoned their search. Using a mixture of his own funds and some long-owed favors, the thief converted an abandoned pirate watch tower from the days of Lankhmar's dominion of Ool Hrusp into a concealed vault to hide the Tooth. Hidden behind secret doors and many traps, the thief would wait until it was safe to retrieve it.

Unfortunately, the priests never faltered in their search and the thief perished before they eventually, after many decades, acknowledged the Tooth was lost forever. Before the thief's death, he penned a message, written in code, revealing the resting place of the Tooth. If he could never enjoy its wealth, perhaps another—one canny enough to locate it—might.

The code was recently discovered by a captain in Ool-Hrusp's city guard who intends to recover the lost treasure. However, a guild thief from Lankhmar overheard the captain discussing it with his men while incarcerated in Ool

Hrusp's gaol and managed to smuggle word of it back to Lankhmar. Unfortunately for the Thieves' Guild, the message fell into the hands of the PCs—who can race north across the Inner Sea to plunder the vault before others recover the Tooth.

Complicating matters, a descendant of the last priest who searched for the stolen Tooth, has received an ominous dream, perhaps sent by No-Ombrulsk, the great whale god itself. This dream revealed the site of the hidden vault and he, too, heads south to reclaim what was stolen and restore his ancestor's good name in the priesthood.

Who will be left standing when these three parties collide in the vault of the Tooth of No-Ombrulsk: the guardsmen, the priest, or the PCs?

## STARTING THE ADVENTURE



The adventure begins when the party intercepts a message intended for the Thieves' Guild of Lankhmar. It is assumed they are not members of the Guild and discover the message by happenstance, perhaps when they slay the messenger in the course of another adventure or through some deft pickpocketing or circumstances resulting from an evening's carouse. The below assumes they find the message after looting the messenger's corpse, but the judge can customize the details to best suit whatever ploy she intends to use to introduce the message and kick off the adventure:

*It was a mere crumpled piece of papyrus stuffed at the bottom of a slain cutpurse's pouch, easy to overlook or disregard. Yet something drew your attention to it. Smoothing out the papyrus, you discovered a scrawled map and a short missive. Blood stained the page as well as ink, and the note seemed crawled in haste.*

*"My brothers,*

*"I've overheard the existence of a great treasure hidden long ago by one of our northern brethren while I was enjoying the hospitality Ool Hrusp's gaol. Centuries ago, soon after Lankhmar lost the Forest Land, cunning men robbed the temple of No-Ombrulsk in the city of that name, making away with a great piece of scrimshaw, embellished with gold and platinum, and dusted with diamond chips. The priesthood chased the daring brothers until only one remained. In his wisdom, he secreted the Tooth of No-Ombrulsk away in a vault outside of Ool Hrusp.*

*"The priests never abandoned their hunt and our poor brother perished before he could enjoy the fruits of his crime. He encoded the existence of the vault in a cypher hidden among his belongings. This cypher has only just now come to light, discovered by one of the captains of the guard here in Ool Hrusp.*



"Unbeknownst to the captain, an avaricious and ill-respected man named Brul, I've managed to glimpse the code and decipher enough of it to locate the vault and the tale behind it. As it is possible I may meet with the noose before I can act on this information, I'm smuggling this note and map back to Thieves' House so that the guild may enrich their coffers.

"I beg you act quickly. The captain has yet to decode the message yet, but he works without the knowledge of his superiors to locate one who can decipher the Brethren Code. Head to the shores just west of Ool Hrusp and look for a broken watch tower along the strand. The vault is hidden in the cliff behind the ruin.

"Should I escape the noose, I expect my usual guild percentage for reporting this treasure to my superiors,

"Yours by the Silver Knife,

"Glummak, Second Class"

The note accompanying the map is scrawled on a filthy piece of rag, but nevertheless clearly depicts the coastline around Ool Hrusp as well as the city itself. Marked roughly

five miles west of the city is a symbol of a tower and a thin beach. An arrow indicates the cliff behind the tower and is marked "Tooth?" With even this crude map, the party can easily locate the purported site of this valuable treasure.

The party can make their way across the Inner Sea to Ool Hrusp in any way they desire, although a ship voyage would be fastest. A PC who owns a Ship benison comes in very handy, but vessels can be chartered if need be in the River Quarter of Lankhmar. A payment of 50 gold rilks will buy the services of a closed-mouth captain and his crew, bringing the party to the shores just west of Ool Hrusp or to the city proper, allowing the party to track down the ruined watch tower as they wish.

If the party insists on traveling overland around the Inner Sea, the journey is much longer and they may have to deal with hazards of the road before reaching Ool Hrusp. If this is the case, assume that it takes Captain Brul far longer than expected to fully decipher the code, allowing the party to reach the ruined tower at roughly the same time as the treasure-seeking captain and his men.

## THE VENGEFUL PRIEST

There is another party at work in this adventure: a descendent of one of the shamed priests of No-Ombrulsk. The failure of his ancestor to safeguard the Tooth of No-Ombrulsk has hung over this younger priest since his birth and he has toiled hard in the priesthood to compensate. However, he has never forgotten his ancestor's failure, nor have his fellow priests forgiven him.

Some weeks ago, the priest had a vision—a divine message from No-Ombrulsk, itself, luring him south to the location of the concealed Tooth. The priest has only now arrived at the Vault and is determined to reclaim the Tooth alone and rectify his ancestor's shame. This vengeful priest can draw upon both his own sorcery as well as the wrath of No-Ombrulsk, and will stop at nothing to regain the Tooth.

The priest enters the area after the PCs do, swimming in through the lagoon (area 1-11) and entering the corridors via area 1-4. He skulks about in the PCs' wake, choosing the strike whenever the judge feels would be most advantageous to the priest. Ideally, that would be after the party has dealt with Captain Brul and recovered the Tooth. Having the Tooth in their possession both saves the priest from having to deal with the Tooth's defenses and allows him to call upon the Tooth's power to help him defeat the party.

The priest's stats can be found in **Event: The Priest Strikes!** (below).

## THE RUINED WATCHTOWER

The party can choose to approach the ruined watchtower by either day or night. Regardless of when they arrive, they find that Captain Brul, the Ool Hruspian guardsman, has beat them to the site by only an hour or so. He leaves most of his men on the beach to watch his back and chase off anyone spotted hanging about or taking interest in the soldiers' presence. Captain Brul enters the excavated chambers with only a few trusted assistants. As noted above, the priest of No-Ombrulsk arrives after the party does, entering the vault via the lagoon.

A stretch of sandy shore lies at the base of 60' high, rocky cliffs. The strand is readily accessible only by a winding trail running up the cliff face or via ship. The cliffs can be climbed with a DC 10 Strength or Climb Sheer Surfaces check. Long ago, the men of Ool-Hrusp manned a coastal watchtower on the beach, keeping an eye out for pirates and other nautical dangers. After the Land of the Eight Cities was wrested from Lankhmar's control, the watch tower was left unmanned and fell into neglect. Only kelp-covered remains of the tower's foundation and attached sea wall remain.

**Area 1-1—The Beach:** *A fire burns on the beach below 60'-tall rocky bluffs. A collection of men, perhaps a dozen in number, is gathered around the fire, poised as if both waiting and watching. A winding road leads up the cliff face to its top. West of the fire is the foundation of a ruined watchtower, half-immersed in the breakers off shore. A crumbling sea wall extends out into the water, its stones eaten away by time and tide.*

Ten soldiers are stationed on the beach, keeping an eye out for anyone approaching the ruined tower and caves from land or sea. During the daytime, they automatically spot anyone on the beach or descending the road from the cliff top, as well as boats out in the waters offshore. Getting past the sentries during the day requires they either be dealt with or that the party swims to the ruined tower or the lagoon entrance. Doing so requires a DC 10 Agility or Sneak Silently check.

At night, they are much easier to bypass. Anyone swimming to the ruin succeeds automatically. Those sneaking past the sentries on the beach must succeed in a DC 12 Agility or Sneak Silently check. If the PCs are detected, the soldiers approach them and threaten them with arrest for trespassing. If this doesn't dissuade them or the PCs physically resist, they have no qualms about killing the intruders.

**Ool-Hruspian Soldiers (10):** Init +1; Atk spear +3 melee (1d6) or longsword +3 melee (1d8) or shortbow +2 ranged; AC 14; HD 1d8; hp 5 each; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +1; AL N.

The soldiers are part of Captain Brul's patrol, ordered to remain here while he and his hired sorcerer (and possibly a few extra men) ventured into the cave. The soldiers have been told this is a matter of state security and to keep their eyes peeled for spies or other threats. This is merely to keep them out of the way, and the captain can summon them with his whistle if need be.

**Area 1-2—Broken Wall:** *A crumbling stone wall stands at the base of the cliff. An open archway, once framing a long-gone gate, pierces the wall at one point. Another gap in the wall stands to the west of the open archway. A stream of water runs through the gap to the sea, suggesting it caused the wall's collapse at this point. A soft glow comes from an opening in the cliff beyond the wall.*

Footprints of two men (possibly five, if the adventure is scaled for a larger party) are visible in the sand beyond the wall, leading to the dry corridor opposite the archway. This is the trail of Captain Brul and his hired sorcerer (plus guardsmen, if applicable). They entered the vault roughly an hour before the PCs arrived.

The glow of a lantern is visible from the dry corridor leading to area 1-3. This is the lamp set upon the old table in that room, lit by the captain, who unwittingly avoided the trap it can trigger by not moving it.

The stream is only 2' deep and is brackish to the taste. At high tide, the stream deepens to 3' and the entire area within the wall is submerged in 1' of water.

## THE VAULT OF THE TOOTH

The tunnels and rooms excavated into the rocky bluff overlooking the sea once served as storage, planning rooms, secondary barracks, and other utilitarian chambers for the watch tower. A small natural spring also bubbled in a cave connected to the constructed spaces.

**Area 1-3—Ruined Room:** *A glowing oil lamp rests atop a ruined table at the far end of this chamber. The floor is covered*

by a thick layer of sand, driftwood, and sea shells visible among the grains. The walls are water-stained, showing varying levels of flooding over the centuries. Across from the entrance is an exit, once bricked over but now bearing a gap large enough for a man to enter.

This was once a guard post when the watch tower was operational. It has been reconfigured into the first of several traps by the thief to guard the Tooth. So far, no one has triggered it, but the party may become the unlucky first victims.

The trap is triggered by lifting the lamp. A thin chain runs from the bottom of the lamp, through a hollow table leg, to the triggering lever set in the floor. Noticing something odd about the lamp and/or table requires a close examination of the items along with either a DC 15 Intelligence or Find Trap check. Disarming the trap is a DC 15 Disable Trap check, or simply leaving the lamp alone.

If the lamp is lifted, the trap triggers, sending a half-dozen rusty spear-length spikes shooting up from beneath the sand-covered floor directly in front of the bricked-over doorway. Anyone in this 10'-square area suffers 2d6 damage (DC 13 Reflex save for half damage). They must also succeed in a DC 8 Fort save or also 1d6 damage from blood poisoning contracted from the rusty spikes.

The footprints lead to the bricked-over exit, milling near the table and lamp, then leaving the room. This passage was sealed by the thief, but Captain Brul has discovered it and cleared away the seal. Anyone inspecting the entrance and fallen bricks recognizes the entrance was broken open only an hour or two ago at most.

**Area 1-4—Collapsed Room:** *A rotted wooden door stands ajar at the entrance to this room. The smell of salt water is strong in the area, hinting of the sea's closeness. The walls are rough-hewn and fractured in places at its western end. A portion of the wall there has collapsed entirely, leaving a dark passage out of the chamber. Water-logged crates and barrels are distributed haphazardly around the room.*

This former storeroom was affected by the erosion that formed the lagoon (see area 1-11), causing a portion of the wall to collapse and a natural passage to form, connecting it to the nearby grotto. This unintended backdoor effectively undermined the thief's attempts to hide the Tooth's resting place and allowed some undesirable occupants to inhabit the vault (see area 1-5).

Most of the crates and barrels are broken and empty, inhabited only by large numbers of shipworms dwelling in the damp wood. These worms attract large numbers of voracious crabs that dwell in the lagoon's shallows.

If the party takes time to explore this room, the crabs sense fresh meat and begin swarming up the west passage in tremendous numbers. The PCs must fight or flee. The rotten door to the room is in poor shape but can be closed to keep the crabs somewhat contained.

**Crab Swarm:** Init +5; Atk swarming claws +2 melee (1d2); AC 11; HD 4d8; hp 20; MV 20' or swim 30'; Act special; SP attack all targets in a 20'x20' space, half damage from non-area attacks; SV Fort +0, Ref +6, Will -2; AL N.

**Alternate Encounter for Larger Group:** Increase the swarm's hit point total to 30.

Note: The priest of No-Ombrulsk enters the vault by swimming through the lagoon and entering via the western passage. The blubber covering his body emits a stench that keeps the crabs and sharks in the lagoon at bay.

**Area 1-5—Triggered Trap:** *The floor here is dry and made of bare stone. The walls are rough-hewn, and show no signs of flooding. Bits of old wood and fragments of boxes and barrels are strewn about the chamber. A sealed wooden door stands in the southeast corner of the room. In the northeast corner is an open corridor departing the chamber. A mound of fallen stones half-blocks this exit. The crushed skull and broken arm of an old, browning skeleton are visible beneath the heap.*

The fallen masonry was a trap rigged by the thief to defend the Tooth. It was triggered nearly a half-century ago by a curious fisherman who discovered the entrance to the vault through area 1-4 while exploring the lagoon grotto. His body lies mostly buried beneath the rubble, killed by the fallen stones.

Anyone digging away at the rubble causes a great deal of noise as the stones shift and clatter, alerting Captain Brul and his henchmen in area 1-7. They wait in ambush in this case. (See area 1-7 for further details.) The rubble can be climbed over without alerting the Captain and his flunkies.

Clearing away the fallen stones reveals only the rag-clad skeleton of a human male. His left arm holds the broken remains of a torch, and a decayed leather belt around his waist has a rotted scabbard with a seaman's knife in it (1d3 damage) and a pouch containing 8 iron stusses and 7 bronze wools.

The door to area 1-6 is swollen with moisture and requires a DC 10 Strength check to open. It can also be bashed in by inflicting 20 points of damage to it. Treat it as AC 11 for attack purposes.

**Area 1-6—Flooding Room:** *A flight of stairs runs down the western wall to the floor of this low-lying room. Remains of old bunks and crates are piled along the walls, along with what appear to be large pieces of leather or cloth covering the floor. At the far end of the room is a raised plinth, a rusting steel box resting atop it. The box is held in place by corroded iron bands bolted into the plinth. Puddles of water are visible on the floor, perhaps seeping in from the Inner Sea.*

A cunning trap, this room bears two dangers. First, it is rigged to seal and flood if the box atop the plinth is tampered with, and secondly, it contains some unintended inhabitants in the form of Simorgyan mantas.

The Simorgyan mantas regularly rest here, slithering up the eroded passage in area 1-4 and slipping beneath the door to this room. The security and dampness of the room makes for a safe resting place after meals. There are two Simorgyan mantas present, each appearing as a length of leather mixed in with the remains of the room's former furnishings. The cunning creatures wait until the party descends the stairs before attacking, hoping to surprise and encircle the PCs, cutting off their escape.



**Simorgyan Mantas (2):** Init -1; Atk smother +4 melee (suffocation) or bite +1 melee (1d5); AC 11; HD 2d6+1; hp 10 each; MV 20' or swim 50'; Act 1d20; SP suffocate (see below), camouflage (+10 to hide checks when in watery or wet environments); SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will -2; AL N.

**Alternate Encounter for Larger Group:** Increase the Simorgyan mantas to a quantity equal to the number of PCs minus one.

Simorgyan mantas attack by smothering their prey, either suffocating them (if air breathers) or crushing them (if aquatic). On a successful hit with its smother attack, the Simorgyan manta wraps itself about its prey and squeezes the life from its victim. The smothered creature must make a DC 10 Fortitude save at the start of the first round after they are enveloped. If the saving throw fails, the creature is crushed or smothered to death on the following round unless the Simorgyan manta is slain or the enveloped creature is freed. Freeing a victim from the manta is achieved with an opposed Strength check (the Simorgyan manta adds +3 to its roll). If the victim or an ally exceeds the manta's check result, the enveloped creature is released. On a successful Fortitude save, the victim survives another round, but must make another save at the start of each subsequent round until rescued or the Simorgyan manta is slain. The saving throw's DC increases by 2 on each subsequent round.

Once the Simorgyan mantas are dealt with, the trap still threatens the party. Attempting to remove the iron bands securing the box (it cannot be opened otherwise) or to move the stone plinth causes sea water to flood into the room, spewing through 1' square vents in the floor. A stone slab simultaneously falls at the room's entrance, sealing the chamber.

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The floor vents are obscured by the piled furnishings. Anyone moving the stacked wood notices the vents automatically; otherwise a DC 13 Intelligence or Find Trap check is required. A similar check notices that the bands and plinth seem curiously arranged, as if intending to obscure something: the trap's trigger. The trap's trigger on the box and plinth can be detected with a DC 16 Find Trap check and rendered inert with a DC 15 Disable Trap check. If the trap is bypassed and the box freed from its restraints (requiring a DC 20 Strength check), it is discovered to be a solid object—a false chest designed as bait.

Any investigation of the doorway notices shallow grooves in the walls adjacent to the door, guides for the concealed slab set in the ceiling above it. Noticing the hidden stone requires a DC 13 Intelligence or Find Trap check. It can be disarmed with a DC 15 Disable Trap check or by propping something beneath it. The wood in this room is too rotten to support the weight, but the PCs may think of alternate obstructions.

The room fills at a rate of 1' per round, requiring 15 rounds to fully immerse the room in water. Anyone standing in the doorway when the trap triggers must make a DC 10 Reflex save or take 2d10 damage from the stone. If the saving throw result is a 5 or less, the PC is also trapped beneath the stone and suffers 1d3 points of crushing damage each round. A DC 20 Strength check (DC 15 if the PC attempting to move the stone has a lever of some sort) frees the trapped creature or pries open the sealed door if closed completely.

Once the flood waters exceed a PC's height, they must make a DC 10 Stamina check each round to remain afloat. The DC

increases by 2 each subsequent round. Remember to apply check penalties for armor.

On a failed check, the PC begins to drown, suffering 1d6 damage each round until rescued. Another PC who is succeeds in her Stamina check can rescue a drowning PC, but suffers a -1 penalty for each drowning character she is currently helping remain afloat on all subsequent checks. Rescued PCs automatically make their Stamina checks so long as the rescuer succeeds in theirs.

Characters on the stairs don't have to make Stamina checks until the water exceeds their height plus their current position on the stairs. The top of the stairs are 8' above the floor and the ceiling is 15' high.

Once the room fully floods, it remains flooded for 1 hour, then the water recedes at a rate of 1' every two rounds.

**Area 1-7—Former Armory:** *A door at the southern end of the hallway stands open.*

**NOTE:** If Captain Brul and his henchmen are aware of the party's presence, they doused their lights and are watching the corridor. Otherwise, add the following to the above description: *The glow of torchlight is visible through the open doorway and the sound of someone or something rummaging around in the space beyond is heard.*

Captain Brul and his men, having discovered the door at area 1-8 locked, are searching for tools or keys to open it in this chamber. If the PCs made noise by shifting rocks in area 1-5 or triggered the trap in 1-6, they are lurking in ambush in this room, ready to strike anyone they see at the intersection nearby or who approach this room.

If the captain and his men are unaware of the party, they can be surprised as normal.

**Captain Brul:** Init +5; Atk longsword +1d6+2 melee (1d8+deed die+2) or hand axe +1d6+2 melee (1d6+deed die+2) or crossbow +1d6+1 ranged (1d6+deed die) AC 15; HD 4d12+4; hp 40; MV 25'; Act 1d20 + 1d16; SP d6 deed die, critical threat range 19-20; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +2; AL N.

**Eyulh, Hired Sorcerer:** Init +1; Atk dagger +1 melee (1d4) or shortbow +2 ranged (1d6); AC 11; HD 3d6; hp 14; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP spells (+4 spell check: *choking cloud, force manipulation, magic missile, magic shield, spider climb, levitate*); SV Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +3; AL C.

**Alternate Encounter for Larger Group:** Captain Brul and Eyulh are accompanied by a trio of guardsmen.

**Guardsmen (3):** Init +2; Atk short sword +2 melee (1d4+1) or crossbow +3 ranged (1d6); AC 14; HD 3d8; hp 16 each; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP none; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +1; AL N.

Captain Brul is an aging Eight-Cityman in his late fifties. His skin is pale from far too many late evenings working the night watch, and his hair and beard are steel gray. A paunch pushes his chainmail outward. Captain Brul is short-tempered, believing the Tooth to be his last chance at an easy retirement, and he's not willing to give it up without a fight. He is not fearless or reckless, however, and may flee or par-

ley for his life if it is clear the party is a superior foe after battle is joined.

Eyulh is an exiled Lankmart, banished from the city for daring to visit its Forbidden Temples (she bribed the magistrate to avoid a death sentence). The dark-haired and dark-skinned woman wears a gray toga and black cape, and bears a skull-shaped broach at her throat. The broach is fashioned from aged bronze covered with verdigris. Once per day, the broach allows the wearer to ignore a "spell lost" effect due to a low spell check result. Eyulh has no desire to die in the vault and will flee if it is clear the battle is going against Captain Brul, using spider climb to escape out of reach if necessary.

The guardsmen, if present, are trusted if unexceptional soldiers, loyal to the captain and promised a cut of the wealth. They fight to the death or until ordered by Brul to stand down.

Once the captain and his men are dealt with, the room can be further explored. Read the following:

*Rusting racks hang on the rocky walls, clearly once for holding armaments. These weapons are long gone, however, and several of the racks have fallen to the ground. A collapsed table in the west end of the chamber is piled high with a stack of moldy leather cuirasses and rusted hauberks of chainmail.*

The racks are indeed empty and rust-eaten, and have no special qualities or value. The piles of decayed armor include six leather cuirasses, mildew-ridden and offering no protection, and four chainmail hauberks, equally corroded and offering only a +2 AC bonus and a d16 fumble die if anyone is desperate enough to wear a suit.

**Area 1-8—Door:** *A formidable door made from stone with rusted bands of iron across its face forbids further passage. No hinges are visible and its granite face is unadorned. A few fresh-looking scrapes mar the door's surface.*

A shatter or a knock spell with a sufficient spell check result makes short work of the door; otherwise, cunning is needed to bypass it.

The iron bands are actually painted tin, a fact that close examination (DC 11 Intelligence check) or pulling on the metal reveals. The bands can be pulled aside, revealing two cavities sunk into the door's granite face. Each contains a small lever.

Pulling both levers simultaneously, so that they protrude outwards from the door, causes a "snick" sound to be heard. If the levers are pushed, the door rolls backwards on tracks set into the floor on the far side of the portal, eventually entering area 1-9 and stopping, leaving a gap large enough to enter the Tooth Chamber.

If a single lever is pulled, the door topples forward, forcing anyone in a 10' square area directly in front of the door to make a DC 13 Reflex save or be crushed by the falling door and suffer 2d10 damage. Characters failing their save are also pinned beneath the stone portal, requiring a DC 20 Strength check to free themselves, or allies to move the heavy door with brute strength or levers.

This trap cannot be detected while the levers are concealed. Once revealed, a DC 15 Find Trap check determines that the door might fall if opened incorrectly, but the searcher cannot discern the correct order to throw the levers. A DC 15 Disable Trap check determines that throwing both levers simultaneously disarms the falling door trap.

If a number of the PCs are trapped under the fallen door, the priest of No-Ombrulsk may choose this moment to strike, trying to swiftly dispatch the immobilized characters.

**Area 1-9—The Tooth Chamber:** *A large and dark room lies beyond the stone door. The floor and walls are planed smooth, and two large circles are painted in faded pigment on the floor. One circle is white, the other is black. Where the two circles overlap is a roughly oval space of gray. A rusting iron cage resembling a gibbet sits on the floor in that gray area. Within the cage is a wooden post. Resting atop it is a gleaming white object covered with bas-reliefs. The object is the size of a pineapple and appears to be a massive tooth.*

This large chamber is trapped, a final security measure to protect the valuable tooth.

The black floor section is rigged to collapse, plummeting anyone stepping onto the dark floor into a 10'-deep pit beneath the precariously-balanced stonework. The pit is lined with spikes and each is coated with a powerful poison. Luckily, the poison's age has robbed it of its potency and the once lethal toxin is now less so.

Stepping onto the pit requires the victim to succeed in a DC 14 Reflex save or suffer 1d6+(1d3)d4 damage plus make a DC 10 Fortitude save or take an additional 1d6 damage from the poison.

Anyone stepping onto the white floor sections or who touches the iron cage suffers 2d6 damage (DC 12 Fortitude save for half damage) from the electrical current flowing through these areas. In addition, they must make a Luck check or become paralyzed by the shock, unable to move or let go. A paralyzed PC suffers an additional 1d6 damage each round (no save). An ally can attempt to knock them away, but will suffer 1d6+2 damage (DC 12 Fortitude save for half) in doing so unless a non-conductive object or method is used. If the character is standing on an insulated material (such as the weatherproof leather in area 1-10), they suffer no damage from the electrical current running through the bars and the floor.

Beneath the white floor section is a concealed cavity in which a pair of salt water-filled pits reside. Set into each pit is a large slab of iron (northern most pit) and copper (southern-most pit). The two plates are connected by copper wires to an iron framework concealed under the flooring. The metal plates combined with the salt water form an earth battery producing the electrical charge. This current flows through both the entire white section of flooring as well as the cage surrounding the Tooth.

The electrical trap can be disarmed only from underneath the floor. A secret 4'-square trapdoor (DC 13 Intelligence check to notice) is unconnected to the electrical charge and can be opened without harm. It leads to a 5'-high space con-



taining the two 8'-deep, water-filled pits and their plates. A circular hole at the top of each plate allows them to be lifted from the water with a pole or similar non-conductive item, negating the current and making both the floor and cage safe to touch.

The cage is locked and the gaps between the bars measure only 4" at most. A DC 14 Pick Lock check bypasses the lock, as will a knock spell. However, unless the electrical current has been shut down, picking the lock shocks the thief attempting to do so as noted above.

Inside the cage is the Tooth of No-Ombrulsk, a massive tooth of a sperm whale covered with scrimshaw carvings depicting leviathans and whales sporting and being venerated by the multitudes. The carvings are accented with inlaid gold and platinum, and a dusting of diamond chips makes the ivory sparkle. The Tooth is worth 10,000 gold rilks, but getting full value will be problematic (see **Ending the Adventure**).

**Area 1-10—Chart Room:** *The floor of this room is covered with dust, but there is some painted decoration beneath the gray layer. Faint coastlines and dotted pathways are visible despite the dust, suggesting a large floor-covering chart. A row of closed cabinets line the north wall. In the middle of the south wall is a bricked-up section, appearing to have once been an exit.*

The floor is covered with a chart of the Inner Sea and portions of the Outer Sea and is done as a portolan chart. The dotted lines represent wind rose lines and are useful for starsmen and other navigators in plotting courses. However, there is no plausible way to take the floor-covering chart away from this location without damaging it beyond usefulness.

Three cabinets once contained other, more portable charts. The few that remain are damaged by age and exposure to salt air, crumbling to fragments if handled less than delicately.

At the bottom of one of the cabinets, wrapped in a square yard of water-proofed leather, are an iron astrolabe and a wooden kamal (navigational tools). The astrolabe is worth 50 gold rilk to a starsman or wizard, while the kamal has little monetary value. The true worth of this discovery, however, is the water-proofed leather. This square yard of material will serve as an insulator and protect anyone standing on it or using it to touch the electrically-charged defenses of the Tooth from suffering damage.

The bricked-over section of wall once connected to area 1-11 when it was a simple spring cave. The thief bricked it up to prevent possible flooding, never imagining that erosion would turn the cave into the massive grotto it has since become.

**Area 1-11—Lagoon:** *The sound of lapping water fills this large subterranean space. From the south, the sounds of the Inner Sea's breakers are heard. Before you, in a large grotto, is an expanse of deep water. Kelp grows in thick patches below the surface and clusters of barnacles and mussels cling to the walls. A stream flows from this lagoon south into the sea.*

This cave was once a small space housing a natural spring. Over the centuries, however, the spring grew larger and eroded the cave walls until it broke through and reached the Inner Sea. Since that time, the cave floods regularly with the tide, turning it into a brackish, 15' deep lagoon.

A pair of harbor sharks were trapped in the lagoon when they swam in at high tide. The rich schools of fish here provide regular meals, but anyone entering the waters provokes an attack. A DC 13 Intelligence check notices a dorsal fin cutting the water if the lagoon is watched, but the check suffers a -1d penalty unless the grotto is sufficiently illuminated (a single torch or lantern won't cut it).

**Ithmar Harbor Shark (2):** Init +0; Atk bite +3 melee (1d7); AC 14; HD 2d8+6; hp 15 each; MV swim 50'; Act 1d20; SP critical threat range 19-20; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +0; AL N.

**Alternate Encounter for Larger Group:** Increase the number of sharks to three.

Avoiding the sharks by throwing some bloody meat or similar chum keeps the predators occupied for 1 turn and is worth 1 point of fleeting Luck to the clever PC who suggests this stratagem.

## **EVENT: THE PRIEST STRIKES!**

As noted above, the priest arrives in the vault soon after the PCs have entered. He swims in through the lagoon, enters into area 1-4, then skulks through the rest of the complex,

looking for the Tooth. If he hears the party, he either hangs back and lets them do the hard work of obtaining the Tooth, or tries to pick them off if circumstances allow.

**Priest of No-Ombrulsk:** Init +4; Atk dagger +3 (+7 when enlarged) melee (1d4+4 plus poison) or sonar blast (special); AC 13 (17 when enlarged); HD 3d8; hp 20 (30 when enlarged); MV 30' or swim 20' (40' when enlarged); Act 1d20; SP sonar blast (DC 13 Fort save or 1d6+1 damage [1d6+5 when enlarged]); affects all in a 20'-long, 15'-wide cone), envenomed dagger (coral toxin, DC 15 Fort save or 1d3 temporary Stamina loss), Blessing of No-Ombrulsk (as *enlarge*, spell check result 20-23), stealthy (+6 to Hide in Shadows and Sneak Silently checks), takes half damage from magical cold, vulnerable to fire (double damage); SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +4; AL N.

**Alternate Encounter for Larger Group:** Increase the priest's hit point total to 40 (60 hp when enlarged).

The priest of No-Ombrulsk is a scrawny human male, approximately 30 years of age. He dresses in a linen loincloth and wears a black helm of metal and leather atop his bald head. White coral inlay in the helmet depicts a great sperm whale battling a giant squid. He carries a dagger made from sharpened whale bone and envenomed with coral toxin. Stinking grease made from whale blubber covers his thin body, protecting him from the cold and dissuading aquatic predators from attacking. This grease is flammable and the priest suffers double damage from fire-based attacks.

The priest can invoke the Blessing of No-Ombrulsk, causing his body to double in size and take on cetacean features. His flesh becomes smooth and hairless, assuming a dark gray color. His nose vanishes, his face becoming whale-like. His hands transform into flippers with rough fingers and he becomes harder to injure as a layer of blubber protects his enlarged form. This size change lasts for 1 turn.

If the Tooth is present and within 30' of the priest, he can emit a strange clicking and moaning song similar to whale song. This calls upon the Tooth's hidden power, accessible only by the faithful of No-Ombrulsk.

The Tooth produces a field of immense pressure, like that deep below the surface of the ocean. All except the priest within a 15' radius of the Tooth must succeed in a DC 11 Fort save or be pressed to the ground. Those under the field's effect cannot move or attack, and suffer 1d4 points of damage each round they are trapped. A DC 15 Strength check allows a pinned PC to escape the field. The pressure field is centered on the Tooth, and moving it (the Tooth is itself unaffected) moves the pressure zone with it, potentially freeing those within it. Otherwise, the pressure field lasts for seven rounds.

The priest offers no mercy and fights to the death, screaming maniacally that his ancestor's honor is soon to be restored and the wrath of No-Ombrulsk shall be visited upon those who dare plunder the god's rightful due. If the party somehow escapes the vault, leaving him alive, he pursues them to the ends of Nehwon until the Tooth is either reclaimed or he is slain.

## ENDING THE ADVENTURE

If all goes well, the party escapes the vault with a fantastically valuable relic in their possession. In the worst case, no PC emerges alive. In the latter case, the adventure ends along with their lives...until the next PCs meet in either Lankhmar, the Land of the Eight Cities, or elsewhere. Assuming the PCs triumph or at least escape the vault alive, their exploits involving the Tooth of No-Ombrulsk might have further ramifications to the campaign.

The Tooth is an incredible treasure, perhaps the most valuable piece of loot the PCs have ever seen. Its craftsmanship and one-of-a-kind appearance make it nearly priceless – and unfortunately almost impossible to get rid of. Any fence capable of paying even half the Tooth's 10,000 gold rilk value will refuse to deal with the PCs, certain that trying to find a seller for the relic is going to be impossible. It's likely the priests of No-Ombrulsk know the Tooth has reappeared and are going to be hunting for it and no buyer is going to risk the wrath of crazed northern priests with a perchance for suicidal zealotry. A less-established fence, one lacking funds and desperate enough to take risks to make a big score, will offer up to 2,000 gold rilks for it. Rendering the Tooth down into its separate valuable components destroys the relic's uniqueness but the party will earn no more than 3,000 gold rilks by selling the precious metals and gemstones individually. The loss of value and their final monetary rewards for their efforts might sting, but it's potentially better than holding onto the Tooth for the long term.

As the fences anticipate, a party retaining the Tooth more than a couple of weeks quickly finds themselves the targets of other priests of No-Ombrulsk. Alerted to their brother's failure by prophetic dreams, others of the faith seek out the party, led by divine signs. The party has difficulty evading them and soon encounters zealous attackers at every turn.

Additionally, the whale god personally takes offense for the robbery; if the party ever takes to sea, they must deal with the aquatic servants of No-Ombrulsk. Whales breach the waters and slam into their ship. Leviathans charge their boat, ramming it with tremendous force. Pods of orcas swim in their wake, awaiting to dine on any who fall or dive from the party's ship. Casting the Tooth into the depths ends this torment. Another option would be to travel to Ool Krut and seek out



the temple of the Sea King. There the party might convince the priests to invoke their deity and ask for his protection against the whale god and his servants, both man and beast. But there will be a price to be paid for this divine assistance.

Lastly, if the sorceress-for-hire Eyluh survives her conflict with the characters, she may reappear in future adventures. Eyluh doesn't seek revenge (unless the party were partially evil and visit terrible harm upon her), but rather knows useful allies when she meets them. Having seen them perform in the field, the sorceress deems them skilled enough to aid her in her own schemes. As an expatriate Lankhmart in the Land of the Eight Cities, Eyluh makes for a useful contact and can help the party navigate the customs and cities of the Forest Land in return for aid. The judge can use her as a hook for many other adventures in the Land of the Eight Cities and Lankhmar. After all, there are adventures, schemes, and crimes galore to undertake in Nehwon and in DCC Lankhmar!

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# APPENDIX A: THE FRITZ LEIBER PAPERS COLLECTION

by Michael Curtis



In January of 2018, I traveled to the University of Houston to visit their Special Collections department. The trip was funded as one of the final stretch goals for the DCC Lankhmar Kickstarter campaign. Thanks to the generous backing of all involved, I had the opportunity to conduct research in the Fritz Leiber Papers Collection, housed at the university library.

The purpose of this research trip was to search for some overlooked piece of Lankhmar-related material that could serve as the inspiration for a DCC Lankhmar supplement or adventure. The book you now hold in your hands is the end result of that trip, the product of an unpublished manuscript penned by Leiber sometime in the late 1930s and which, to the best of my knowledge, has never been published.

The draft was a version of “The Tale of the Grain Ships,” a precursor to the story that eventually became *The Swords of Lankhmar*. In this version, however, much was different from the final product. It begins with Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser returning from No-Ombrulsk after an unsuccessful robbery of the Temple of No-Ombrulsk, the whale god. The two are ambushed by one of the last priests pursuing them,

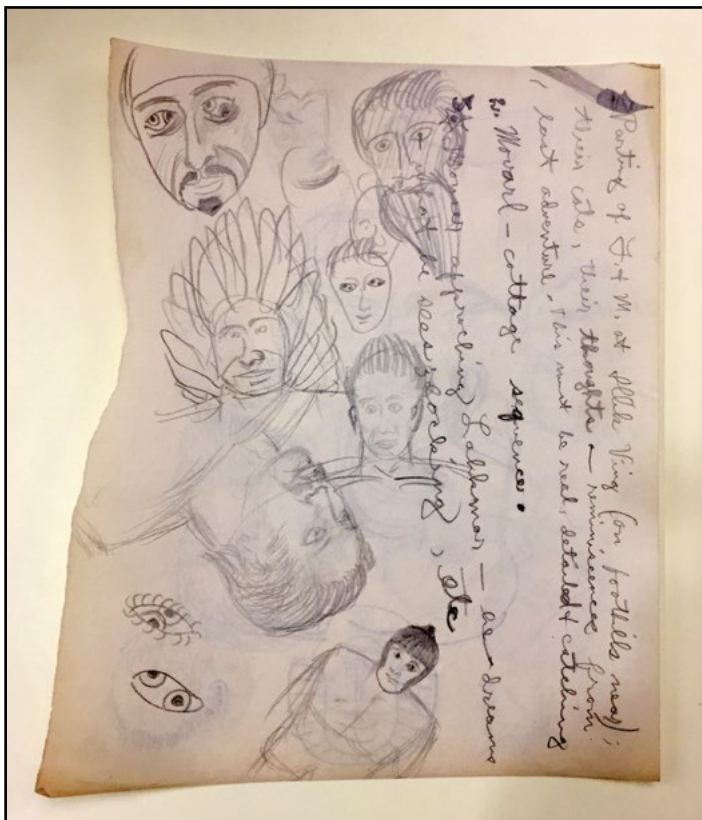
springing from a frosty ledge high in the Trollstep Mountains. If this sounds familiar, the title of this opening chapter, “The Black Priest,” may explain why. This very premise, although unpublished in the draft manuscript, was later reworked into the Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser story, “The Seven Black Priests.”

From the Trollstep Mountains, the pair reach the Land of the Eight Cities and part ways. Fafhrd heads back to the Cold Waste to inquire about his blood brother, a young man named Visf. Visf’s existence comes as much of a shock to the Gray Mouser as it does to the faithful reader of the Lankhmar stories. In time, we’ll learn that Visf was rescued from death by Fafhrd as a youth and left in the care of Northern mystics, where he demonstrated nigh-supernatural power. The Mouser continues onto the Land of the Eight Cities, planning to meet Fafhrd at a favorite inn.

The subsequent chapters give us a look at the politics of the Land of the Eight Cities, as the Overlord Morval and his Lords of Council deal with the mysterious delay of the grain shipment from Lankhmar. While the circumstances of the grain ships’ fate are similar to those portrayed in the *The Swords of Lankhmar*, we witness events from the Forest Land’s perspective, gaining great insights into the history, people, culture, and government of the Eight Cities, all of which has never been revealed in published works. It was clear that this unreleased background material was rich fodder for an RPG supplement—information never before appearing in the canonical knowledge and history of Nehwon.

As Fafhrd continues to seek his blood-brother, the Gray Mouser is hired by Morval to track down the source of the grain fleet’s difficulties, and is sent to “Lahkmar” to investigate. One can date the story draft based on this spelling of “Lankhmar,” the earliest used by Leiber and Fischer in their correspondence. Once in the city, the Mouser soon comes into conflict with the Overlord Gliplerio’s court, including the grain merchant, Hisvin. Much as in *The Swords of Lankhmar*, Hisvin has fell schemes in mind for Lahkmar, and finds an ally in his daughter, named Ivlis in this version of the story.

The plot culminates in a manner similar to that of the published novel, with Gliplerio deposed and the rats running amok in Lahkmar. Hisvin has usurped the throne and Fafhrd and Mouser rush to Sheelba of the Eyeless Face to acquire a whistle capable of calling the War Cats. They blow the whistle in the desert and lead the great battle felines back to Lahkmar. As they arrive, Visf, who in earlier chapters was described as having power over beasts, appears in the city and begins piping, leading the rats onto ships and sailing



Doodles of Lankhmarts by Fritz Leiber



Fantastic Stories Cover "Adept's Gambit"

out to sea with them, where they are destroyed in a storm. The War Cats dispatch the Inner Circle of rats and Hisvin, restoring order to the city. Pulgh (likely not the extortionist of religions but another by that name) becomes Overlord and the final shipment of grain is sent to the Land of the Eight Cities, fulfilling the compact with the Forest Land and avoiding war between the two nations.

While the unpublished manuscript may have been the crown jewel of the collection from a design point of view, it wasn't without other riches. I discovered the long-sought after map of Lankhmar that was originally published in *Amra* magazine, based on an original sketch of the city by Leiber. That had escaped us during the entire DCC Lankhmar design process, and I had hoped to locate it so that it could serve as the starting point for our own Lankhmar city map.

Also carefully preserved in the collection were two Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser screenplays. One, "The Black Adept," was for a short, silent film written by Dave McDaniel based on an original story by Leiber (although not "Adept's Gambit" as one might believe), written in 1964. The other, *Swords and Destines*, by Jeff Brower, was to be a full-length movie comprising pieces of "The Snow Women," "The Unholy Grail," "Ill Met in Lankhmar," "The Circle Curse," "Adept's Gambit," "The Price of Pain-Ease," and "The Sadness of the Executioner," all assembled into what we'd call an origin story movie these days. The screenplay was completed in 1982, which coincided with the release of *Conan the Barbarian*

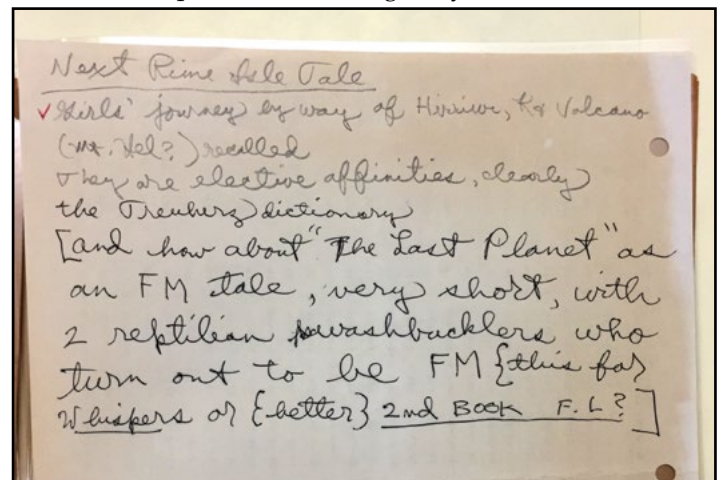
on the silver screen and was undoubtedly intended to ride the coattails of the fantasy boom of the mid-80s. *Swords and Destines*, however, was never produced.

Something that was produced though was the game of *Lankhmar*, originally released by TSR in 1976 and ushering in a long-time partnership between Leiber and the "Game Wizards." The game of *Lankhmar* was based on a wargame of sorts created by Leiber and Fischer and played during the years of the Great Depression. The original board, a massive piece of cardboard that showed the terrain and geography of Nehwon, was long lost along with the rules the two wrote. When Gygax learned of this game, he expressed a desire to reproduce it, leaving Leiber and Fischer with the chore of reconstructing the game from memory. These rewritten rules, penned in longhand, can be found in the Papers Collection.

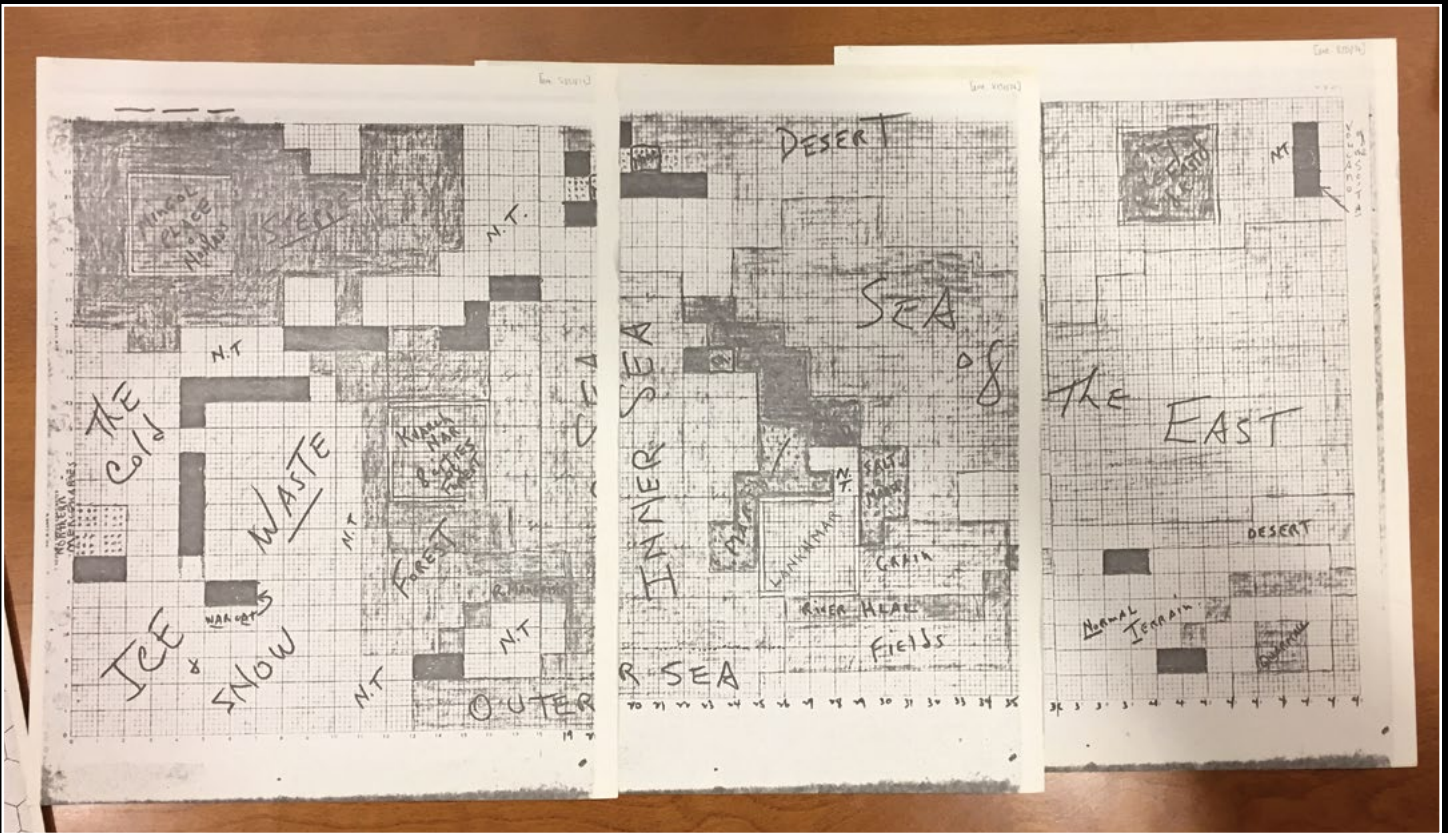
As part of the development of the game, Gygax sent Leiber and Fischer a number of illustrations done by David C. Sutherland, III, each depicting his take on the characters in the game. Fischer sent these back to TSR with a number of corrections, pointing out where Sutherland had veered away from Fischer's own personal interpretations of the characters and cultures of Nehwon. Sadly, these corrections arrived too late for them to be implemented. The annotated illustrations are preserved in the Collection, granting an interesting insight into how the Twain's co-creator envisioned the duo and the world they inhabited.

Speaking of Gygax, the collection houses the various correspondence exchanged by Leiber and Fischer with Gary over a 10 year period, starting in 1973 with an initial contact letter from Gygax (written on Guidon Games letterhead, the company Gygax worked for before TSR was formed) to 1983, when Gygax was living in Los Angeles and heading Dungeons & Dragons Entertainment Corp. There's also a letter from Gary's then-wife, Mary, who struck up a friendship with Fritz during Gen Con 1976. The letters from all parties range from business matters (the production of the *Lankhmar* board game) to the personal, with discussions of writing, chess, books, and family life filling the pages.

No collection of Leiber's papers would be complete without the correspondence exchanged by himself and Fischer.



Story note suggesting alien swashbucklers who turn out to be Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser!



Reconstructed Lankmar board

A PROPOSAL FOR AN ADDITIONAL PIECE AT LANKMAR

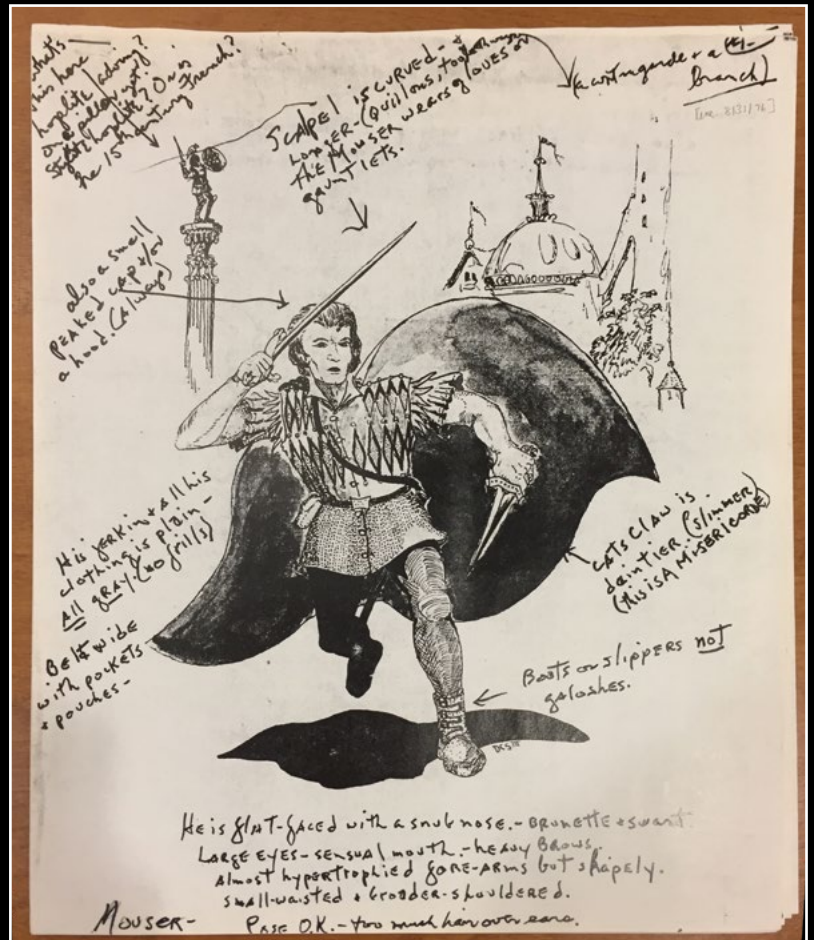
THE MEN  
Each Player has also a Houri.

THE WEAPONS  
Each Player has also one dagger.

THE MOVES  
A Houri moves three squares, any direction or combination. She has, in short, the move of an Arrow.

①

Handwritten page of Lankmar board game rules



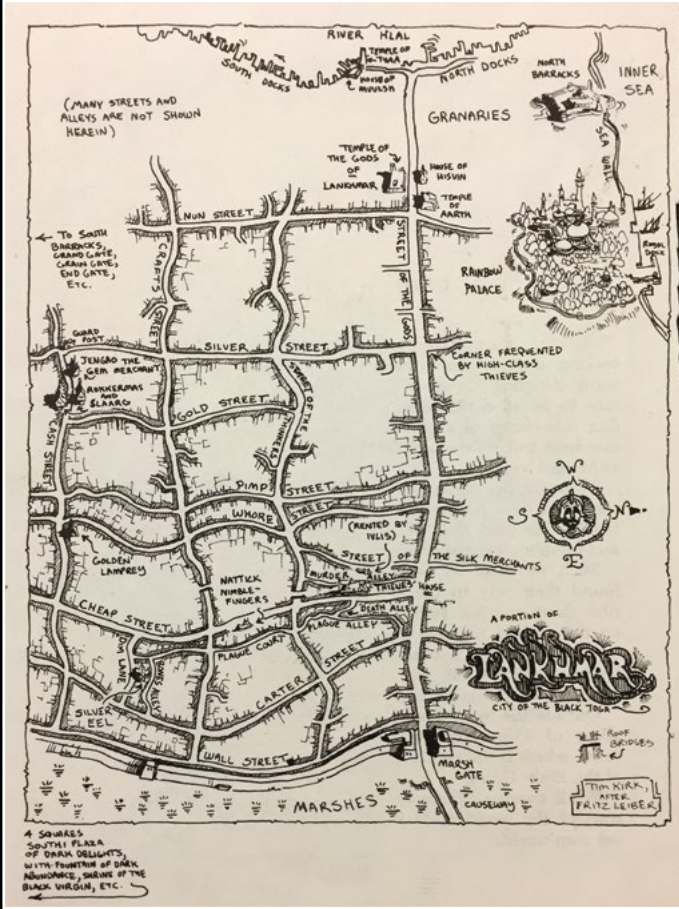
Sutherland illustration of the Gray Mouser with notations and correction from Harry Otto Fischer

17  
 PRODUCE  
 GENERAL BOX COMPANY  
 The man had faint moustache and shadow had begun to grow.  
 The great white oxen threw their weight against the yoke. It was not the first time nor would it be the last they knew. Each month as they were hauled to stretch of road the master whipped and slashed them frantically, attempting to lash them into speed. They, by nature, were unable to attain. Straining, they obliged as best they could; for well they knew that this spot was pulled. The Master would reward them with a bit of salt and a rough cresset. Their Master had reason to dash them so. This spot was accursed and feared among his people. From this KIKKIXK curved and the towers of Qarmall could be spied; and more important these towers looked upon the road, even as one looking up could see them. It was not KIKKIXK healthy to look upon the Towers of Qarmall, or to be looked upon by them. There was sufficient reason for this feeling. It was KIKKIXK unfortunate that this particular piece of road stayed mucky long after the rains had ceased; almost from one season to the next. Unfortunate in that it was KIKKIXK longer time to pass, and that the situation prevented men from mending it. The Master of the Oxen spot surreptitiously, KIKKIXK made an obvious gesture with his fingers and glanced fearfully over his shoulder, as the last mud-hole was KIKKIXK (at the sky-thrusting towers of Qarmall). Even in this fleeting glance he caught the glimpse of a flash, from the tallest keep, KIKKIXK shuddering he leaped into the welcome hiding of the trees and thanked the gods he worshiped for his escape. Tonight he would have much to speak of in the tavern. He would buy his KIKKIXK bowl of mead to swallow and bitter wine of herbs; and he could lord it for an evening. Ah! but for his quickness he might even now be plodding soulless to the mighty gates of Qarmall; there to serve until his body was no more and even after. For tales were told of KIKKIXK and other things amongst the elders of the village: tales that it was well to heed. Was it not only Louma Ewe ago that young Twela went from the ken of men? Had he not jeered at these very tales, and drunken braved the terraces of Qarmall? Well were these things known. It was also known that his less brave companion, KIKKIXK had seen him with bravado (charged) to the last terrace, almost to the moat; then when Twela, slammed at some unknown cause, turned to KIKKIXK his body twisted and KIKKIXK pulled into the darkness. Twela had heard of the passing of Twela from this KIKKIXK that less brave or less bold companion of Twela, had spent his time in a continuous drunken stupor. All the way KIKKIXK to the village he pondered. He tried to formulate in his dim present intellect a method by which he could present himself as a hero. But even as he wove a simple self-aggrandizing tale he rebot himself of the whispered tale of that one who had dared to brag of robbing Qarmall's vineyards. That one whose fate was spoken of in whispers and in secret. So the Master of the Oxen decided to confine himself to flocks, simple as they were, and trust to the atmosphere of horror that he knew any manifestation of activity in Qarmall would arouse. Qarmall, king of Qarmall, was casting his KIKKIXK for the coming year. In the highest tower of the keep he labored, putting in order the huge astrolabe and the other massive instruments KIKKIXK necessary for his observations. The afternoon sun beat hotly into the small chamber, from the polished surfaces of lenses and scintillating KIKKIXK as he reflected KIKKIXK it was warm, even for an old man KIKKIXK and Qarmall stepped KIKKIXK the broodery aside, KIKKIXK letting the cool moor-breeze blow through his KIKKIXK observatory. In the distance past the paraded slopes, he could see the small curved, brown thread of road which led, eventually, to the village. KIKKIXK

Page from Harry Otto Fischer's original draft of "The Lords of Quarmall" later completed by Leiber

Jan 13, '64  
 Dear Mouse,  
 Writings, a hell of a profession -- and always stays that way, whether you've writ 1 story or 10 or 100 or 1000 (of take the last figure on faith)! This in case you're working on a Mouserish cuneiform & finding the going tough.  
 One thing you could almost certainly pick & even sell (for just a few -- literally few -- bucks): a piece for AMRA on your contribution to Fafard & the Mouse... the genesis of the world of Lankmar in your mind. George Scithers actually pays a few bucks [five or thereabouts] for such contribs. Such a thing would be interesting to readers and maybe help supply you) stylus finger)abit.  
 Best,  
 Jaf

Letter from Leiber to Harry Otto Fischer



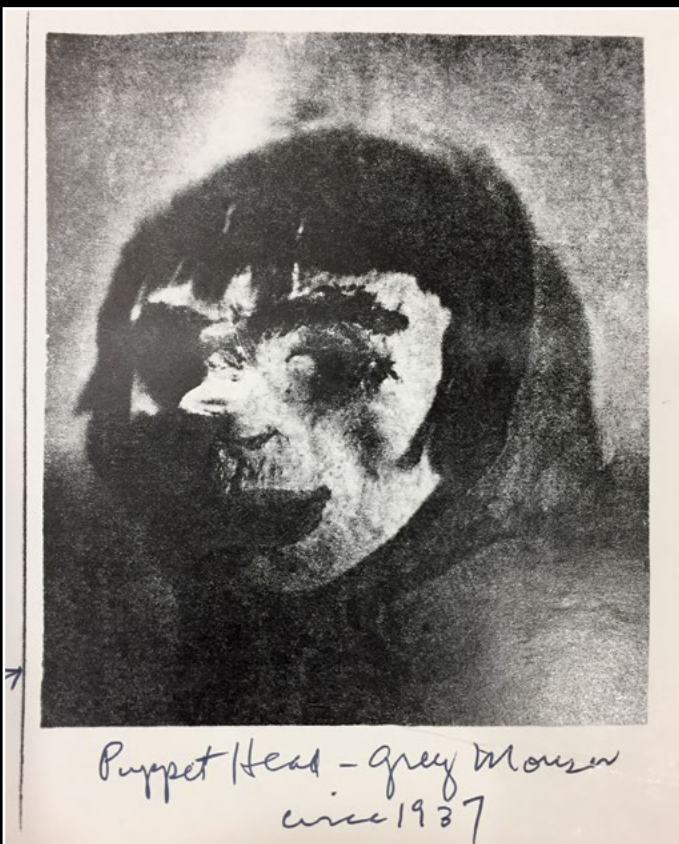
Lankmar Map by Tim Kirk based on Leiber's original sketch

**GUIDON GAMES**  
 P. O. BOX 1123 - EVANSVILLE, INDIANA 47713  
 E. GARY GYGAX, RULES EDITOR, 330 CENTER STREET, LAKE GENEVA, WISCONSIN 53147  
 8 February 1973  
 Mr. Fritz Leiber  
 c/o Ace Publishing Corporation  
 1120 Avenue of the Americas  
 New York, New York 10036  
 Dear Mr. Leiber:  
 While I cut my teeth on your classic storey YOU'RE ALL ALONE (as I remember it was in the old pulp Fantastic) I could no longer resist dropping you a line to tell you how much both my son and I have enjoyed your Fafard and the Gray Mouser yarns. My son is only thirteen, having begun to thoroughly enjoy SF and Fantasy just last year--the same age I began to delve into the genre.  
 Yesterday evening, a young associate of ours was inquiring how I rated the various authors. As he has only begun to get into this vein of reading, and having pursued mainly the "Ghulhu Mythos" and the Conan tales, I began extolling Merritt, Farmer, Vance, and of course Leiber. Upon asking my son which he preferred, Howard, et al, or you, he replied that you're were the better stories, and without hesitation of doubt. I not only agreed, but I found myself envying our friend who had yet to have the pleasure of delving into the various Swords stories. Now, I want to know when we are going to be treated to a new one?  
 While I have recently taken up the trade of shoe repairing, and I write and design wargaming articles, games, and rules on a semi-professional basis, I have more and more of a desire to seriously try my hand at another fantasy novel (my first was the usual bomb). Getting to the point here, if I ever do make it, remember my name, for I intend to look you up and talk your arm off at some convention.  
 Again, thanks for your superb tales and for your attention now.  
 Regards,  
 E. Gary Gygax  
 P.S. Please pardon the typing, syntax, etc. herein. The hour is too early and there's only been one cup of coffee. Sent below safar. With a day of rules typing waiting, I can't face reworking this --

First letter from Gygax to Leiber (Guidon Games letterhead)



First (?) map of Nehwon, possibly the work of Martha Fischer, Harry Otto Fischer's wife



Gray Mouser puppet created by Harry Otto Fischer

It was in their writings—sprawling, multi-page missives that put modern e-mail exchanges to shame—that the characters of Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser first came into being. I was happy to discover that many letters between Fritz and Harry survived the years and found a home in the collection. Reading them gave me a deeper insight into a friendship that had endured the Great Depression, births, deaths, struggles with sickness, and long silences that would suddenly cease with furious bouts of letter-writing. One can't help but ponder one's own friendships, both long-term and short- after reading these letters. Unfortunately, the collected correspondence is largely all from the later decades of their friendship and the very messages that spawned the birth of Fafhrd and Mouser are absent, perhaps lost or in the hands of private collectors or family members.

Aside from the aforementioned unpublished draft, many of Leiber's early stories are also missing from the collection. This is unsurprising. The value of these manuscripts among collectors would be high and, given Leiber's problems with sobriety and his poor financial straits at various points in time, it's easy to imagine that these were either lost or sold off prior to his papers being donated to the University of Houston. Copies of his later works, mostly stories from the 1970s and on, do reside in the collection, along with production galleries of his covers and other letters pertaining to their publication.

It's been said that "Miscellaneous" is always the largest category, and this is certainly the case with the Leiber Collection. The items I've mentioned so far have been of interest to the Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser fan as well as the gamer. The collection houses far more than these items though. Countless pages of correspondence, far more than I could work through in my five days of research, are preserved. Some are exchanges between other notable names in science-fiction and fantasy, such as Marion Zimmer Bradley, Ray Bradbury, Mike Stackpole, and more. Other letters are to family, friends, and other loved ones. Pictures of Fritz are present, and while not plentiful, an examination of the images turns up a charming photo of him with his father, Fritz Leiber, Sr., the noted Shakespearean actor, as well as him with Harry Otto Fischer, Margo Skinner (Leiber's second wife), and L. Sprague de Camp. And, of course, there are hundreds of fan letters, gifts, and other tributes from those who adored Fritz.

The most anticipated items in the collection for me, however, were his swords and a mysterious folder marked "Game?" I envisioned his swords to be tremendous broadswords or at least fencing sabers or epees. I knew Leiber had an interest in fencing and sword-play, and hoped to discover the inspiration for "Graywand," Fafhrd's broadsword, which he wields like a fencing blade. Alas, the archivist who processed the collection was clearly not an aficionado of swords or fantasy role-playing games, any of whom could tell you the "swords" were actually "daggers" or "wall-hangers." No Graywand was found.



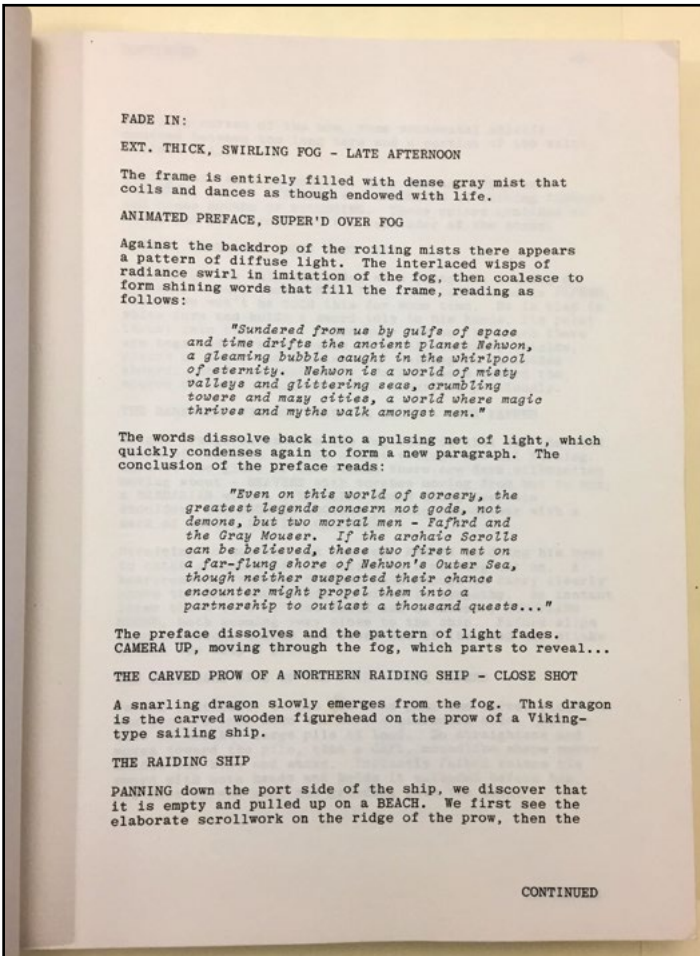
One of Fritz Leiber's "swords"

The mystery "Game?" folder was also a bust. It appears to be a collection of astrological and occult symbols, along with notes about a story involving a coded message. It is clear that Leiber intended to use these symbols as code in the tale and that they had no bearing on any game, board or otherwise. At least the collection does house copies of Leiber's charming article for *The Dragon* magazine, wherein he tries to explain wargames and fantasy RPGs to Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser. If you're a gamer, a fan of F&GM, and can either visit the University of Houston or track down a copy of *The Dragon* #1, be sure to read "Fafhrd & the Mouser Have Their Say."

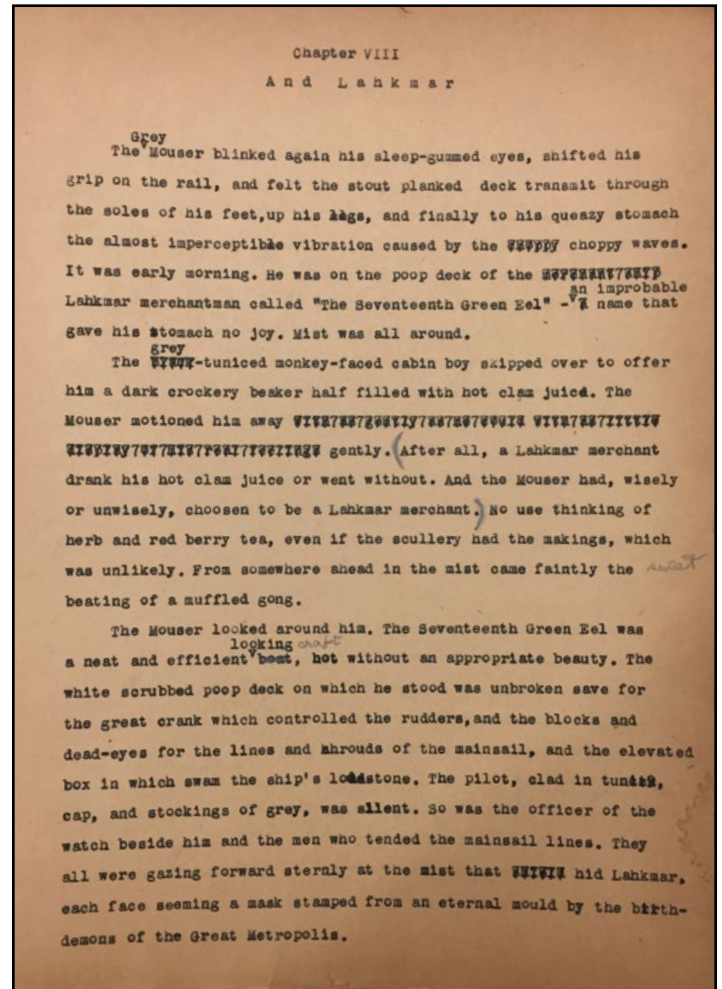
I cannot fully express my gratitude to the Kickstarter backers who made this trip possible. Without your faith in DCC Lankmar, my idea of researching the Fritz Leiber Papers Collection would be one long-deferred and paid from my

own pocket at some later date. Likewise, I'm indebted to Imelda Cervantes and the rest of the UoH Special Collections department for their extremely helpful assistance during my time there. As someone with both archival training and who has worked in academic Special Collections, I was impressed with their professionalism, courtesy, and accessibility throughout my visit and cannot praise them highly enough. Lastly, my thanks goes to Joseph Goodman for arranging the license with the Estate of Fritz Leiber and making a lifelong dream of working with Lankmar a reality.

This concludes our exploration of the Land of the Eight Cities for the nonce. I'll see you all at the Ilrisk Bough in Mlurg Nar. Bring your ropes, pitons, and ice cats, for we venture for Stardock at dawn!



First page of *Swords and Destinies* screenplay



Page from unpublished manuscript that inspired this supplement

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