

Cults and Temples of the Middle World

Introduction

! This book aims to provide you, the reader, with an overview of the religious practices of Arunia and the gods that dwell therein. The eight families of the gods will be made clear, as will their origins and histories. Within these pages you shall also find essays on how the different races approach worship, faith, and the inevitable truth of death.

! Creation stories are contradictory, each faith telling of a different way in which the world came to be. That does not mean they are all false... though nor does it mean that they are all true. The wyrms tell of the Four Eggs (which are the sun, the moon, the world, and the dark moon that can't be seen), while the giants speak of the Autocreation and the worshippers of the Aelio believe in the finely crafted Lamp of the Sun and Dish of the Moon.

! But the old gods have passed out of the telling of things in this age, and it is the Aelio who rule the heavens. Their master, Haeron the Lawgiver, has established strict laws concerning their behavior: they are not to interfere in the mortal world directly, lest they damage it beyond repair. They are not to combat one another on the mortal plane at all, unless it is through their priesthoods and their armies. This gives the contest for worship the feel of a particularly frustrating game for some of the gods, and you can be sure that not all abide by Haeron's dictates.

! While this book will detail all of the northern gods to some extent, the long-form entries are reserved for a handful of deities that are likely to be chosen by adventurers (or are likely to be worshipped by the forces they fight). The use of the clerical class is reserved in Arunia for those Syncretic or Ecumenical temples that serve more than one god, of which there are few. Instead, most religions have one or more priestly classes available only to that faith/temple (and for these purposes the worship of the same god by different names in elvish and human cultures, for example, makes a difference). While any class could be ordained by any religion (for the most part), the divine agents on Arunia are classified by their specialty mythos classes.

The Divine Families

! The gods of Arunia make up several different ancestries, each of which may loosely be defined as a "pantheon" in the traditional sense. However, since some of the elder gods have taken on new life in the pantheon of men, and as some of the gods are worshipped in different ways by different people, it is far more useful to classify them according to their origins.

! It's important to note that the *Archaioi*, *Wyrmai*, and *Night Gods* all predate the existence of the Aelio and Vinthar. Collectively, this makes them the so-called Elder Gods.

The Archaioi

! The gigantic gods of the earth, sea, and sky, the Archaioi are a family of kings and queens, of elemental good and elemental evil. The family has its roots with Solon the Self-Creating, who the giants hold sprang into existence fully-formed without any urging; in essence, he had made himself from nothing. He was an earthy god, and in the giant pantheon represents the good things of the soil, the clay, and the stone. The Archaioi were all joined by sister-wives, also of their own element and temperament, to form joined pairs.

! Other than Solon, the most famous amongst these deities is Ulagos the Potter, Solon's dark male shadow. Ulagos is the lord of mud and clay, and since the giant days he has been spinning his giant wheel and throwing off misshapen beasts into the world. The noble centaurs and minotaurs owe their birth to Solon; the foul Eye Tyrants and Catoblepas were formed by none other than Ulagos.

! Most of the giant gods have substantially faded in this day and age, likely because the giants themselves have fallen to a low ebb. Their civilizations are mostly in ruins and they live as a degraded and scattered people throughout the north, worshipping only when they can. The only giant gods who retain a measure of their old strength are those that successfully made the transition into the mannish pantheon (or have, like Ulagos, attained the worship of other creatures).

The Wyrmai

! According to draconic myth, the Three Worlds were a void before the arrival of the Great Mother Dragon, Nagyzeru. She came into this void pregnant with her three children, the Dragons of Balance. Before she died, her own body becoming the Three Worlds (hence the draconic word for all of creation, Nagyzerr), she gave birth to three eggs. Two of those would hatch; the blazing bright egg contained Azris, the Fire of Creation. The cold black egg held Urumis, the Devourer. The last egg, huge and swollen, never hatched. This, the dragons believe, is the world and it contains the slumbering world-wyrm Garas the Balancer, whose tidal breath is the fabric of magic itself.

! Modern scholars often identify the so-called Dark Moon as the egg of Urumis the Devourer and many theologians believe that Urumis is just another name for the inimical and awful force known as Mother Night. Few now recognize the names of the ancient dragon gods, and amongst those fewer still would know any but the Three Dragons of Balance.

The Night Gods

! Mother Night is a name that is known throughout Arunia and spoken only in whispers. She is the terror and darkness at the world's end, beyond the Girdling Seas in the far west, where the light fails. Trolls have worshipped her since the Night Age, and theologians write of a time when the entire surface of Arunia was smothered in her grip. Some say it was only the coming of the world-tree Asca-Irminsul and its silvery leaves that drove her off, others that it was the forging of the stars and the sun.

! Whatever the case may be, Mother Night is attended by a thousand thousand spirits, some as weak as men and others as powerful as demigods. These creatures yearn to snuff out the sunlight and plunge the world into a second age of night, one that

would never end. Only the most foolish, desperate, or insane seek the aid of the Night Gods and the thousandfold shadows that serve them.

The Aelio

! It was the waking of the Aelio in the Upper World that ushered in the end of the First Age and began the Second. The Dawn Age was marked by the coming of Haeron, Avauna, and the hosts of younger gods who sprang from Asca-Irminsul and the Waters of Life. These deities are those worshipped by men, elves, and dwarves; they are younger than the great elder gods of old, but elder still than the Felnumen and the Vinthar.

! When one mentions “the Gods” in Arunia, it is usually the Aelio to which one is referring. This is the largest divine family, comprising a majority of the deities still worshipped today. Ruling over it are the four brothers, known as the Quarto: Eiri, Aros, Vodei and Haeron. Haeron, the youngest of the four brothers, is nevertheless the pantheon’s chief and master.

The Dvergrin

! Children of the Aelio known as Eiri the Earthfather and Helda Stonemother, the Dvergrin are the particular pantheon of the dwarven gods. One might call them a subset of the Aelio, as they are not worshipped by any but dwarves and certain gnomes.

The Vinthar

! The smallfolk worship a separate pantheon of far-walking gods led by Leesha Roseheart. Made in the image of their parent-deities, the smallfolk envision the Vinthar as a deific race of halflings and gnomes. Many of their gods were elevated from folk-hero status by Leesha herself! Where the Vinthar originated is a mystery, for no legend survives to tell of their coming, but the smallfolk revere them all the same.

The Felnumen

! The gods of the mud-races, the Felnumen are the divine descendants of Ulagos the Potter and his many trysts, both with his sister-wife Glyrea and with the other Archaioi. They include Ashad the Lord of Slaughter and Toynash the Cruel King; these gods served the Aelio in the early days of their domain, but later struck out on their own to craft races that would worship them alone. All goblin-kin owe their creation to the Felnumen, particularly those who schemed in slaying the Felnumen chief, Yuva, and making of his corpse the Youngest Races.

The Aspect Gods

! Far in the south, the Mugharians (and the ‘shari of Ralashar) worship a thousand thousand gods of stone, fire, air, and sea: the Aspect-Gods. These are local elemental divinities, far smaller in power than the Aelio or even the Vinthar, but far more potent than simple spirits. It is said that one can travel for years in Mugharia without ever seeing a shrine to the same Aspect-God twice.

Faith and Worship

! Not all the races of the north worship in the same manner. To see a man pray is not to comprehend the way a dwarf or an elf goes about their faith. Religion means something different to each people, and in some cases even each culture. Men burn their dead where the southmen settled, but elsewhere they bury them; elves build crypts and mausoleums and dwarves deep tombs and catacombs. To understand the mysteries of faith, it must be approached one race at a time.

Men

! Most men do not pledge themselves to a single god or goddess, but throughout their lifetimes will go and pray to whosoever is most likely to have influence over whatever problem they are seeking to solve. Both elves and dwarves (who are much more likely to choose patron deities) have often remarked on the seemingly mercenary nature of mannish worship. This is perhaps exaggerated by the fact that outside of feasts and holy days there are no public acts of communal piety in mannish society—no temple services, no daily call to prayer (unlike the elvish Morningsong and Evensong), and no requirement for any faithful human to present themselves to the temple.

! Prayer, in a mannish context, is undertaken by the supplicant but also by the priests. Money must generally exchange hands, usually for the priesthood to make the appropriate sacrifices and chants to ensure that the supplicant's prayers are heard. It is thought that the smoke which rises to the skies or the animal's dying soul in a sacrifice lends wings to the prayers of the believers. "Religion," wrote the Lawkeeper Davyn de Valle "is for the priesthood. Prayer is for the people." What he meant by this is clear: true worship is undertaken in private, within the temples, by priests. The public interacts with them only to make requests or, in uncommon cases, to engage in spiritual acts such as pilgrimage, seeing an oracle, or very rarely engaging in some mystery right.

! Mannish temples are generally off limits to those who are members of the inner cult or priesthood—exterior altars and temple accoutrements are provided for the lay worshipers to engage with while the powerful sacral items (eikons, high altars) are contained within the private fanes and sanctums. Some exceptions do exist to this rule, including temples of Haeron, particularly when they are doubling as courts of law, but for the most part this pervasive dichotomy defines worship in the north.

! Supplicants can easily be broken down into three groups: the lay worshippers, who are seeking a momentary boon from the god (or perhaps to thank the god for some already recieved blessing), the inner cult, which is composed of those who have dedicated their lives to the service of a single deity but who have not been ordained, and the priesthood itself. It's important to note that many ordained priests in the inner priesthood are not themselves classed as priests of any kind because they lack the training, devotion, and divine link which allows the funneling of miraculous power in the form of spells received from the Godhead.

! This is not to suggest that man is not a spiritual creature: quite the contrary. Idols and eikons pervade every day life, interactions are sprinkled with imprecations to the gods, and grand public ceremonies of state often make use of religious iconography. Priests are present at each stage of life, officiating over things as simple as opening a new business or beginning a journey.

Wind Elves

! Wind elf culture values public displays of religious devotion, unlike the religions of men. Every elvish city hosts a temple to the creator-god Anunia and each day at sunrise and dusk many worshipers gather to sing the Morning and Even Songs of the Silver God. These songs are said to wake the winds and keep them blowing across all the Middle World, and great pride is taken not to miss the celebration of these rituals by the deeply devoted. Of course, Anunia is far from the only god worshipped by the elves. This long-lived race does not tend to skirt from temple to temple in a fleeting manner as do many men: the patron god of an elf is likely to be a matter they have cogitated on for nearly a decade before finally deciding once and for all to join the following of one of the temples. There are no inner and outer temples in elvish lands, no altars open to the air that are for the use of lay people—all temples may be entered by the both the common rabble and the sworn cult alike. It is a rare elf indeed who has not embraced a deity by the age of two hundred but this embrace need not be wholly exclusive: elves are encouraged to make donations to all manner of temples that are allied both in the heavens and in the Middle World.

! Temples are open public spaces in wind elvish cities, and often their outer walls are pierced by many archways so that they are open to the wind and rain as well. They serve as gathering places and platforms for both political and artistic statements and the lives of elvish cities frequently revolve around their temples.

! Wind elvish nobles are generally extremely free with their patronage, sending lavish sums or even hundreds of workers and artists to help adorn their chosen temple. It can be seen as a mark of power that one's own cult is ascendent in an elven nobles' home city. Temples themselves distribute vast amounts of largesse to poets, singers, musicians, fresco-painters, woodworkers, and all other artists in an attempt to represent the center of gravity for culture, artwork, and beauty and by this to draw new members ever to their bowers.

! One temple alone works outside these bounds: the Temple of the Shadow Triad, where lurk the three dark gods of wind elven nature. Their worship is not outlawed in any elvish kingdom, but they are generally considered to be the manifestations of the very worst portions of elvish personality. Greed, corruption, lust, and madness reside in their house and all three are worshipped in tandem. Temples of the Shadow are always found in out of the way places and bedecked with grotesque artworks that would make most elves uncomfortable to gaze upon. Their cult membership is secret and private, and few elves would openly admit to the shame of worshipping at their dark font.

Wood Elves

! Wood elves are devoted wholly to the gods of birch and pine, of wood and glen. They hold some reverence for their creator Anunia, but most of their worship is split between Tulia, Senia, and Aloran. Their tribal societies are theocratic, led by druids and treespeakers. They worship the very trees themselves as well, and most tribes perambulate between several sites where giant and ancient trees grow. These are the so-called "ancestor trees" whose memories stretch back into the Third and Fourth Age. Their reverence for plants and animals makes them a strange sight in mannish,

dwarven, and wind elvish settlements and because of this they rarely feel at home anywhere but the wild.

Dwarves

! Dwarves of all stripes share a single culture when it comes to matters religious. The patterns of faith were developed by the very first dwarves awoken in the ancient Harnholme and have changed little since. All dwarves revere Eiri the Earthfather and Helga the Stonemother, and their temples are central to every dwarven settlement whether it be a ringtown, a clanhall, or a great folkhall. Temples to Eiri, by sacred writ, must be constructed below ground or within a mountain and they often serve as the central hub of great folkhalls. These temples also play host to numerous other priests of various dwarven faiths, with idols and eikons of each of the great dwarven gods. They are held as open clan-free spaces, and all the halls directly adjoining the great temples are public halls.

! Like men, the great majority of dwarves need make no religious commitment to any deity. Unlike men, they often gather to hear readings of the historico-religious Eddas which are held semi-regularly in the great temple. Indeed, history and religion are so intertwined in dwarven culture that clans often commission temple-vaults for their own clanhalls where private clan histories can be composed and tended by various priests.

! Temples other than the Great Temple of each settlement are built in public spaces, usually funded by a clan or clans that are dominated by dwarves who have dedicated themselves to that deity. These public clan-temples hang the shields of their founding clans prominently along their facade as well as within their walls. Members of any clan, devotees or laydwarves, are welcome to come and worship there. As in mannish settlements, the services of the priests insofar as magic goes are reserved for those who have pledged themselves beyond the standard prayers and donations... but unlike the mannish gods the dwarves do not require exclusive devotion, merely some sign of extraordinary piety.

! Ancestor worship is also extremely important to the dwarves. They believe that once a dwarf dies, his spirit remains bonded both to his form (and thus the practice of building elaborate crypts filled with grave goods) as well as to any likeness made of him in stone or earth. This is known amongst dwarves as "seeing through the stone," and for this reason many of their arts, structures, and craftworks are adorned with dwarven faces so that their ancestors may be palpably present in the everyday world.

! Worship of one's ancestors is a private clan affair, led by clan-priests of Eiri (or other temples, if the clan has a preponderance of another faith) which is done in the clan-vault or private clan-temple built for that purpose. It may also be undertaken by the family (and most dwarves live in homes with an extensive extended family) since clan members are not necessarily related by blood. In all cases, dwarven homes often host a secret shrine where the fathers and mothers of the family, venerated for generations, can be called upon.

Smallfolk

! Religion amongst the smallfolk is centered upon the vast Greensward legendarium and the heroes that have arisen amongst their people to become

demigods. Story and song are blended into an ancient and powerful tradition which is preserved by the matriarchs of each halfling family and the priests of the gnomes. The gods of the smallfolk are their progenitors and their heroes, culled from thousands of years of wandering and battle in the Greensward.

! Since halflings and gnomes are far more prodigious in their offspring than most dwarves and elves, they can afford to devote a few members of each family to the service of the gods and need not fear dedicated second, third, and fourth children into the temple. These children are raised in communal temple creches and grow to serve the communities from which they sprang. They know their heritage and are mostly warm with their families, but the hill-halls that they came from are almost always secondary to their “true” family—their divine family of fellow-priests.

! Worship for halflings and gnomes is done piecemeal and without great ceremony. Almost every gnome and halfling can be guaranteed to have a family member or friend in the priesthood; this helps demystify the priesthoods to a great extent. Matriarchs are inducted into an unofficial arm of the priesthood by dint of their status as heads of the household, and the lore of the priests is all collected and maintained in a webwork of oral storytelling traditions.

! Part of this tradition is the raising of halfling children, which is done in large groups (generally familial in nature) and care is taken that priests may instruct them and tell them tales of the brave Beryl Ironfoot or Machnanen the Giantslayer. The same is true in gnomish circles, though more frequently all gnomish children in a village will gather together for instruction during lunch and the hotter hours of the day when they can be of little use on the farm or in the workshop.

Death and Dying

*“Blessed is he who walks in Abdju,
for that is the City of the Dead.
Blessed is he who passes the Gates of Death
for he walks in eternal life.
Blessed is he who has prepared for death,
for he shall live forever.”*

—Papyrus of Anki, First Book of the Dead

! The long-lived races of Elves, Dwarves, Gnomes, and Halflings live in close contact with the mayfly known as Man and, though he may lord it over those who’s time in the Middle World is even more brief (such as goblins and their kin), this makes men particularly attuned to the narrow span in which they live their lives. Death comes to all the races of Arunia who are not of the Great Immortal Three—the Trolls, the Dragons, and the Giants, and it has been proven that even those may grow so weary of life that they fade away, turn to stone, or otherwise perish. Elves alone amongst the younger races are said to be immortal, but after a handful of centuries their breasts begin to fill with melancholy and they must choose to leave the Middle World or be doomed to madness and doubt.

! The power that governs death is Akem, Akanian, the Grim Master and the Silent Lord, the Keeper of the Seven Gates. He is implacable, unstoppable, and utterly without empathy or humor. His is the task to ensure the progression of the natural order; when the cycle of life and death is disturbed by any means, he is aware of it and springs into action. His priests despise free-willed undead as abominations and it is by Akem's decree that those things which have died may not be returned again to life.

! Each culture treats with death in a different manner, however, and Akem manifests to each race in a different guise. What they share between them is the belief in the Seven Gates and the Stair that accompanies them. Men, dwarves, and smallfolk must pass through sevenfold realms in the Lower World, walking down a great switchback stair in the West that descends below Arunia and into Nullia. Along this path, they must pass through the Seven Gates, which open only to those descending and not to those ascending (*"Cursed is he who troubles the Dead,/for the Gates of Death are closed"* proclaims the **Papyrus of Anki** in the **Third Book of the Dead**). Elves alone may travel to a secret island beyond the western Girdling Seas, right up against the Wall of Night, and from thence depart upwards to Edellia and the seat of Anunia. All others must go down to the Seventh Hell where the City of the Dead, Abdju, is located. There they will wait in endless procession, standing amidst the vast sands of the desert, safe behind the walls of Abdju, until Akem accepts them one by one into his palace to be dispatched to their eternal rewards (or punishments).

Men

! Mannish cultures can be divided into two categories when it comes to the dead: those who follow the ancient Milean custom and those that do not. Generally, every land the empire touched has adopted the practice of immolating the deceased and considers the very body of the dead to be immensely taboo. Mileans and those who adhere to this tradition will not allow the dead to be interred within the walls of a town or city, demand a strict separation of living and dead, and leave all funerary rites to be performed solely by those authorized to deal with the next world: the Akemite priesthood. By definition, those who do not adhere to the Milean custom are many and varied. Most bury their dead—but the preponderance of ancient imperial ritual in the north means that in all the lands of the Golden Belt, stretching from the Straits of the Moon to the Sun Sea, the dead are incinerated into ash and stored below monuments in great tomb-yards outside the cities.

! When a man dies, it is the custom to entrust his body to the nearest Akemite foundation. If there are none nearby, wandering Akemite priests (Journeyman) may be enlisted to the task. The sanctification of the body requires ritual purification for three days upon an altar or specially prepared stone slab. At the end of the three days, the Akemites build a fire to consume the dead and place the remains in a ritual urn (in Milean lands) or site a grave for the deceased and bury them in ceremony. Most Milean lands also make use of professional mourners, particularly for wealthy or noble folk, and funeral processions are an element of religious showcasing which entire cities can turn out to see.

! Bodily resurrection is held as possible only for important crusaders of a deity's cause. It is not easy, for that God must defy Akem himself or else get his acquiescence. This means that only the most potent and honored dead, who have proved themselves

time and again to a cult, may even be considered for a return to the Middle World. In ancient days it was common practice for the funerary cults to create undead to guard tombs and Akemite monasteries, leaving some undead in tombs and crypts across the north. Necromancy is now despised by most men, though many wizards dispute its status. While its practice and accumulation of necromantic texts are banned in many lands, there are few mannish mages that actually abide by this dictum.

Wind Elves

! Elvish funerary custom is much simpler than that practiced by men. Any elven priest may administer the death rights to the deceased. There are no taboos concerning bodies and the touching thereof, nor do the elves believe that their dead must be incinerated or reduced to ash. Instead, since elven bodies corrupt only very slowly and over many millennia, they are usually preserved in open sarcophagi and laid to rest in intricate family tombs and crypts. Since there are no fears the so-called "pollution" of the dead (contrasted with most post-Milean cities) the elves have no qualms about creating these crypts, shrines, and mausoleums within the walls of their cities. Indeed, many powerful, well-loved, or noble elves are buried in complexes located in the cities of their patronage.

! Unlike the other races of mortals, elves do not corrupt and die naturally. Their lifespans are endless, perhaps because they were originally made of the incorruptible metal, silver. Their physical development as children is not stunted in any way, though if you ask any dwarf he'd say an elf was a child well until they were two or three hundred years old. Most elves are lusty and emotional, throwing themselves wholeheartedly into whatever activity they undertake. Yet, as they age their morose periods last longer and tend to be darker. By the time they reach five hundred years they enter their twilight. Though their bodies never become decrepit or aged, their minds eventually lose the capacity to deal with the thousandfold tragedies they witness throughout their lives. All elves may choose to abandon their mortal shells and travel to the west, and it is usually some time after five hundred years of age that they do. Those who do not may eventually find themselves losing touch with reality, trapped in a delirium of depression and madness which eventually burns through their physical body and leaves them as insane, houseless spirits, cursed to wander the haunts they believe they recognize.

! For this reason, elves often make their peace with death long before they see it coming. They have a peaceful and accommodating relationship with their own ends, knowing with certainty that they must one day choose to die rather than lose themselves to the dark insanity that would otherwise doom them. Their culture does not fear nor obsess over death. That's not to say they won't fight to survive, nor that they have no will too; acceptance of their own eventual demise is not quite the same as being ready to die at any time.

Wood Elves

! Sharing the same physiological and psychological circumstances as wind elves, wood elves are also taught to value the proper time of dying. However, they bury their dead not in cold marble mausoleums but rather directly in the earth. They believe their dead feed the forests and the great plains, returning to the great web of Arunia. Their bodies are commended by their druids, priests, or magicians upon their death and they

are buried wherever the tribe happens to be. Grave sites are marked with mounds of stones called caerns (a trick that the elves taught early barbaric men) and are usually situated along a tribe's wandering route.

! Wood elves sometimes choose to live to a great age, though no one is quite certain what keeps them from transforming into vengeful spirits. Current scholarly opinion is that their close relationships with nature keeps them grounded—most of these elves appear to be druids and perhaps their earthy connections allow them to stay in tune with Arunia when other elves would long ago have gone mad.

Dwarves

! The dwarven folk are long-lived as well, though not eternal like the elves. Dwarves practice a form of ancestor-worship, and the manner in which a dwarf dies and is cared for after death is of *great* import to their people. Dwarves believe that the spirit of a deceased dwarf lingers for a year and a day after they are slain, trapped in the fallen flesh. It is not until that time passes that the spirit can leave the Middle World for the Hall of the Ancestors. In that time it is imperative that the clan of the deceased prepare the body, inter it in a crypt of stone, and dress it appropriately with weapons and armor and provide the crypt with burial goods. Dwarves who remain above ground and unburied after their time has past are believed to either become horrific draugr, seeking vengeance, or to be lost forever.

! This obsession with the physical integrity, protection, and interment of the body has led dwarven armies to sacrifice hundreds of their number to retrieve the remains of fallen comrades. Stoicism amongst the dwarves is considered a grim virtue: while (most dwarves; an exception is here made for green dwarves) they consider violence and war unpleasant and horrific, they also know that when they engage in them they will not stop until the foe is completely defeated and humbled. Men have trouble understanding the cultural logic that can lead to a column of dwarves singing a dirging song as they, surrounded, fight to the death.

! The peculiar belief of “seeing through stone” has also led to an adoption of the dwarven face as a potent icon throughout their artwork. Faces, both male and female, have been abstracted or reduced to generic “ancestral forms” which allows them to stand in for *any* dead ancestor. Thus, when a dwarf adorns his home or his tools with small faces, it is not only for decoration but also so that his ancestors may see—and bless his endeavors.

! Dwarven funerary rights are complex and ritualized, and performed by priests of Eiri. The family, the clan, and the close friends of the dead are permitted to attend. Clan thanes and noble families generally receive more complex funerals at the expense of the clan treasury. However, clan-crypts are communal and all members of the clan who die may be placed within them. This helps cover the immense cost of new delvings and defenses by making death a communal effort.

Smallfolk

! Death is a personal and private affair in smallfolk communities. Their culture produces no professional grievers or priests to deal with the dead; nor do they make public scenes and shows of their sorrow. Instead, each (sometimes quite large) family cares for its own. The family matriarch generally officiates the honors of a halfling

funeral and the patriarch that of gnomes, and only the closest friends of the deceased are invited to join with them.

! They despise necromancy and the necromantic arts, and find spells used to talk to the dead or return them from the grave to be the most morbid form of insanity, akin to the madness that destroys elves who live overlong. Burial is most common for smallfolk, though cremation may be performed if the deceased leaves wishes to indicate a preference for it. All family dead are buried together, in a section of what usually turns out to be a village or city lichfield. Smallfolk generally do not like to be in the presence of graves or corpses, finding their connection to the Netherworld to be strange or uncanny.

! It is considered an ill omen indeed to name a child after a living relative, so many smallfolk name their babes after folk long deceased. Grief after the family ceremonies are discharged tends to be private: it is unseemly for someone to weep openly outside the confines of their family home.

The Gods

! As there are a great many gods and but a limited amount of space in this boxed set, only three deities from each pantheon are given full treatment. These will be placed at the head of their pantheon, before the others are listed, and include the mythos priest class that each god sponsors.

THE MANNISH PANTHEON

! The mannish pantheon contains more gods than the dwarven, elvish, or smallfolk pantheons largely because of the great variance in mannish cultures. They also worship a huge number of small gods on a day to day basis, and many mannish cultures maintain an altar or at least a shelf of small gods in their own homes. The other races rarely worship gods outside of their own cultures, but when they do they most often turn to those worshiped by men.

Aros

Epithets: the Wind Lord, the Poet, the Singing, the Fury

Greater God, CG

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: The winds, poetry, fury, elves

Aliases: Anunia, Arodr

Symbol: A four-directional windburst

Aros (AH-ros) is a consummate warrior-god. Unlike Tallial or Halor, he does not represent *war* as a concept, but rather the individual warrior. Of course, were he only a god of warriors he would be sharing his duties with Tallifer, Lord of Fools, an elvish deity; he is not. He is the Wind Lord first and foremost, the master of the four great wind spirits Aeshelon (the north wind), Eferus (the west wind), Boltorus (the south wind), and Imunäs (the east wind). He is the patron of arts and poetry, and normally associated with passion and intensity in emotion.

Aros appears to be a thin man wearing silver scale armor and an open robe, carrying a curved blade in one hand and a lyre in the other. It is said that Aros invented the sword to give the elves a weapon with which to fight the children of the Felnumen, the orcs and goblins. He himself is brother to Haeron and Eiri, and the three are often referred to as the Aldes Fratres or the Old Brothers.

Aros, as a god of passions and furies, does not restrain himself. He will eagerly walk amongst mortals, send one of the Winds to do his work, or empower his priesthood with great magics. He does not suffer evil of any sort, and will root it out personally. For this reason, all of his high clergy can *detect alignment* once per day by chanting a relatively simple prayer.

Adventurers tend to be drawn to the worship of Aros, for the simple reason that he is uncomplicated in his view of the world and can easily divide things into right and wrong. He is very influential on the mortal plane, interfering by the sendings of magics and aids even when the Hierean rules dictate that he should not. He and Heimir have been known to aid each other in what might be termed “causing trouble”—cooking up schemes to avoid the rules of Haeron so that they might assist the mortal world without impediment.

The Church

Clergy: Specialty Priests

Clergy's Alignment: CG, NG

Turn Undead: No

Command Undead: No

The Temple of the Winds is the mannish church of Aros. He also has an organizationally separate church amongst the elves known as the Silver Temple. Amongst men, his temple has small support. Without the elvish temple to supplement it, it would seem more fitting of a god of lesser standing and power. There is no central organization amongst the Temple of the Winds; each temple stands or falls on its own and may have higher or lower ranking clerics leading its cult. The fact that Aros does not shy from dream-sendings, oracular readings, and flat-out appearances helps keep the temple knit together and allows the cult's elders to decide who, in each temple, deserves to be promoted.

There are five “ranks” of clerics within the temple: the acolyte or novice, who is a member of the inner cult that has chosen to undertake the devotions of the clergy, the Windwalker, who is the most basic form of fully ordained cleric, the Windspeaker, who is a mid-level official of the temple (and in small temples may actually be the high priest), the station of Wind's Fury, and the Master of the Four Winds (the highest level it is possible to achieve in the priesthood). A temple may contain any number of the lesser rankings, but it is only possible for a single Master to reside in any given place. If Aros signifies that he wishes a second Master promoted, it is the duty of that Master to find a location upon which to build a new temple.

Dogma: Aros and his clergy do not suffer evil; they do not believe in passivity, but rather instant action. Violence and battle are part of life, for living is fraught with strife. To strive blindly and without purpose, however, is seen as a great sin amongst the Arodians. One must always know the goals of their violence, for undirected deaths are murder. Indeed, Arodians see the eradication of those who commit evil acts as not only necessary, but as a great boon to society. Arodians care little for rules, particularly those they see as evil or unjust, and will just as soon challenge a knight, baron, count, or king to single combat as they would any other malefactor.

When placed in a society with rampant ills, however, the Arodian would be wise to check himself, and they often do; in lands such as Soloth and Essad, there are Arodians but they simply bite their tongues and watch with internal anger, waiting for the moment when they can lash out and bring demonstrative rightness (not justice, for the word is a joke to Aros, whose order believes that 'justice' is a word used by cowards to justify murder) to slay the foes and overtopple the kingdom.

Day-to-Day Activities: The temple-borne clerics of Aros are often seen out and about in the cities where they have established themselves. In large cities temples are generally attached to gardens and dormitories where the clergy can practice a craft to be perfected as an art. Smaller temples, mostly situated outside of major cities, may have grounds that serve as the garden instead, wild and free. Arodians also make their way to seaports, where they can collect prayers to ward the docked ships from Vodei's anger. It is not uncommon to see Arodian temples sponsor adventuring parties, or for Arodian priests to become adventurers themselves.

During periods of war, or if their homes are threatened, Arodian clerics will generally fight to defend their lands and those things they consider good. Rather than fight in ordered ranks, Arodians answering the call of war generally skirmish without regard to either tactics or the positions of their allies.

Adventurers make up a large number of Arodian cult-members. For this reason, Arodians are constantly preparing stocks of magical gear to aid them. The temples of Aros tend to be quite wealthy were adventurers back them, for those adventurers tithe large amounts of money to the temples (the better to allow them to continue their charitable deeds) as well as to purchase from them the supplies and spells that Aros provides.

Charity also forms an important part of the Arodian lifestyle. They tend to the indigent and poor where they can, and often in places where there is a great gap between the purchasing power of the poor and the wealthy they will provide cheap artisanal services for peasants, both free and unfree. For this reason, some Arodian temples have developed markets situated around them, particularly in more rural areas.

Holy Days/Important Ceremonies: Aros has many holy days by the elvish calendar, but mannish worshipers tend to focus on a scant few of those. The two holy days which are held in honor by the mannish temples are the Highsummer festival, which is

celebrated on the 12th of Swording, and the Day of the Winds on the first Aeron of Hording.

Highsummer is a joyous festival that honors Heimir and Aros as well as Eminiea and Eleia in a general debauch. Drink is passed around and the great altars of Eleia are adorned in wreaths of flowers. Arodian priests play the wind-harp, satyr-pipes, and much revels are had.

The Day of Winds is a melancholy celebration devoted to the four winds themselves and their chief, Aros. It is generally only celebrated where Arodian temples are found, and even then many do not attend it. It is said that the winds blow strongest on this day of all days, and the trees shiver as they change guard for the winter.

On the Day of Winds, prayers are said to ensure the successful transition of the seasons; there are Arodian imprecations to return Eleia to life (as she has ritually “perished” at the end of Highsummer) and many times this calls for mock battles. This day can therefore double as a tourney-day for regions that have a fair worship of Aros. Indeed, in some places in the Milean Hearthland it is not uncommon for tourneys to be held on this day to be presided over by Arodian priests.

Major Centers of Worship: The largest temples of Aros are in fact those that belong to the elves, for Aros is their chief god. Mannish temples are generally very small affairs, open to the breezes and airs, with a few clerics to tend them. The largest Arodian temple tended by men is actually in ruined Llynder, located high atop a bluff. This is known as the Temple of the Aeshelos, and what few towns exist in Llynder do homage to it.

Affiliated Orders: The cult of Aros is strongly affiliated with the cult of Anunia, for the two gods are one and the same.

Priestly Vestments: Priests of Aros wear long blue robes, often fringed with lighter blue embroidery. It is common to see blue-dyed leather gloves and deep sky-blue cloaks as well. The sign of the four winds is often embroidered on their cloaks, wrought into their clasps and broaches, and worn in heavy silver around their necks. Silver is the preferred metal of decoration for Arodians, and they do not wear gold if they can help it.

When not in robes, Arodians generally stick to expensively dyed materials of blue and things laced with silver to denote their devotion.

Adventuring Garb: When adventuring or going to war, Arodian priests generally wear a blue tabard with the sing of the four winds embroidered on it, a deep blue cloak, and some jewelry to decry their position.

Priest of Aros
(Specialty Priest)

REQUIREMENTS: Strength 12, Constitution 12, Wisdom 9

PRIME REQ: Wisdom

ALIGNMENT: CG, CN

WEAPONS: Any blunt weapon, falcata, scimitar, darts, bow

MAJOR SPHERES: All, Elemental (air, water), Charm, Combat, Weather, Healing, Necromantic

MINOR SPHERES: Chaos, Divination, Guardian, War

MAGICAL ITEMS: Any clerical.

REQ. PROFS: Religion (Aros)

BONUS PROFS: Artistic Ability (Any) or Musical Instrument (Any)

A Windwalker of Aros can attempt to use magical items that are not normally usable by clerics. Their percentage chance to do this successfully is 5% per level, capping at 95% at level 19.

Windwalkers can cast *draw upon holy might* (as the 2nd-level priest spell) once per day. They always get at least a +1 bonus from this spell.

At 3rd level, Windwalkers gain the ability to give artistic performances like a bard; they can grant a morale bonus just as bard might and also influence the reaction of crowds.

At 5th level, a Windwalker becomes immune to lightning and electrical-based attacks.

At 7th level, a Windwalker can cast *mass suggestion* (as per the 3rd-level wizard spell) once per day.

At 10th level, Windwalkers may cast *haste* (as per the 3rd-level wizard spell) once per day. This haste does not take time off of the target's life.

At 15th level, Windwalkers can enter a state of *furor poeticus*. When in this state they gain a number of temporary hit points equal to their level, their strength is effectively set to 20, and they can make two attacks every round. They are immune to normal weapons until the *furor poeticus* ends. The *furor* lasts for one round per level. At the end of the *furor* they lose all temporary hit points and take 1d8 additional points of damage for every turn they have spent in the *furor*.

Avauna

Epithets: the Healer, the Everyyoung, the Daystar

Intermediate Goddess, NG

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Light, healing, medicine, the sun

Aliases: Noronia

Symbol: A sunburst of gold

Known as Noronia to the elves, Avauna is married to Galos the Blind. She is the ruler of all things relating to the disc of the sun and the daylight. A consummate healer, Avauna nevertheless refrains from the sorts of fertility rites and midwifery normally associated with Eleia.

Once one of the chief Goddesses of the Northern regions of the world, worship of Avauna has gone down in the days since the Eighth Age. Many of her temples stand deserted or left to ruin, their treasures gathering attention from adventurers the world over for the famed use of gold by her clergy to represent the healing light of the sun.

Avauna generally appears as a powerful and motherly woman dressed in a long dress and holding the hook used to hang the Lamp of the Sun in one hand. The imagery associated with her is mostly solar.

The temples that are still functional are lavish affairs covered with hammered gold and alabaster. The holy symbol of Avauna is a sunburst and her colors are gold and silver. A number of important Collegia, Halls, and Convocations of medici remain throughout the north. All Healers of the Daystar and many of the leeches and medici of the civilized north are trained in the great lecture spaces of these universities and academies.

The Church

Clergy: Sunsworn Cleric (mythos priest), Epistene Healer of Avauna (mythos priest), Paladin Epistene (medician paladins)

Clergy's Alignment: LG, NG, CG

Turn Undead: Yes

Command Undead: No

The Temple of the Unconquered Sun is dedicated to the worship of Avauna in all her forms. Though the church itself is generally considered NG, it has numerous sects particularly those in the form of individual Collegia, Universities, and Academies. Most of these are more strictly ordered (LG) than the main temple itself.

The seat of the Unconquered Sun is the Temple of the Daystar in the old kingdom of Haldera. From here the temple is administered by Geniev Ralass, the Sunmaiden and chief priest in the temple of Avauna. She has a council of six holy Sisters who assist her in taking care of the temple. However, the hierarchy is not generally very strict.

Below the Six Sisters are the Lights; these are clerics who command individual temples and sects. The Lights report to the Temple of the Daystar by messenger once a season. A large number of clerics are employed as clerks to review these missives and determine whether or not they require action at the level of the Sisters. If they do not, the Council of Lights reads them and dispatches responses. The Council of Lights comprises the seven elder-most male members of the central temple.

Lights have free reign over their individual temples and sects. There is no holy canon, though there are many texts on medicine that all priests are required to be versed in

and all temples must have a copy of the basic corpus of medical training. Each individual temple is organized according to a specific corpus and may be distinguished as either a temple proper or a hospital/college.

Temples are generally run by Sunsworn. The chiefmost Sworn in the temple is the Light; Generally Lights are assisted by a number of temple functionaries known as the Luminances. These are elected from the number of Sworn that reside at the temple site and often include a Cantor (who sings the praises of Avauna), a Magistri Medicus (who is the most experienced healer in the temple), a host of clerks, and a Recorder (who keeps records of temple holdings, incomes, and supplies).

Dogma: Avaunites believe that harming other people, particularly those who might do homage to the Daystar, is a deadly sin. For that reason they generally refrain from engaging in any violent activities unless they absolutely must. These clerics have traditionally been insulated from violence by the presence of strong Hieriean assistance, but since the resurgence of Noronia's worship in the elvish lands the Avaunite temple has been growing more militant and less reliant on other faiths.

Day-to-Day Activities: In the morning at the first rising of the sun, all clerics of the Daystar must kneel and pray. This prayer lasts for one hour and is called the *Greeting of the Sun*. At noon they must stop again and engage in the *Praise of the Sun* which lasts for fifteen minutes and in the evening they pause for the *Sun's Farewell* which lasts for thirty minutes. Neglecting to perform one of these prayers requires severe penance which is normally displayed with bodily castigation or sacrifices.

Clerics may also spend their days conducting medical research, copying or composing books on medicine, teaching medici, and tending (in a mundane manner, of course, for Avauna praises the skill of man to heal above all other things) to the wounded or sick in their hospitals.

Affiliated Orders:

! **The Collegium of Miles (LG).** The Collegium is the head of the entire imperial church of the Unconquered Sun and the Hieriatros and Light of the school there also serves as the de-facto head of the Milean branch of the temple. All Lights within the empire send their missives to Miles, and the Hieriatros sends her report onwards to the Council of Lights. The Collegium supports the existence of a number of hospitals (including the Hospital of Miles) within the empire, using temple funds to keep them open for the public good.

! **The Epistene Order (LG).** The Epistasi are a sect of Avaunites that swear special holy orders above and beyond the rites of priesthood undertaken by the Healers. Her most sacred and staunch devotees follow this order which exists within most former imperial holdings. The Order receives its authority not from any king or emperor, but rather directly from the Sunmaiden herself. They wear not only the healer's

sun (the Sun of Life) but also the Cup and Serpent, which represent knowledge and medicine.

! Founded in the Fifth Age, the Order of Epistas worships Avauna as the patron of healing and medicine. Nearly all medical colleges and schools of the Avaunites are run by Epistasi clerics or at least provide benefices for a small Epistene chapter.

! The widespread use of Epistene titles and positions was abandoned after the Khewedi invasions of the Seventh Age though a number of Epistas continued to teach in Haldera and major Epistular centers such as the Hospital and Collegium of Miles. The Epistene Order experienced a resurgence in the late Ninth Age and elven clergy have worked in close concert to help reintroduce the Order of Medicians, restoring lost or destroyed texts and knowledge.

! *Ranks within the Order.* The order is divided roughly into two groups; the Peregrinati and the Regulars. Peregrinati, though they swear the same holy oaths, travel in service to Avauna while the Regulars remain ensconced within a hospital, college, monastic house, or other institution such as a temple.

! **Peregrinator Minor.** Fully trained medici and ordained priests, the Peregrinators Minor must wander the roads seeking to tend ills and right the wrongs of the world. Many of these are clerics, though a select few have been granted the Oaths of Knighthood and inducted as Paladin Episteni.

! **Peregrinator Canon.** After two years of loyal service or at any time after exhibition of uncommon valor, the Curia Epistene at the Temple of the Daystar may promote a Peregrinator Minor to a full Canon. The Canonici are functionally complete priests who lack a temple but otherwise may perform all of the rites of the Avaunite clergy save for inducting new members as acolytes.

! **Peregrinator Augur.** Peregrinator Augur have been given the authority to sanctify new members of the religion and induct laymen into the inner cult. They may be surrounded by large numbers of followers even as they perambulate.

! **Canon Regular.** A member of the order who does not travel, canons regular make up the bulk of sedentary Epistasi. They are generally overseen by the local Light or, if present, one of the high ranking Manus Avauni.

! **Manus Avauni.** A Hand of Avauna, the Manus are the abbots, hierophants, and leaders of large Order establishments.

Sunsworn of Avauna

(Speciality Priest)

REQUIREMENTS: Wisdom 9

PRIME REQ: Wisdom

ALIGNMENT: CG, NG, LG

WEAPONS: Any blunt weapon

MAJOR SPHERES: Creation, Elemental (fire), Elemental (air), Sun, Summoning, Healing, Necromantic, Divination, Travelers, Wards

MINOR SPHERES: Protection, Guardian, Time, Elemental (water), Weather

MAGICAL ITEMS: Any usable by clerics

REQ. PROFS: Religion (Avauna)

BONUS PROFS: Fire-building

Sunsworn are the mainstay of the Avaunite priesthood; Healers are rare and belong to the Epistene Order. Most clerics worship all of her aspects (unlike the Epistene who primarily worship her as the font of health and medicine). Sunsworn are solar clerics, and as such they benefit greatly from the presence of their goddess. They receive a +1 bonus to-hit and to all saving throws during the day; however, they receive a -1 bonus to their saves at night or when underground or in deep shadow in addition to losing the previous benefit.

Sunsworn can turn undead as long as they have a light source nearby. The attempt will exhaust the light source regardless of its origin unless it is the sun itself (*light* spells and dwarven lanterns alike will be snuffed out). The moon does not count as a bright enough light source for this ability. Large fires may continue to burn after they are used in a turning attempt, though the portion directly nearby will be quelled.

At 3rd level, the Sunsworn may cast *light* (as per the 1st level priest spell) at will.

At 5th level, Sunsworn may invoke the wrath of Avauna once per day. They may perform this ability once a day for every five levels of experience they have attained. When invoked, the Sunsworn glows with otherworldly might, their very body radiating pure sunlight. The invocation lasts for 1d4 rounds + 1 round/level. During this time, the cleric radiates an aura of *fear* that affects all evil characters within 30' and an aura of *blessing* which affects all good characters within 60'. The cleric may resume fighting the round after the invocation has been called upon.

At 7th level, Sunsworn may cast *affect normal fires* (as per the 1st level wizard spell) at will. They may also cast the spell *pyrotechnics* (as per the 3rd level priest spell) once per day.

At 10th level, Sunsworn gain a +2 bonus to-hit, a +1 bonus to damage, and a +2 bonus to saves during the day. The nighttime no longer affects them other than to remove these bonuses.

At 15th level, Sunsworn are immune to fire sources of all kinds, magical or non-. Whenever a Sunsworn is exposed to naked flame that would otherwise deal 50 or more points of damage in a single round, they may choose to instead be affected as though a *heal* spell were cast on them. This does not make them immune to other types of heat.

Healer of Avauna (Specialty Priest)

REQUIREMENTS: Wisdom 12, Intelligence 10, member of the Epistene Order

PRIME REQ: Wisdom

ALIGNMENT: NG, LG

WEAPONS: Any blunt weapon

MAJOR SPHERES: Creation, Sun, Healing, Necromantic, Divination

MINOR SPHERES: Elemental (air), Protection, Guardian, Time, Elemental Earth, Elemental Water

MAGICAL ITEMS: They may only use magical weapons that deal bludgeoning damage.

REQ. PROFS: Religion

BONUS PROFS: Healing, Herbalism

Epistene Healers are trained in the healing arts and blessed by their patron. For this reason, they always heal maximum hp (3) when they succeed at a healing check right after combat or during combat when a wound is delivered. At first level they may pray for a *cure light wounds* spell above and beyond what they may normally prepare. At fifth level they may prepare a *cure disease* spell above and beyond what they are normally capable of. At seventh level they may prepare an extra *cure serious wounds*. At ninth level they may prepare an additional *cure critical wounds* and at eleventh level they may prepare one additional *heal* spell.

Healers may *call upon faith* once per day for every six levels of experience when attempting to make any check relating to healing or diagnosis even though they do not normally gain access to the summoning sphere.

Healers are loathe to cause harm to living beings, and will attempt to avoid physically engaging in combat at all costs unless it is clear that by so doing more harm will be caused than would be avoided. For example, if a giant is about to throw a boulder and crush a small village, they would attempt to intervene. This stigma does not extend to the undead or to those who have proven themselves to be unrepentantly violent.

At 3rd level, Healers becomes immune to normal diseases. In addition, they begin to turn undead as clerics of 2 levels lower.

At 5th level, the Healer may attempt to calm wounded animals like a ranger. They receive a +2 bonus to reaction checks when determining the general feeling of NPCs towards them.

At 7th level, the Healer becomes immune to magical diseases. Upon reaching this level, their maximum age is doubled.

At 10th level, the Healer is immune to magical aging affects of all kinds.

At 15th level, the Healer can restore the wounded with but a touch. They may *lay on hands* as a paladin of equivalent level.

Avaunite Spells

1st Level

Aurora's Blessing

Sphere: Sun

Range: Touch
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 1d4 rounds + 1 round/level
Casting Time: 4
Area of Effect: Touched Creature
Saving Throw: None

Aurora's Blessing grants an ally a +1 bonus to-hit, damage, and AC as long as they stand in sunlight, direct or indirect. The spell bestows their person with a warm shimmering mantle that moves with them, almost as a second skin. Their weapons are guided to their targets and the mantle itself may help deflect blows.

The material component of the Blessing is a golden cloak-pin worth at least ten gold pieces. This pin is not destroyed by the casting, but the cleric must pin the pin to his target.

3rd Level

Blazing Lamp
Sphere: Sun
Range: Touch
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 1 hour/level
Casting Time: 3
Area of Effect: one lamp
Saving Throw: none

When this spell is cast, the priest designates a single lamp (of any size) to be affected. This lamp must be gilded with specially prepared gold that costs at least five hundred gold pieces, and it must be lit at the time of casting.

For the duration of the spell, the lamp cannot be snuffed or extinguished. Any attempts to block its light are foiled, and the light shines through with intense brightness (blazing through metal, cloth, etc.) Additionally, the lamp illuminates twice its normal radius while affected and the flame will continue to function even if it is submerged.

When the spell ends, the lantern's fuel source is used up, no matter how much time was left.

Haeron

Epithets: the Lawgiver, the Smith, the Hammerer

Greater God, LG

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Laws and justice, metalworking, smiths, advocates

Aliases: Calyeron, Brynjar

Symbol: A golden smith's hammer

Haeron (HIGH-ron) the Hammerer is the central god of the mannish pantheon. He is a just and wise deity, who oversees justice and maintains peace amongst the other gods. While he is not averse to bloodshed, he is merciful and generally seeks the most peaceful path ahead. He absolutely despises the dangerous and troublemaking gods of the pantheon; he must constantly strive to keep them in line and prevent them from upsetting the order he has established.

! According to the Prophet Aeldus, Haeron was responsible for crafting the “golden bonds of law,” which govern the way men interact with one another the world over. Haeron is the fountain of law and justice, from which all virtue flows, or so his priesthood touts. Yet, this is not Haeron's only sphere of influence; he is the god of smiths and metalworkers as well, and his golden hammer can be found hung in forges and temples alike.

! He doesn't rule the pantheon with an iron fist; indeed, it can be said that he does not really rule the pantheon at all. He oversees it, takes care of the conflicts between the deities with his overpowering might, but mostly threatens rather than acts. He himself is the pillar of the concordance between the gods. He has set forth the laws by which the gods must abide, and those who fail to hew to them will face his wrath. He has set forth the laws by which the gods must abide, and those who fail to hew to them will face his wrath; he is not implacable in his anger, however, and will temper it with good sense. If the gods interfere in minor ways in the mortal world, he may issue stern and demanding warnings or send his most fearsome servant, the Herald of War, to remind the offending deity of their place.

! Yet Haeron was gone to war in the past, and likely will do so again in the future. The evil gods within the mannish pantheon are constantly jockeying for position over one another and to attempt to unseat the Hammerer. He has done battle with Dinismayl and Vodei; in the Fifth Age he manifested an avatar to protect the city of Miles from a Wyrmling under the Winter Queen's thrall.

! While he commands a number of gods that report directly to him (Halor, Tallial, and Vaela being the three most directly under his governance), Haeron has many allies he can rely on. Chief amongst these are his brother, Eiri, and the Sun-goddess, Avauna. His elder brother, Aros, has always been a thorn in his side, good-natured though he may be.

! Haeron is the youngest of the four gods known as the Quartos, which are Eiri, Aros, Vodei, and himself. They were born from the world-tree and served Avauna in the earliest ages of the world.

! The chief of gods often appears as an old man with a long white beard and a broad chest, wearing a simple white linen toga and carrying a long-hafted smith's hammer in his right hand. This image of him was first seen by Aeldus the Prophet, who was visited by the god during the early First Empire and brought his worship to Miles.

!

The Church

Clergy: Speciality priests, paladins, monks, crusaders

Clergy's Alignment: LG, LN

Turn Undead: Yes

Command Undead: No

! The temple of Haeron is widespread and powerful. They have a strictly hierarchical organization that radiates outwards from the Temple of the Lawkeeper in Miles. They often find themselves integrated into local society as judges and adjudicators due to their devotion to law. However, Hierian priests will not submit to local rule which they find objectionable. For example, there are few Hierian priests in Essad, the Free Cities, or other places where enslavement is commonly practiced.

! Hierian temples are often elaborate affairs, large buildings of marble with domes or high raised tympanum roofs. Unlike many temples in the North, they maintain spaces of public worship within. Members of the inner cult may walk further into the temple than simple lay worshipers, but there is still a very elaborately decorated public worship hall provided. This is partly because of the relationship many Hierian temples have with the local authorities.

! In many lands, while custom is dictated by the nobility, breaches of custom are judged by the clerics of Haeron. This is done by bringing the offender to the largest nearby temple and presenting them before the head of the temple there, who is often called a Hierus. The Hierus (or the Metropolitan, Hierophant, or Divine) sits in a tall throne just before the anvil-shaped altar called a *menraius*. The *menraii* are massive seats with a long set of stairs before them upon which the priest must ascend. Once seated in a *menraius* the judgements of guilt and innocence are thought to descend from on high.

! The ordering of the temples of Haeron is done according to the ancient central manuscript known as the Scroll of Law, which is a collection of dictates, stories, tracts, and oracular readings. The particular section concerned with temple organization is known as the Orijenula and was written by the first High Lawkeeper, Orijenus.

! The lowest rank amongst the temples is that of novice. Ascending through the true orders (novices have yet to pass the test of priesthood) are the Peacewards who may be pastoral or remain at a single temple, the Dictate who help administer temple grounds, the Speakers who may give blessings and conduct ceremonies, and the temple's High Priest who alone may pronounce judgements. Every region also has a Hierophant (in the case of a district without any great cities) or a Metropolitan. These are each organized into twelve great districts known as the Divinities, and each is ruled by a Hierophant known as a Divine.

! The Twelve Divines sit beneath the High Lawkeeper at Miles and upon his death they are bound to choose a member of the order that is not one of their number to replace the deceased Lawkeeper.

! **Dogma:** The philosophy of Haeron is an ancient one that has evolved over the centuries and been added to in copious commentaries by famous sages. At its heart, however, the dogma states that Haeron alone made the bonds of law (called the "golden bonds") and that law itself, while it is generally little more than a collection of customary punishments in the North in the modern age, still represents the very bedrock upon which relationships can exist. In essence, Haeron provides the structure and fabric of any modern society.

! However, the golden bonds are not simply chains to keep things the way they are. Stultification and putrefaction is not the goal of the Law. To this end Haeron tolerates a great many other gods who have viewpoints quite opposed to his own. Indeed, many

Hierean clerics would rather see the *spirit* of the law fulfilled than its *letter* though they may feel beholden to it.

! The clerics of Haeron will not strive openly against a kingdom in which they have temples; they may attempt to change it from the inside by supporting more liberal elements within the kingdom. However, if the cult maintains no temples within a land that espouses views it despises it may dispatch clerics to fight against the men of that land.

! Much of the Hierien doctrine comes from the Scrolls of Law, which are a collection of rules, predictions, and prayers that represent the collected wisdom of the clergy. The section detailing the organization of the priesthood, the Orijenula (named after the first Lawkeeper and compiler, Orijen) is the most commonly referenced, for it encapsulates the structure of the church and the behavior of its priests.

! **Day-to-Day Activities:** Most clerics of Haeron remain attached to a temple rather than traveling about. There they pray and attend to the needs of the faithful, both members of the inner cult and those who are simply lay-worshippers. Lesser Hiereans may never have the opportunity to judge a case, but those who are masters of temples may do so several times a year or more. While they do not pass judgement on punishment, they do determine guilt or innocence in several kingdoms that recognize them.

! In the morning, the Peacewards wake with the dawn to begin a long series of prayers to the Hammerer. After these are completed, they tend to the altars of their temple and service the needs of locals who must make sacrifices or who desire to pray.

! Some of the clerics may attend to lords and nobles during the day, serving as wage-paid clerks or scribes, though this is hardly their primary task. Still, they often charge less than professional scribes and their work is good, if done in a stead and restrained style.

! Every temple also maintains a sacred archive or vault in which the records of every trial, decision, and judgement of the local lords are stored. Many clerics are required to help keep these and to collate and copy the records into new bindings for transport on the *Clerk's Feast*.

! **Holy Days/Important Ceremonies:** The Clerk's Feast is the most important holy day for the clergy of Haeron. It occurs on the 18th of Festing every year and, on that day, the clerics of Haeron send their bound copies of rulings to the temple of the High Lawkeeper in Miles. Additionally, every five years sitting clerics must travel to the office of their Divine (known as *the Pilgrimage of Faith*) and sit before the Council of Elect where they are questioned to make sure they are capable of maintaining their office.

! There is a public festival known as Haeron's Feast which occurs on the 20th of Festing, two days after the Clerk's Feast. On this day, all locals are invited into the temples and given food and drink before the anvil-shaped altar where they are encouraged to give thanks before the Hammerer and to atone for whatever wrongdoings they may have done that have gone unpunished throughout the year.

! **Major Centers of Worship:** The Temple of the High Lawkeeper at Miles is the center of Hieriean worship the world over. The Twelve Divines all report to the High Lawkeeper and the massive complex is the heart of the religion, storing hundreds of thousands of scrolls and serving as a staging ground for advocates, clerics, and business from all over the empire.

! Other major landmarks include Haeron's Stone, which stands some thirty or forty miles from the capital and is where Aeldus the Prophet first heard the voice of the Hammerer. There are other shrines and great sites, but they are generally far afield.

! Recently, the emperor himself has declared a new ground consecrated: the site of the Battle of Byrnham Wood where the Sign of the Hammer blazed across the heavens to mark Tamerin Elsoin as the rightful ruler of Miles.

! **Affiliated Orders:** Temples of Haeron are closely associated with the worship of his direct subjects in the pantheon: Vaela, Halor, and Tallial. For this reason, the Order of the Sword Militant is often associated with Haeron. The Sacred Heralds of Vaela operate from a base in the Lawkeeper's Temple of Miles. Within the Empire, any offerings made to Tallial are made by War Heralds that keep shrines within Hieriean temples.

! **Priestly Vestments:** Ordained Peacewards of Haeron are given strict dictates on what their clothing should entail, as set forth by the Orijenular Laws of the Scrolls. The sacral servants of Haeron must wear white robes belted with gold and trimmed with a thick blue filigree. The rank of the priest is revealed by an increasing amount of gold thread used in the filigree and the width of the blue bands.

! High priests wear brass or golden circlets to denote that they are the masters of a specific temple and have the chief right to sit in the seat of judgement. All clerics wear golden amulets in the shape of the hammer.

! **Adventuring Garb:** The Orijenula states that "priests, when in need, may choose to wear whatever suits them," but goes on to express strict guidelines on arms and armor. They are never to be ostentatious or gaudy, for war is a grim and ugly business. They are "permitted to bear the hammer worked upon them in brass or silver, but not in gold. Never should their weapons be sources of pride." This last rule has been circumvented by the use of staffs and gavels that double as holy symbols and walking sticks yet may also be considered weapons: in this way, many priests throughout the years have laid claim to gaudy golden weapons encrusted with jewels.

Peaceward of Haeron (Specialty Priest)

REQUIREMENTS: Wisdom 15, Intelligence 11

PRIME REQ: Wisdom

ALIGNMENT: LG

WEAPONS: All bludgeoning weapons.

MAJOR SPHERES: All, Creation, Combat, Elemental (fire, air), Charm, Law

MINOR SPHERES: Healing, Protection, Wards, Weather, Guardian

MAGICAL ITEMS: The same as priests.

REQ. PROFS: Religion

BONUS PROFS: Law (local region), Reading/Writing (cleric's choice)

Peacewards may cast *command* (as per the 1st level priest spell) once per day in addition to any other spells prayed for. The Peaceward may issue a command composed of one word at level one. For every three levels the character has attained, they may add an additional word to their *command*.

! At 3rd level, a Peaceward may cast the spell *spiritual hammer* (as per the 2nd level priest spell) once per day. Any castings of *spiritual hammer*, prayed for or otherwise, require no material components.

! At 5th level, a Peaceward's *bless* (as per the 1st level priest spell) allows any lawful creature it affects to strike creatures that are immune to magical weapons of less than +1.

! At 7th level, clerics of Haeron may increase their strength to 18/00 once per day for three rounds. This ability lasts for an additional round for every three levels the Peaceward obtains. If the Peaceward already has a strength of 18/00 or higher, they simply receive a +1 bonus to hit and damage.

! At 10th level, Peacewards can use *true seeing* (as per the 5th level cleric spell) at will.

! At 15th level, Peacewards may cast *Heal* (as per the 6th level cleric spell) three times per day.

Akem

Epithets: the Grim-faced, the Grinner, the Ishtrian Death, the Absolute, the Watcher, the Master of the Keys, the Lord of the Seven Gates, the Silent One

Greater God, TN

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Death, the afterlife, spirits

Aliases: Akanian, Kemr

Symbol: A footed archway, a sickle and hourglass

Akem (AH-kem) is the god of death and the underworld. He is known for his strongly lawful leanings, but his role places him as the fulcrum of life and death and for this he must be balanced and even-handed. He is widely feared, as his presence heralds death and the otherworld has many strong taboos associated with it. However, he does not choose who perishes, merely guiding them to the Underworld and making certain that they have residence there until they can be judged by their appropriate gods.

The Seven Hells and their attendant gates are guarded by him, and they comprise his entire domain. The Seven Hells are divided into realms, the lowermost of which is his primary concern; there, one will find (according to Akemite scripture) Abdju, the City of the Dead, which he rules. From his position there, he is master over the fate of the souls of the dead as they journey to their respective rewards and punishments.

He strongly opposes bodily resurrection and the creation of the undead. His priests are said to be able to see those who have returned from the grave by an invisible mark, and are tasked with annihilating all free-willed undead and the "returned." For this reason almost no deity will grant resurrection to their followers unless Akem consents as well.

Claustrum

Epithets: the Lord of the Lock, the Scourge, the Oppressor

Intermediate God, LE

Family: Felnumen

Portfolio: Slavery, oppression, exile

Aliases: Gorash

Symbol: A pair of manacles

Lord Claustum (CLAOW-strum) is the patron of slaves and slavery. Many believe that he is related to the orcish god Gorash, which even his own priests don't deny. Claustum's worship is thankfully contained to a few particular regions where slavery is widely practiced: the Free Cities, Essad, and Soloth are the only lands where he is worshipped in any great numbers. He is the private god of a good deal of Essadi slave-drivers and Masters, however, for his bounty has essentially provided the wealth of that kingdom.

Claustum revels in the use of legitimate force to crush others. For this reason, he is also the patron of exile and those who are forced into exile often blame Cruel Claustum for their fates. He appears as a brutally muscled man wearing a war-helm and holding a whip in one hand and a length of chain in the other.

Dinismayl

Epithets: the Winter Queen, the Bitch Queen, the Queen of Hunger, the Queen of Want
Greater Goddess, NE

Family: Archaioi

Portfolio: Winter, ice, snow, cruelty, greed, sorrow

Symbol: An ice blue skull

Dinismayl (DIN-iz-male) is one of the ancient gigantine gods who has survived into modern worship. She is the one and only god of the Frost Giants, who are her servants. Her worship has spread throughout the evil and depraved men of the world.

She is a cruel and brutal goddess with no love in her heart at all. She is known to appear amongst the giants who follow her and also to manifest to confront Vodei, with whom she has a long-standing war over who commands the storms of winter. Her five Blizzards follow her in attendance, challenging Vodei's Storms and ravaging the land with ice and snow.

There are three other handmaidens who stay close to her as well: Sorrow, Want, and Hunger. She is the patron of all sorrows and starvations, though she rarely answers prayers from those who seek relief from these horrors (and if she does, it is with terrifying consequence for the petitioner).

In appearance Dinismayl is a beautiful but frigid frost giant, clad all in furs and crowned with a circlet of crackling ice.

Eiri

(see Eiri Earthfather, Dwarven Pantheon)

Eleia

Epithets: the Spring Maiden, the Green Maid, the Grainmother

Intermediate Goddess, NG

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Spring, rebirth, midwifery, fertility, farming

Aliases: Tulia

Symbol: A blooming oak tree

Eleia (el-EE-uh) is the goddess of the harvest, of fertility, and of grain. Myths record her presence amongst the rolls of the first Aeliö and, as Eminea made the lesser beasts of the world, Eleia fashioned the plants that now grow upon it. She is the lady of Spring and the mistress of Rebirth and she is said to die each year and pass into Nullä at the fading of summer; thus, the world mourns her until she is reborn in the following spring.

Eleia is a kind goddess, who's servants seek to ease the burden of the farmer and the orchard tender. While she is technically subservient to Haeron, she is less concerned with laws and rules than he is. Eleia consecrates marriage, and she is the goddess that people pray to when they want a child. Her temples can be found amongst villages the world over.

She appears as a beautiful maid of auburn hair wearing garments appropriate with the seasons; in the spring she is resplendent in a crown of flowers and a brilliant dress of many colors, in summer she wears a crown of hay and barley, in autumn she is depicted in earth tones with no crown at all, and in winter she wears a crown of twigs and icy colors. Her presence is heralded by a train of animals who follow in her wake and it is said the very trees and flowers bow and debase themselves before her. Her touch can return a withered limb to life and can cause a tree to blossom. She is the Spring Maiden.

Fortuna

Epithets: the Fickle, the Lady, the Lady of the Wheel, the Goddess

Intermediate Goddess, CN

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Fate, gambling, money, fortune, merchants

Aliases: Tychéa (Aellon)

Symbol: A wheel, a downpointed right hand with extended index finger

Fortuna (For-TUNE-ah) is the goddess of fate and luck. Many people believe that her influence on [Sarnon](#) and the weaving wheel of the Tapestry of Time influences the outcome of events and shapes the future. Indeed, it is believed by many that Sarnon and Fortuna are either lovers or relatives (though the Temple of Fortunes says they are lovers, many persist in believing that they are in fact brother and sister... or both).

One of the largest and most well-known traditions associated with Fortuna is that of the traveling clerical gambling fairs known as [Fortuna's Wheel](#). These priests, however, do not represent the mainstream of the [Temple of Fortune](#). Those who worship Fortuna frequently do so because they are merchants or because they believe in the overriding

power of fate and luck (two concepts which are not opposed in the minds of the northerners). Fortuna also receives many one-off prayers as well, particularly from those who are making a dangerous journey or undertaking some potentially lethal activity, hoping that the Wheel will favor them.

But Fortune is fickle in all things — love, war, mercantile ventures. The clerics of Fortuna often caution people not to think of their offerings as a bribe to the goddess, but as a simple sign of devotion (for whatever good that does). Members of Fortuna's inner cult are almost exclusively merchants engaged in long-range shipping trade or adventurers who live by luck and the blade.

Of all the mannish gods, Fortuna is one of the few most likely to be worshiped by other races. Halflings, dwarves, elves, and even gnomes have been known to take up the fickle finger of fate and join the cult or even become clerics themselves.

Galos

Epithets: the Blind, the Seer, the Lord of Magic, the Emerald God

Intermediate God, CG

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Magic, divination, prophecy, astrology, the heavens

Aliases: Lumia

Symbol: An eight-sided faceted emerald

Galos (GAH-lohs) is the lord of magic and is thought of as the founder, codifier, and master of all wizardry. While the other Aeliö were still getting accustomed to the world and exploring its boundaries (and even peopling it with plants and animals), Galos was examining the great and boundless seas of magic that encompass Arunë. It was he who devised the ordering of the great magical schools, and it is often said that he spent much time amongst the giants during the Night Age and spoke with their scholars, teaching them to order their previously wild castings; Gigantine scholars dispute this fact, claiming that it was Galos who sat at the feet of the giants and recorded their musings.

However it may be, Galos holds the very power of the oceans of magic in his grasp. It is said that he can control the very sources of magic. For this reason, he is the patron of wizards, seers, and sorcerers the world over. He is a particularly interfering deity, having been opposed to most of the other Aeliö for several Ages.

Galos' history is long and storied. He once opposed himself to the other gods, living alone in the far north of the world at a great stronghold in the Barrier Range. During this period he was known as the Great Foe; he created a great green star-stone (the father of all emeralds) and shattered it to make the stars themselves. They were green in the early ages, and the sun and moon were made to blind Galos' seeking eyes. It was not until the end of the Eighth Age (during the Cataclysm) that the last of the stars was made white, the infamous Eye of Lumiä.

Lumiä often appears as a handsome bearded man with fair hair wearing long green robes. However, no matter what form he takes his eyes are always glazed over with cataracts. Theologians believe this is the result of his battle with the hero Ozmiandre and the removal of his power over the star known as the Eye.

Glyrea

Epithets: the Giantess, the Gorgon

Intermediate Goddess, LE

Family: Archaoi

Portfolio: Serpents, Poison

Symbol: An asp

Glyrea (GLEE-ree-uh) is one of the Archaoi, the gigantic gods from before the coming of the Aelio. Her worship spread to the south men after they settled in Rhûn and she became a common goddess during the First Empire. However, in the modern age she is publicly denounced (though her worship is not proscribed). Privately, many important political figures make offerings to her in the hopes that she will "remove" their rivals. Her temples are small affairs, and her priesthood is reviled. She is strongly associated with the stain of necromancy and assassination, and is called the Giantess, the Gorgon, and Glyrea of the Forked Tongue.

Offerings to her can be made anywhere, though it is proper to her worship to make them at a shrine. These can include the regular bevy of slaughtered animals, but also offerings of one's own precious blood to bind a pact with Glyrea are not uncommon. There are few members of her inner cult among the people of the north, but those who are are certainly not to be trusted.

She appears as an alluring woman of gigantic stature and flashing eyes, often wearing a toga or a robe. Beneath her clothing, however, wind hundreds of serpents of various types, all of them deadly. In combat, 1d12 of these at any given time can position themselves to strike.

Halor

Epithets: the General, the Steady, the Sure

Lesser God, LN

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Strategy, tactics, soldiers

Symbol: A captain's rod

Halor (HAY-lorr) has no temples dedicated to his worship, though many Hierien temples also have altars dedicated to Halor. Many soldiers revere him due to his nature as the dutiful lord of battles. Generals pray to him before major engagements, and soldiers

often wear his stylized baton as a charm. He is one of the many sub-gods that serve Haeron, acting as the Smith's personal assistant.

While Halor has no temples and few clergy, he is the patron deity of the now-famed Order of the Sword Militant, a semi-mercenary group of paladins and men-at-arms that utilize a system of chapterhouses to organize their membership.

He is depicted as a wise veteran warrior with a rod of captaincy in one hand and a sword in the other. His symbol is the rod which he carries, and his colors are silver, yellow, and blue.

Haparos

Epithets: the Luckbringer

Lesser God, CG

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Good Luck

Symbol: A four-pointed star

Haparos (hah-PAH-ros) is a servant of Fortuna and stands in direct opposition to Taelii, the Mistress of Ill Luck. He is a happy-go-lucky god and a favorite of gamblers and risk takers. Haparian holy-water is prized as a good luck charm throughout the north and particularly religious (or superstitious) folk wear a small vial of the stuff around their necks.

As the bringer of good luck, Haparos is master of the upper portion of Fortune's Wheel, and his clerics are welcomed just about everywhere. However, his clergy is not large; about the same size as that of his foe, Taelii. Haparians tend to be light-hearted folk. It is not uncommon for his worshipers to trust more in luck than skill.

Very few people join the inner cult of Haparos. Those who do are somewhat less freewheeling and tend to understand the cruelty inherent in Fortune's Wheel. These lot generally only believe that Haparos favors those who take proper measures. Still, they see it as their duty to make certain good luck rubs off who are at the lowest ebbs of Fortune.

Hasht

Epithets: the Flayed God, the Lord of Suffering, sometimes simply "the Flayed One"

Intermediate God, CE

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Suffering, sickness

Symbol: A scourge or a wounded hand wrapped with a bandage

Hast (HASHT) is a god of suffering and pain. His worshipers may seem to be masochists and madmen—and in fact, many are. However, he is also worshiped (as Vodei is) to avert his gaze, to turn it away from the hurting. Many of an evil or selfish

nature who wish to avoid the sufferings of the world are willing to sacrifice at his altar to avoid his wrath.

His clergy appear mad, covered in running sores and oozing wounds, refusing all treatment for injuries, and wrapping barbs around their flesh to commune with their terrible lord. His temples are rare due to the unwholesome nature of his worship, but in times of war or plague his worshipers spring up like maggots on a corpse.

He often appears as a thickly bearded man, his hair matted with blood and a wild fire in his eyes. There are speculations that he is the brother of Heimir, and some semi-heretical Heimiran cults believe just that. Whether Hashtemites also do is unknown.

Heimir

Epithets: the Joyful, the Drunken, the Laughing

Intermediate God, CG

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Hospitality, alcohol, jests

Symbol: A beer barrel or mug

Heimir (HIGH-meer) is the patron of hospitality and alcohol. He is something of a trickster, and has a long list mythological exploits that including befuddling and fooling the other gods. The patron of brewing and alcohol, all taverns and inns include at least a token icon of the god somewhere on their grounds. Few would dare to whip up a batch of ale without first giving the proper praises to Heimir to bless the endeavor.

Heimir is often depicted as an enormously fat man wearing the brown habit of his order and a belt of golden rope. His most famous adventure, in which he rode a beer-barrel out of Valingas upon the waters of life, provides his most beloved depiction; Heimir on the Barrel is often what his statues, paintings, and cult idols display. Of course, that's hardly all there is to the Joyful God. He is also known for the Fool's Feast, when he and Aros played Haeron to sleep in order to steal his power for a fortnight and make changes for the good to all of Arunë, walking amongst the people and slaying enemies in the Seventh Age.

Heimir's joys and lusts are vast, and he represents the pleasant side of drink. It is Salan, his demigod servant, who takes the form of the dangerous frenzy of release. Heimir is often worshipped along with Vaela and Fortuna as part of the "travelers trio," as his task is not only brewing ale but making sure that travelers are given a place to stay upon the road. Invoking the name of Heimir against a miserly home-owner who refuses hospitality is known to lay upon that house a curse.

Insitor

Epithets: the Sower, the Knowing

Lesser God, LN

Family: Archaioi

Portfolio: Learning

Symbol: A serpent biting its own tale

Insitor (IN-sit-or) is the child of Glyrea and thus one of the ancient giant-gods. While Quilian Knowais covers all that is known, it is Insitor who commands the gates of learning itself. The two sometimes work in concert and sometimes at odds, but it is said that if you wish to know something you should pray first to Quilian and then to Insitor. His temples are almost nonexistent, and his worship is mostly secondary.

When he appears it is said that he comes as a young unshaven man, clad in a pure white toga and bearing a torch in one hand and a book in the other. His familiar is said to be the serpent, and the serpent-twined Goblet of Knowledge is in his keeping.

Kha'ina

Epithets: the Liar, the Deceiver

Lesser God, CE

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Treachery, plotting, deceit

Symbol: A dark cloak

It is said that Kha'ina (KA'-ina) was worshiped first amongst the desert nomads and came north only long after the Sword Age had ended. She is little mentioned or worshiped, though it is known that treacheries are her domain and those who commit them sometimes whisper a prayer to her.

Kha'ina is said to resemble an orc woman of unpleasantly alluring features, with strong rippling arms and deep green (almost black) flesh. She is rumored never to appear or grant her favor in the daylight.

Kypselus

Epithets: the Lord of Sin, the Black Hand

Lesser God, LE

Family: Archaioi

Portfolio: Corruption, decay, transgression

Symbol: A black hand

Kypselus (KIP-sel-uss) the Black Hand is said to be the son of Ulagos the Potter and Nyxos the Husband-Eater. As one of his natural children, Kypselus is part of the ranks of the so-called Felnumen or Mud Gods.

The Lord of Sin himself is a master of deals, bargains, and creeping corruptions. He represents both physical decay and moral collapse. His followers, while few amongst the demihuman races, are much more numerous amongst the monstrous creatures—goblinoids, ogres, and trolls particularly.

He relishes swamps, sinkholes, and corpses (though not of elves, which are immune to his touch). It's Kypselus who is said to walk amongst the dead and encourage them to

decay. Ghouls and ghastrs are supposedly creatures of his own creation and are considered particularly sacred. These undead traditionally serve the priests of corruption and are used as temple servants and warriors.

In appearance, Kypselus resembles a squatting orc with pure black skin and a grotesquely knotty beard extending from his chin. He is frequently shown wearing smoke-black armor as well.

Meina

Epithets: the Pale

Lesser Goddess, TN

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: The underworld, the deep sea

Aliases: Meri (elvish)

Symbol: A flat level hand

Meina (MY-na) is Vodei's consort. She was, according to myth, stolen from Valingas and forced to live with him beneath the waters. She is a sad and languishful goddess who dwells in the depths of undersea caverns. Sailors sometimes pray that she averts her husbands interests from their ships. Elves are known to have a much more elaborate worship of Meina in the form of Meri the Seawife.

In appearance Meina is a sweet looking woman drenched in seawater and wearing a dress of pale turquoise. Her temples are most often found on the coasts and some believe that the strange merfolk below the sea worship her as their chief goddess.

Misthoros

Epithets: the Sellsword, the Blade, the Father of Mercenaries

Lesser God, NE

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Mercenaries, hired soldiers

Symbol: A half-drawn blade

Misthoros (MIS-thor-os) clearly comes out of the East where mercenaries fight in great abundance. He is the patron god of many of the Companies of the East and there are countless banners that belong to his cause. His temples there proliferate, particularly in Zemm where his power is the strongest, but there are very few temples of his found in the heartland or the west. Mercenaries think of him as a protector and a paymaster all rolled up into one which is why he is sometimes called the Swordfather.

When he choses to appear in dreams and portents he is said to come as a weathered veteran of a thousand battles, clad in battle-worn armor and wielding a dark blade that crackles with blue-purple tongues of power. His name is decidedly gigantine in sound, which leads some to classify him as an Archaoi but he is more properly Aelio.

Omiros

Epithets: Farstrider, the Long-strider

Intermediate God, NG

Family: Archaioi

Portfolio: Stories, storytellers, discovery

Symbol: A bearded sagely head

Omiros (OH-mir-os) was a gigantine god, one of the original Aspect Gods of the Night Age. He is still worshipped by many Cloud Giant bards and sages, from whence he draws his power. His bastions in mannish and demi-human lands are few and far between.

He is a joyful god, much given to jokes and laughter. He is also a melancholy god who has walked the world and seen its woes and terrors. He rarely interferes directly with the affairs of mortals; as one of the Old Gods he is untouchable by the Aelio, but he still respects their strengths.

He despises the evil gigantine gods and insofar as he has any agenda in the world, opposing them and healing the evils done by them is a big one. It is said that he knows more about Mother Night than most other gods have forgotten in their lifetimes.

In appearance Omiros is a gigantic pale blue skinned or flint skinned sage. His beard is snow white, and he often wears a green tunic or toga and carries a walking stick.

Orult

Epithets: the Hermit, the Cackling, the Shrieking, the Mad God

Intermediate God, NG

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Loneliness, madness, isolation

Symbol: A wide, bloodshot eye

Orult the Hermit is a minor god who serves directly under Dinismayl. He was once a free-agent of his own, but the Winter Queen took him under her wing under threat of annihilation. More important than the hand-maiden of Madness (one of her direct subordinates), Orult is still worshiped by some and has clerics that sing his praises out in the wild places.

He himself is said to be insane; He was imprisoned by Galos during the Third Age when the Seer-god found him attempting to take control of the force of magic and wrest it from its rightful owner. Galos dispatched him to the Abyss and eventually forgot he was there. It wasn't until the Fifth Age that Haeron brought his sentence to an end. However, when he was released he was completely insane.

Orult appears as a wild man with a scraggly beard and beady eyes. He does whatever must be done to survive.

Osvea

Epithets: the Mother, the Hearthmaid

Lesser Goddess, LG

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: The home, the family, children

Symbol: A fire on a hearthstone, a sickle over a blaze

Osvea (oz-VAY-uh) is a goddess mostly worshipped in the home. Her presence is much more common in the east; Llyria, Stonemark, and the regions surrounding those kingdoms have more true worship with clergy and temples, though the Aedea Osvium in Miles is of monumental importance.

Osvean worship is normally tantamount to asking for protection of the family and by its extension its members. Thus, her cult sees many mothers and heads-of-households inducted into it.

Osvea is depicted as a mother herself, perpetually pregnant but armed with a long and wicked sickle. Her person is often carved onto cribs, hearthstones, and over fireplaces to invoke her protection. Used less than her holy symbol is her idol-image, which depicts her. She is known to be fierce when her children are threatened (the Litai, or prayer-answerers) and this passel of babes accompanies her wherever she goes.

Quilian Knowais

Epithets: the Wise, the Farseeing

Intermediate God, LG

Family: Vinthar

Portfolio: Scholarship, knowledge, writing

Symbol: A snow-white quill

Alias: Sulcania (elvish)

Quilian Knowais (QUILL-ee-an NO-ways) is one of the only smallfolk gods ever to cross over into the mannish pantheon. A Vinthar of old date, he is much revered by gnomes but also by scholars and scribes. He is the patron god of writing, libraries, and scriptoriums as well as of clerks and reading. His priests keep libraries within their temples and encourage writing wherever they can by the founding of independent scribal houses. Of all the gods, Quillian's followers are most likely to become monks and withdraw from the world.

Quilian himself, when appearing before men, comes in the guise of an old and bent man with a long snow-white beard. He walks with a knotty cane and wears long gray robes. It's said he can abide nothing less than the destruction of books, scrolls, and the written word.

Raya

Epithets: the Rose-knight, the Fair

Intermediate Goddess, CG

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Beauty, art, joy, freedom, love

Symbol: A rose-twined lute

Alias: Arina (halfling)

Raya (RIE-uh) is the goddess of beauty and artwork. She is perceived by some to be flighty and fickle; however, those with a true understanding of the dictates of Raya know that she can be as stately and mighty and is as important as the other gods. Her worshipers and temples are sparsely spread across the north, but those that do worship her tend to lead somewhat charmed lives. She is known to take an eye to interfering in the affairs of mortals.

Her powers have expanded in recent centuries with the spread of the Libernian Festival, a summer religious event dedicated to her, during which her clerics are required to offer their bodies to any man or woman who pays the goddess for their sexual services.

She is also the goddess of love and is known as the Changing. Hermaphrodites are considered particularly blessed by her hand. Her clerics are a pleasant lot, given to laughter and travel and are fairly likely to wind up adventuring. In appearance she is a full-hipped and buxom woman of blinding beauty who wears a simple roughspun dress and walks barefoot over the grass.

Rhamna

Epithets: the Fleet, the Nemesis

Lesser Goddess, CE

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Vengeance

Symbol: A burning sword

Rhamna (RAHM-na) the Nemesis began her existence as a lesser spirit. She is not mentioned in any of the greater rolls of the gods nor in any of the lesser texts. She may be associated with the dwarven goddess Mordrig or the elvish Ramaas (though this is not certain). During the Pillar Age she received her first sacrifices from Mileans who wished to find vengeance against their kin.

The Nemesis has no temple. She is worshiped in dark groves at night by those seeking vengeance for some great ill. She has no regular worshippers, either, and her clergy are secretive hermits who live in the countryside, waiting for seekers to find them. They are called Debtors, for vengeance is a debt that can never be paid. These hermits are often reviled, but no one will dare lay a hand upon them.

Ware those who invoke Rhamna, for the cycle of vengeance is never ending! She appears as a young androgynous woman wearing an oaken laurel and bearing a blazing blade in one hand. In many depictions she also has the wings of a bird to help bring her to harry her foes with all the more speed.

Sabian

Epithets: the Patrician, the Noble

Intermediate God, LG

Family: Archaioi

Portfolio: Politics, statecraft

Symbol: A sprig of grapes

Sabian (SAY-bee-an) is the archaic god of statesmen and politicians, once well-worshipped in the empire. However, since the end of the imperial days of glory, Sabian's influence has waned to nearly nothing in the west. Llyris and some eastern lands still worship him, however, and the memory of Sabian remains strong in western displays of state power even if his priests are gone and his temples empty.

Still, his iconography retains its power in the west; noblemen may wear broaches with clusters of grapes on days when they must face their peers and many buildings of the imperial domus incorporate twining grape leaves into their architecture. However, his true worship continues only in the east with the fading temples that stand as testament to Llyric ideals.

He appears as a stony-skinned giant wearing a long white toga with grape vines twining through his hair.

Salan

Epithets: the Drunken, the Lech, the Happy

Lesser God, CN

Family: Archaioi

Portfolio: Wine, ale, revels

Symbol: A sprig of barley

Salan (sal-AHN) is a servant in Heimir's train who is technically bound to do the Laughing God's bidding. However, he is notoriously independent-minded and often simply acts without Heimir's blessings, sometimes directly against his so-called "master." He is the ancient deity of revels and the temporary madness which follows and it is believed that the satyrs are his lineal children, potentially by way of his mating with dryads.

He is a dangerous god who may become violent or melancholy without warning. Feasts blessed by his presence generally turn towards madness and chaos and most are wary of his dark "blessings" which can easily lead to tragedy. Satyrs, however, worship him fiercely as their chief deity.

Salan appears as a man clad in Heimiran robes, but they are stained with wine and ale. He is always besotted and drunken but his moods may vary from glee to vigorous hate without any kind of in-between. He is most often referred to as a warning, rather than a tutelary deity.

Sarnon

Epithets: the Weaver, the Crippled

Lesser God, LN

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Weaving, fate, time

Aliases: Meidhos

Symbol: A spindle

Sarnon (SAR-non) is the Weaver who sets down all things in the Tapestry of Time. It is said he lives without Arunia and the Three Worlds, watching from the great void beyond so he can see all things. He was wounded in the Dawn Age by Galos and now cannot leave his loom.

He has no priests and no temples, though sometimes his name is called upon those making offerings to avert fate or even by those who's professions mimic his own. He is also known as the Inexorable and the Inevitable, as all things he weaves must eventually come to pass.

Sernis

Epithets: the Whisperer, Blackcloak, Shadowhaunt

Intermediate God, NE

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Secrets, shadows, ambition, thieves

Symbol: A muted bell

Sernis (SIR-niss) is a mysterious and secretive god who normally appears as a man with no tongue all clothed in black. It's said he speaks only in whispers. His domain is secrecy, shadow, and whispered power. It is unclear if he was one of the mighty Aelio or if he was a spirit-servant of Sarnon who won his freedom through clever manipulations. Some legends hint that he may in fact have been one of Galos' spirit-servants as well.

However it may be, he is closeted and shadowed. His power over secrets means that in worship, the devoted whisper to him the offering of a single secret in the hopes they will get one in return. Often, these are spoken in murmurs to his priests, making Shadow Priests of Sernis quite potent in information-dealing. His clerics and temples are always occulted, hidden, sometimes within plain sight. Those who worship him often pretend to worship some other god, reserving their rites for when they are alone.

Taelii

Epithets: the Cursed, the Harridan

Lesser God, CE

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Ill luck

Symbol: A sprig of black lovage

Taelii (TIE-lee-ee) is the sister of Haparos and the second servant of Fortuna. Where Haparos brings good luck, she brings the other type. Known as the Cursed, most do what they can to avoid this vicious and vindictive goddess.

Talleal

Epithets: the Herald, the Burning

Lesser God, CE

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: War, fire

Symbol: A helm with stag or ram's horns

Talleal (TAH-lee-all) is the lord of war and god of destruction. He is kept in check by Haeron, and is brother to Halor. The two do not get along. It's said that Talleal heels like a dog at Haeron's beck and call, but in the more unpleasant lands such as Essad and Soloth he is worshipped apart from the Hammerer and his priests pray and burn sacrifices in his name.

He appears as a huge man corded with muscle wearing a stag-horned helm with a closed face. It's said he relishes violence and bloodshed, and is himself partly insane. Reaving and slaying are his creed, and sacrifice on the field of battle his favorite meat while the blood of the slain is his drink.

Tharos

Epithets: the Necromancer

Demigod, CE

Family: Man

Portfolio: Necromancy, the Undead, betrayal, lies

Symbol: A human fingerbone surrounded by a gold ring

Tharos (THAH-ros) is most commonly referred to simply as the Necromancer. One of Galos' ancient Generals Sorcerous, Tharos was awakened by his old master in the Eighth Age during the War of Ascension (before Galos could find his place again amongst the gods, when he walked the Middle World in anger). Tharos betrayed his former master and went into hiding when the war ended. During the Ninth Age he brought a scourge of undeath to Arunia, ravaging it with his armies of the fallen. In the end he was able to secure a cupful of the Waters of Life in an enchanted goblet which grants him the trappings of godhood. This goblet is now known as the Cup Everlasting, which is ever by his side.

Worship of the Necromancer is outlawed in all sane and reasonable lands. His cults still manage to flourish in hiding, waiting for the day when he will return to the Middle World and give eternal life to all his followers.

Tyros

Epithets: the Deceiver, the Tyrant, the Mad

Demigod, LE

Family: Man

Portfolio: Tyranny, fear, rulership

Symbol: A black skull wearing a bent crown

Tyros (TIR-os) the Deceiver was once the king of the drowned kingdom of Yer'is. It is said that he made a bargain with Vodei to grant him great temporal power but to surrender the lowlands of Ys to the sea. He countered that bargain with another in secret: with Vodei's hated rival, Dinismayl, which allowed him to escape. He has served as her chiefest and most loyal servant ever since.

Tuwayn

Epithets: the Unsleping, the Unseen

Lesser God, LN

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Guards, guardianship

Symbol: A closed helm with an eye emblazoned upon it or a hand with an eye etched on its back

Tuwayn (too-WAIN) was originally worshipped by the northmen, but has come to be given thanks everywhere. In the heartland of Miles he is associated with the noble practice of erecting semul statues which depict guardian beasts blessed by his hand that ward off evil humors and thieves from great households.

Tuwayn is often invoked as the god of locks, wards, and doors; his worship has no priests or clergy and is in the hands of those who offer their prayers to him when his aid is needed. Indeed, Tuwayn rarely has shrines at all; however, many locks, keys, and doorways are inscribed with his sigil and many mutter silent praise to Tuwayn for keeping their belongings safe.

Tuwaynian subaltars and eidolons may be found in Hierean and Avaunite temples, where they are tended by clergy of those gods.

Vaela

Epithets: the the Pilgrim, the Wanderer, the Road Warden, the Shield

Lesser Goddess, LG

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Travelers, pilgrims, journeys, roads

Symbol: A pilgrim's staff

Vaela (VAI-la) is Haeron's daughter, born of his union with Avauna in the Dawn Age. She is the warden of roads, the watcher of travelers, and the guardians of innocent journeying folk. She makes sure the ways are straight and dangers are light. Vaela receives prayers from every walk of life. Her statues adorn the roadways and many houses have a small eikon of Vaela in their foyer so they can leave offerings on the way out.

Her clergy are few, but many serve as Road-wardens and Viators (bearers of messengers). She is the patron deity of the Knights Mendicant, a holy order of poor brothers and sisters who dress all in black and wander the roads. Some of the Knights are paladins sworn in her service.

Her statues are often covered with melted wax and bowls of rancid meat and spoiled wine. Her holy symbol is a walking stick or staff, and he is always depicted with a staff in one hand and a shield in the other.

Vodei

Epithets: the Rager, the Waverider, the Ruiner of Ships, the Twister of Ways

Greater God, CE

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: The sea, merchants, storms, ships, waves

Symbol: A stylized wave of soapstone

Vodei (vo-DAI) is the lord of the sea and one of the four Quarto brother-gods. Younger than Eiri and Aros, he is nevertheless far stronger than either of them in body. When the realms of the Middle World were divided between them, Aros was awarded the lower heavens, Eiri the earth and caverns, Haeron the upper heavens, and Vodei the depths of the sea. He took to his realm with gusto, being a temperamental and dangerous god.

The Waverider is prone to great rages and also to inexplicable, implacable calms. During the early ages of the world he stole the goddess Meina to live beneath the sea as his queen and bride. While the two have occasional congress (and some legends claim the cyclopes of the Cloud Sea and Aellon are the result), they generally live apart and have a great hate for each other. Meroflk, the beings closest to Vodei's abodes, are strongly divided in their support for the Rager or his more peaceful queen, the Pale Lady.

Vodei also has at his beck and call a number of twelve powerful spirits known as the sturms. Many have speculated that these spirits were bound to Vodei when he first came into power, likely by the use of his legendary trident with which he commands them. These sturms are responsible for all the worst storms of Arunia, stirring up the sea, dumping down rains, snows, and sandstorms. "As treacherous as the sea," or "as treacherous as Vodei," as the old saying goes.

In appearance the Twister of Ways is a massive and faintly blue-skinned man with a powerfully muscled chest and arms. He is often depicted surrounded by thundering waves, his trident held in one fist, lightning playing among its tines.

The Minor Gods

Elernus, the Little Flame

Elernus (ELL-er-nus) is the god of hearths and fires and his statue can commonly be found in stone kitchens, forges, and near hearthstones. He appears as a svelte man,

nubile and generally clad only in a loincloth. He is a favorite of cooking servants, scullery maids, and household women.

Eirini, the Peaceful

Eirini (eye-RINN-ee) the Peaceful was a spirit of Valingas, elevated by Haeron himself to preserve the peace of men after the end of the first great war against Lumia. She is a calm goddess, serene even in the face of the grossest insults. She cares little for the world as it is, though the taboo against breaking the peace in one of her temples is so great that many scholars believe she would actually manifest to punish the offenders.

She appears as a teenage girl with long golden hair and pale blue eyes. Her very image is considered sacred, and those who defy her strictures of peace within their sight can expect her brutal vengeance.

Fornax, Goddess of Ovens

Commonly associated with Elernus, Fornax (FOR-nax) is said to be his mother. She is specifically master over the great communal baking ovens used in the empire. Since these are a noble monopoly, care of her statue is part of the fee all common folk pay to use the ovens.

Lanelus Aurora, the Dawnrider

Child of Avauna the Daystar, Lanelus Aurora (LAN-el-us ah-ROR-ah) is the herald of dawn and the fore-runner of the celestial lamp. He is often depicted riding on its carriage, peering into the unknown, and for that reason he is sometimes invoked on trips that must carry one through the night or darkness. His statues are rarely seen on private altars, but sometimes adorn public buildings. He is always depicted as a young curly-haired boy.

Mefitis, Goddess of Poisonous Vapors

Not worshiped at all, by anyone, Mefitis (meh-FIT-is) is only invoked to ward off stinks, smells, and evil humors. She is often implored by miners and other folk who must journey into deep tunnels to help reduce the chance of smothering to death. She is often depicted as a female gorgon, leading many to believe she is the daughter of Glyrea herself—perhaps by an incestuous relationship with her own son, Insitor.

Naenia, the Lamentor

This goddess is always seen weeping or crying and is commonly invoked at funerary processions. Naenia (NEYE-nee-uh) is the hystrix and patron goddess of the funeral procession as well as the professional weepers hired by nobles to attend their funerals. She is also, for this reason, associated with actors. She is always shown wailing, tearing at her clothes, and is the bane of sound sleep amongst children everywhere.

The Parcae

The Fates, the Weavers of Sarnon, who assist him at his duty. Uthir, Vethir, and Skuld they are called, and they determine the length of the threads given to the Weaver.

Invocations of the fates are frequent, but they are not believed to have much influence in day-to-day life.

Tanthis Profundis, Master of Wells and Fountains

A cthonian lord of the deeps, Tanthis Profundis (TAN-this pro-FÜN-dis) has domain over all wells, fountains, and springs and is considered to be the father-protector of all naiads, nereids, and water-spirits. He is said to be the son of Vodei, and he appreciates a coin or two tossed into his fountains and wells every now and then. He wears a curly brown beard and brown hair.

The Silent Goddess

She is the attendant of Akem, the Silent Lord. Her name is never spoken and her rituals are always conducted by Akemites, but she is the official psychopomp in charge of conducting the spirits of the deceased from the site of their tomb or cenotaph to the edge of the Middle World. She is depicted as a masked and robed figure, grim but not terrifying.

Household Gods

These are private, household gods. Their eikons are never to be displayed to those outside the family. They are made by family members, generally from clay baked in a special controlled fire in the home or the communal ovens. Once they are installed, they are not to be seen by outsiders. If they are, the idols must be destroyed and made anew.

Familia, Goddess of the Home

Familia's (fa-MILL-ia) place is beneath the hearthstone, family-altar, semul-statues, or the bed. She is the daughter of Tuwayn the watcher, and is said to watch the walls and windows of the home to keep her family safe.

Moneta, Goddess of Memory

Moneta's (mon-AY-ta) eikon must be buried beneath the threshold. She is the goddess of remembrance, and the ceremony of her burying is a way to consecrate a new home. During that time she is commended to the care and keeping of Sarnon, the Weaver.

THE ELVISH PANTHEON

! Many of the elvish gods are analogues to the mannish—they are Aelio by any other name. Those who are not, are worshiped solely by the elves. Sometimes halflings may worship elvish gods, but that is a rare occurrence indeed.

Anunia

Epithets: the Wind Lord, the Poet, the Fury

Greater God, CG

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Winds, poetry, art, passion

Aliases: Anunia, Ardor

Symbol: The four winds

The lord of the Winds, the Singing Fury, the Maker; these are all epithets for Anunia (ah-NOON-yeh) who is the creator-god of the elves. He is the master of the four winds, which are called Aeshelon (the north wind), Eferus (the west wind), Boltorus (the south wind), and Imunäs (the east wind). He is a warrior-god, and the master of poetry and art as well as battle. However, his worshippers do not seek after combat, for war itself is considered to be a waste of the Anuniaian talent. Rather, they praise strength in arms only as an expression of craft, and they find battle only when the great lusty furies of the Wind Lord urge them on.

Anunia appears as a sere elf wearing silver scale armor and an open robe. He carries a scimitar in one hand and a lyre in the other. It is said that Anunia invented the sword to give his children the elves a weapon to fight the beasts of the Felnumen, the orcs and goblins. He is brother to Haeron and Eiri, and the three are called by men the Aldes Fratres or the Old Brothers.

Anunia is a god of many passions and furies. He has been known to frequently walk amongst his people or bestow the powers to shift the balance in the favor of the elves. He does not suffer evil in his presence, and as such his clergy may cast *detect evil* once per day by muttering a short prayer.

His temples are airy affairs, built to allow the wind access to their most sacred spaces. They are often hung with silver chimes or bells that the wind may play. The wind-harp is considered especially sacred to him, and his priests are often enjoined to create what is known as a wind-garden where they may set up chimes, a wind-harp, and other wind-played instruments and allow Anunia to “speak.”

The Church

Clergy: Specialty Priests

Clergy's Alignment: CG, NG

Turn Undead: No

Command Undead: No

The Silver Temple is the elvish church of the Wind Lord. It has strong ties to the mannish Temple of the Winds. The elvish temple is widely supported in almost every elvish settlement. A great majority of lay-elves are members of the inner cult of Anunia. The Silver Temple is associated with a number of calendrical rites, particularly the singing of the several great songs that mark the hours of the elvish day. These songs are sung in every temple of Anunia across the north as the sun sets: Evensong is the most important of these, and the name of the office has lent itself to the name of the dusk-hour in all northern society.

The Silver Temple is more structured than its mannish equivalent. It's highest office was once that of the Gwyderion, that is the Priest-King of Tailmisiä. However, in the ages since the Gwyderion ruled, that office fell into disuse and has, most recently, been usurped by a Noroniaian priest. In the modern incarnation of the Temple, there are four

offices of extreme dignity, these being the Priests of the Four Winds. Each of the Four Winds dwells in a different elvish kingdom. The North Wind in Talimisiä, the South Wind in Vesimä, the East Wind in Sidrabinä and the West Wind in Valkaela. These clerics are respected in the extreme, and they meet once every two hundred years to discuss the Eight Songs of Joy and the Eight Songs of Lament which comprise the holy canon of the Silver Temple.

Each individual temple is divided into the following stations:

The Acolytes. These novices are elves who have been taken into the temple for service. They may intend to become priests, or they may simply be attending at the temple in order to receive training in the *paidea*. No duty of ordination is placed upon them if they wish to leave when they reach maturity.

The Novitiate. These are priests who have just been ordained. They have the same jobs as the Acolytes, save they are permitted into the temples most sacred spaces and may see the cult-idol.

The Intoners. The Intoners sing the Songs of Joy and Lament and thus form a small choir. Becoming an intoner is not a mandatory step along the path of priesthood, for it ties one to a certain temple. Many novices choose instead to become Wanderers.

The Wanderers. These priests are set free from the bonds of their home-temple to wander the earth, adventure, and accrue fame, fortune, and worshippers as well as to funnel money back to the priesthood. Wandering-Priests are afforded a measure of respectful distance by most priests.

The Chief Intoner. One of the most prestigious of the under-positions in the temple is that of Chief Intoner, who must select the section from the Songs to sing as well as guide the other Intoners in singing it.

The Windseer. The chief priest in the temple, the Windseer appoints all other positions and determines whether new novices are fit to be ordained.

Dogma: Anunia counsels his followers to engage fully with the moment, to live in the now. His worshipers are composers of ballads and epic songs, sculptors of great works of elvish art, and warriors of consummate skill. Indeed, many of the elvish duelists known as Bladedancers worship Anunia.

Anunia does not suffer evil, and will root it out wherever he may. The Silver Temple is accorded extraordinary respect in most elvish kingdoms, and the words of the Wind Priests are taken extremely seriously. Anunia also believes in making the world a better place through art; beauty is a major element of the Anuniaian beliefs and this concept is suffused throughout elvish society.

Things which are ugly are thought to be morally warped, for beauty is the physical manifestation of moral good. This applies to the hideous elf-reavers who mutilate their flesh fearsomely as well as to the rotting countenances of the undead. All of these things are unlovely because they are immoral. For this reason, Anuniaians are very careful and wary around things which do not display natural beauty.

Day-to-Day Activities: The clerics who attend to the duties of the temple spend their days in song, meditation, and composing poetry. They administer to the elvish population that requires healing or clerking and they hire their skills as composers of music, songs, poetry, and other arts out to elvish nobility much as a bard or troubadour might.

Wandering priests generally spend their days adventuring, though they too often take time to compose small ballads. In either case, all priests sing the Evensong when the sun begins to set.

Holy Days/Important Ceremonies: The high Anunian holiday of Springsorrow occurs on the 5th of Sowing. It is a festival both joyous and mournful, dedicated to the end of spring and the knowing that all things must fade and change. It is customary for elves to read out a poem of their own writing each Springsorrow, and to submit that poetry to the Temple of the Winds nearest them as an offering.

Wind Priest of Anunia (Specialty Priest)

REQUIREMENTS: Strength 12, Constitution 12, Wisdom 9

PRIME REQ: Wisdom

ALIGNMENT: CG

WEAPONS: Scimitar, any bladed polearm

MAJOR SPHERES: All, Charm, Combat, Creation, Elemental (air), Healing, Weather, Necromantic, Protection

MINOR SPHERES: Chaos, Divination, Elemental (water), Thought, War

MAGICAL ITEMS: Any clerical.

REQ. PROFS: Religion (Anunia)

BONUS PROFS: Artistic Ability (Any) or Musical Instrument (Any)

Priests of the Windlord are protected by Anunia; they can *feather fall* three times per day; this spell only affects their person. They can also cast *whispering wind* (as per the 2nd level wizard spell) once per day.

At 3rd level, Priests of Anunia may cast the spell *wind wall* (as per the 3rd level wizard spell) once per day.

At 5th level, the Priest of Anunia may sing a potent *battle song* during combat. This unearthly music unleashes power channeled directly from the Wind Lord; the Priest and

his allies receive a +2 bonus to-hit and damage while the song continues. All foes of the priest must make a morale check for every three rounds the priest continues to sing.

At 7th level, Priests of Anunia may *levitate* at will up to a height of 160 feet. This ability will affect their own person and an additional 100 lbs of equipment.

At 10th level, Priests of Anunia may summon a 12HD air elemental once per week. This elemental arrives completely under the control of the priest.

At 15th level, Priests of Anunia may *wind walk* (as per the 7th level wizard spell) three times per day.

Meri

Epithets: the Sorrowing, the Lady of the Waters, the Mistress of Sorrows, the Seawife
Intermediate Goddess, CG

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Travelers, sadness, the sea

Aliases: Meina

Symbol: A heavily lidded eye dripping a single tear

Meri (MEH-ree) is the Goddess of the deeps. She is was captured by Cavalian in the Dawn Age and dragged deep beneath the sea to be his bride. There she dwells in a great coral palace, ever apart from her husband (save for a few times a year when they are said to return to one another). She is a sad, weeping goddess, who feels sorrow for all living things and seeks to ease their paths through life.

In appearance she is a heartbreakingly beautiful elf maid with green hair and green eyes. She rarely appears to mortals, be they priests or no.

! !

The Church

Clergy: Specialty priests, sailors

Clergy's Alignment: CG

Turn Undead: Yes

Command Undead: No

The temple of Meri is a widespread one amongst the elves. Since they ply the seas often, they make many offerings to Meri to counteract the ill-will of Cavalian on travelers. Most elvish captains seek out a Merianite shrine before departing for the open sea, and thus there is a great need for her temples to be established and well-off in each port.

Merianite establishments have a single hierarchy within each kingdom where her temples are found. They are essentially and functionally separate organizations, though the Great Hierophant of each recognizes the other Great Hierophants as her equals.

Merianite temples that do not fall under any of the established regions are on their own, lead not by a Hierophant but by a mere Seaspeaker.

Temples are organized into a simple structure. The lowest rank of the priesthood is the novitiate, who serve as temple attendants and do most of the drudgework. Like many elven religions, temple servants spend nearly eighty years before they are granted the opportunity to advance.

Those that do become Seasingers (whether they can use magic or not). The Seasingers comprise a good number of the ordained priests of any given temple. Each temple is itself run by a Seaspeaker, who may appoint the Seasingers to various offices which include the Master of Rites and Ceremonies, the Lamentor, and the Keeper of Novices.

!

! **Dogma:** Ease the pain and comfort the burdened, for Meri herself would have it be so.

! **Day-to-Day Activities:** Priests of Meri often tend to the sick, the poor, and those in great sorrows. They are also constantly amongst sailors and dockhands, blessing ships for journeys and curing ills that have been incurred upon the sea.

Seasinger of Meri (Specialty Priest)

REQUIREMENTS: Wisdom 13

PRIME REQ: Wisdom

ALIGNMENT: CG

WEAPONS: Nets, man-catcher, quarterstaff, harpoon, trident; Seasingers are restricted to natural armors

MAJOR SPHERES: All, Charm, Creation, Elemental (water), Guardian, Healing, Necromantic, Summoning, Travelers

MINOR SPHERES: Animals (aquatic only), Elemental (air), Plant, Protection, Sun

MAGICAL ITEMS: The same as priests.

REQ. PROFS: Swimming, Healing

BONUS PROFS: Religion (Meri), Weather Sense

!

! Seasingers can relieve pain or fear effects with a calming touch. Once per day, the Seasinger can attempt to *soothe emotion* by laying-on of hands. The target makes a saves vs. spell (which it may willingly choose to fail). If it is affected, a peaceful calm comes over the creature, lasting for 10 minutes per level of the priest. During this calm, the subject is completely complacent and peaceable. Any creature in combat when this ability is used will cease fighting.

! At 3rd level, the Seasinger may perform the *kiss of life* once per week for every three levels attained. This kiss will bring back a subject from the brink of death; anyone at 0 hp or less will return with 1d4 hp remaining. This kiss is a literal breathing of life into the target; as such, the Seasinger is instantly reduced to 1d4 hp upon using it.

! The kiss must be used within 10 minutes of passing below -10 hp (for a PC) or of death (for an NPC) and there must be enough bodily remains to deliver the kiss to the target's lips. If they are in pieces, for example, they will likely bleed to death again.

! At 5th level, the Seasinger radiates a calming aura that grants all friendly characters a +2 bonus to save against any fear effects or spells that would adversely agitate their emotions.

! In addition, the Seasinger may use the spell *emotion control: sadness* and *emotion control: hopelessness* once each per day.

! At 7th level, the Seasinger may use the spell *Airy Water* once per week. It is cast as though by a 12th-level wizard.

! At 10th level, the Seasinger gains the ability to cast *water breathing* three times per day.

! At 15th level, the Seasinger can attempt to share the depthless sorrows of Meri with any individual once per week. This takes a touch of flesh to flesh contact; the subject is permitted a saving throw versus paralyzation to avoid the effects. If they fail, they are forced to experience Meri's agonizing torments in their mind, reducing their Intelligence and Wisdom to scores of 3 as they become stark, raving mad. This fate persists for one day for every level the Seasinger has obtained.

Talifer

Epithets: the Fool, the Brave, the Lover

Lesser God, CG

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: War, love, fools

Symbol: A falcata crossing a shield engraved with a heart

Talifer (TÆ-li-fir) is the elven god of love both requited and un-. He is also the god of war and battles, sharing much of the same passion for war as Anunia lays claim to, though in Talifer's case he is the patron of great bodies of men not the individual soldier.

He is a lovesick god who often rushes into things without thinking and is thus always depicted with one arm in a sling. Many young elves harbor secret devotion to him, though their elders would scoff, for he is also the patron of blazingly hot emotions that erase all reason.

It is said that Talifer loves above all others the elf-goddess Meri, who is imprisoned beneath the sea. Some say his wounds are the result of a battle with Cavalian (known to men as Vodei) over her affections.

!

The Church

Clergy: Crusaders, clerics, fighters

Clergy's Alignment: CG

Turn Undead: Yes (clerics only)

Command Undead: No

The Elvish Temple of War is a small and disunited thing. Individual shrines are raised on battlefields in memoriam of great elvish victories (or losses) and each Talifernian establishment is semi-independent from all the rest. It is not uncommon for the great elven kingdoms to sponsor a single temple above all the other Talifernian temples in their lands, and for the high priests of that temple to sit in attendance at their court as the so-called “Ministers of the Blade.”

Talifernian temples take no novices before they are the age of 25 and release none into the world before they are 75. During this period they are trained in the use of a blade, instructed in the ways of the church, and given the clothes and often the armor that will serve them for the beginning of their careers.

Most Talifernians are itinerant or adventuring priests, traveling the length and breadth of the land to do valorous deeds. Those that aren't serve in a rudimentary hierarchy in their respective shrines beneath a high priest.

!

Dogma: Fight for love, fight for valor, and fight so your name blazes across the sky when you are gone.

Day-to-Day Activities: Talifernians either spend their days tending their shrines, seeing to pilgrims, and venerating the brave dead or out amongst the people. Those that travel often tell tales and heal battle wounds, as well as follow warbands around to assist them in battle.

Major Centers of Worship: In Silversong, there are a pair of great battlefields known as the Mede of War and the Last Stand where the Wars of the Moon raged particularly hot. Those landscapes, though unsettled, are dotted with Talifernian outposts, shrines, and memorials to the war-dead.

Priestly Vestments: Talifer's favored colors are brilliant red, pure white, and steel gray. Talifernians thus wear tunics of purest red with metallic wire woven through them. Armor is often times covered in a white tabard, or enameled white.

Acanian

Epithets: the Shadow

Intermediate God, TN

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Death

Aliases: Akem, Kemr

Symbol: A close-faced elvish helm

Acanian is the elvish specter of death. He represents both grief and release, for elves must eventually choose to perish or be overwhelmed with sorrows. Thus, he is a bittersweet friend who dwells beyond the Wall of Night at the edge of the world, in a palace of shade and sorrows. It is his servants who watch over the Isle in the West and make certain proper elves ascend the Stair and others are sent to his Palace.

His cult is not powerful, but it has the role of watching over the mortal remains of elves who go west as well as raising cenotaphs and mausoleums to the dead and so is all-pervasive.

Aloran

Epithets: the Warden, the Watcher

Intermediate God, LN

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Guardianship, the wood

Symbol: A rod entwined with vines

Husband of Senia, lord of the forests, and one of the two great druidic gods, Aloran (AL-oh-ran) is worshipped primarily by the wood elves (though there are also several Refuser tribes that pray to him exclusively as well). Where he is prayed to in wind elven lands it is usually in his guise as a protector and guardian and serves as the patron of the elvish citizen-militia. In the wilds, however, he is the protector of the woodlands and the trees.

Aloran is often depicted in a cloak of matted leaves with a hood of the same, though sometimes he is simply a “green man,” made from vegetation itself. He is associated with borders and woodlands, and is the uncaring enforcer of the wild. It is said that he taught the elves the secrets of speaking with the trees and stones.

His wind elven priests live in hermitages and monastic houses in the wild. His temples are always woven of plants grown together by his will, and never constructed from cut wood.

Calyeron

Epithets: the Smith

Lesser God, LG

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Law, metalworking

Aliases: Haeron, Brynjar

Symbol: A smith's hammer

In the elvish pantheon, Calyeron (CALL-yer-on) (though he remains a brother) must act as Anunia's servant. He is a patron genius of the forge, and appears as a particularly well-muscled elven smith with long flowing black hair.

Worship of Calyeron is common among high class smiths and metalworkers, generally in the form of a small shrine in their workshop. His cult is almost nonexistent, relying mostly on lay worship. Those who do serve as priests within his cult are known as the *tacimdre* or *forgewalkers*. They are generally mendicants who travel from one settlement to the next, often making use of the Silver Road.

His worship can be done in public while attending the normal Evensong of Anunia as well, as Calyeron is a client of the Wind Lord many of his faithful pray to him in Anunian shrines.

Cavalien

Epithets: the Lord of Sorrows, Master of the Deep

Intermediate God, CE

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: the sea, storms, pain

Aliases: Vodei

Symbol: A blue hand

Cavalien (cah-VALL-ee-an), in the elvish incarnation of Vodei the Twister of Ways. However, he is little-worshiped by elves and viewed more as one might a malevolent and powerful spirit rather than a god. Elvish sailors will still speak of Cavalien pulling them below, or the “deeps of Cavalien” but they rarely give him prayer or offering.

Lumia

Epithets: the Apostate, the Mage

Intermediate God, CG

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Magic, prophecy

Aliases: Galos

Symbol: An emerald-tipped staff

Lumia (loom-YA), though he has been reformed by his marriage to Noronia and subsequent acceptance back into the heavens, remains a sore subject with most elves. They claim it was Lumia who taught the Felnumen to make children, thus plaguing Arunia with goblins, orcs, and all their kin. Alone amongst the elves, the Oronnai still worship him (and do so fervently). All other elven cultures tend to eschew Lumia and look with little favor upon his priests.

Noronia

Epithets: the Daystar

Greater Goddess, NG

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Healing, the sun, growth

Aliases: Avauna

Symbol: A golden sunburst

Noronia (Nor-OWN-ya) is the elvish goddess of the sun, who radiates warmth and goodness. While the elves have a cultural love affair with the moon and silver metals, Noronia represents the day to that poetic elvish night. She is the unbridled power and passion of the dawn and the day, and her color is gold. Noronia is allied with all the elvish gods of growth and change, and she stands alongside Anunia in prowess. Her light banishes the darkness and for this reason she is also associated with the life itself.

Noronia appears as a slender elvish maiden, when she chooses to appear, from whom rays of ineffable honey-colored light pass as though her body were but a veil cast in front of the sun itself. She is the creator of the Lantern which lights the day, and it is her light that is borrowed to give the glow to the moon. Noronia is a tender goddess, rivaling Anunia's furies in her peaceful and tranquil moods. She is often said to walk amongst the elvish people in disguise to ensure that they are safe from harm. There are many legends that she herself fought, in disguise, alongside Anunia in the Elf-Dragon Wars to protect her people.

Noronian temples tend to be elaborate and make heavy use of gold and light in their construction. They are mirrors of Anuniaian temple structures; where the Anuniaites build their temples of airy archways decorated in silver, Noronian temples are often just as open to the elements but built using sturdier architectural techniques and a profusion of gold and gemstones.

Elves believe that the lantern of the sun itself is carried in her train by a lamp-bearer named Valos who walks with her across the sky. As important as her escort of the sun through the day is its journey into the underworld at night; then, the sun passes beyond the western seas and through the Wall of Night, where Noronia does fearful battle against the minions of Night before passing into the realm of the dead. There, the weary sun-bearer rests and the lamp pales for many hours before it rises once again in the east.

Solmi

Epithets: the Weaver

Lesser God, LN

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Weaving, time, fate

Aliases: Sarnon

Symbol: An elvish hourglass

Solmi (SOLL-me) is the elvish incarnation of the god men call Sarnon. His worship is held particularly highly by those elves who work with cloth. Tailors, weavers, and tapestry-makers all give praise to the god of fate. Like many of the lesser elvish gods, however, Solmi has few priests and fewer temples. His worship is mostly a private affair.

Senia

Epithets: the Moon Mother, the Green Mother

Greater Goddess, TN

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Nature, the moon, agriculture

Aliases: Eminia

Symbol: The dish of the moon

Senia (SEN-ee-ah) is the godly-wife of Aloran and the second of the two druidic gods. She is known as Eminia to men, and her elven worshippers treat her in much the same way as mannish druids do. She watches over the great wilds and deep untouched dales, with poems and artwork being dedicated in her honor by many elves throughout Arunia. Of the sun and moon, most elves believe the moon most beautiful, most subtle, and most potent.

Sulcania

Epithets: the Historian, the Ponderer

Intermediate God, NG

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Books, history, learning

Aliases: Quilian Knowais

Symbol: An open book with a quill laid across it

Sulcania (sul-CAHN-ia) is the elvish god of scholars and historians. A favorite of scribes, researchers, and even some poets, Sulcania serves as the god of the great libraries, lorehouses, and scriptoria of the elves. He is a distant fatherly figure, unused to asking his clergy for anything or directing his worshipers to do anything. He's mostly concerned with the completion of manuscripts and the advancement of the historian's craft.

He cannot stand the destruction of knowledge and the ruination of books. He will indeed manifest to punish those who burn libraries or despoil Sulcanite monasteries. It's said that when the great libraries of the Vesimia burned during the War of the Moon he could be seen walking through their aisle weeping, tearing at his hair like a mourner.

The Historian manifests as a slender elf, very pale, with pure white hair and a long chin-beard. He is always depicted in whites and grays.

Tulia

Epithets: the Spring Maiden

Intermediate Goddess, NG

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Springtime, rebirth, growth

Aliases: Eleia

Symbol: A newly grown leaf

Tulia (TOO-lee-ah) is the elvish goddess of the fields and glades, and she is worshipped by many farmers and keepers of groves. She is associated with Eleia, most likely the same deity by a different name. Her temples are rarely found in elvish cities, but they dot the pastoral countryside with their tholos domes and flowering pillars. Her priests are pastoral as well, and care not for the great urban centers but rather for the rambling farms of the countryside.

The Shadow Three

These three elvish gods are served by a single priesthood; they are Fyraas, the goddess of disease and flame, Runeia, the god of corruptions and monies, and Seaid, the lord of lies and thieves. Together they make up the Shadow Pantheon, and are served by the ecumenical clerics of the Shadow. These three elven gods represent the unpleasant underbelly of their culture, and many more elves than one might think worship one of the three. Their worshippers need not be evil, though many are.

Worship of the Shadow Three is not restricted by elven law, but is looked upon as a sign of deep inward evil and so often kept secret. Shadow Temples often lie in out of the way places, or hidden from prying eyes so their supplicants need not be subject to prejudice.

Their priests tend to wear grays or blacks, often clothing themselves in ornate silks and veils. The sign of the Shadow Three is a black iron triangle or pyramid, which is often worn as a charm by those who worship at the dark altars.

THE DWARVEN PANTHEON

! Dwarven gods can easily be divided into three sub-pantheons. The first two are those which serve Eiri the Earthfather and Helda the Stonemother, and the third is comprised of those left over who serve no one but themselves. Most of the gods that serve Eiri and Helda are their own offspring, and they are divided by gender with the sons of the dwarven gods serving Eiri and their daughters Helda.

Eiri

Epithets: the Earthfather, the Dwarf-father

Greater God, LG

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Kingship, law, exploration, craftsmanship, the earth and stone

Symbol: Three mountains

Eiri (EYE-ree) the Earthfather the dwarf-maker and husband to Helden Stonemother. While the elves claim physical descent from Aros, the dwarves have no such beliefs about their father; Eiri made them from stone in the bowels of the earth, shaping them as a mason shapes a statue. They take pride in this beginning, for it was Eiri who made the first Sons of Stone, the greatsires of their race. Thus, amongst all their gods, Eiri is held in the highest esteem.

Eiri himself is an explorer and a wanderer. He delved into the deeps before he made the tolfolk, the tool-dwarves, and alone he peered into the darkest places of the world. He is the explorer-god, the maker-god. Building, crafting, and the makings of cunning things are worship of Eiri. Every dwarven tolhal has a great temple to Eiri at its heart where there burns the brightest forge-fires, and it is on anvils consecrated by Eiri and Brunr that the Master Smiths of that race hammer out their legendary works.

In mannish stories, Eiri generally appears as a hunched but powerfully built old man with a long white beard and a wide-brimmed hat. For dwarves, Eiri is undoubtedly a dwarf with a luxurious well-braided white beard and long white hair. A secondary symbol

of Eiri is the hammer, which can both create and destroy. But Eiri loathes battle, for it depletes the already small numbers of his children.

Eiri is married to Helda Gryrmodhr (Stonemother) and together the two are the parents of a great number of the dwarven pantheon: Brunr, Glita, Grafar, Hyrr, Nithrar, Matta, Skaldi, Soeri, and Eridh. Of these, Brunr, Glita, Grafar, and Nithrar all serve Eiri directly and their temples are subordinate to his.

The Church

Clergy: Sons and Daughters of Stone, Clerics (the Pantheon of the Hall)

Clergy's Alignment: LG, LN

Turn Undead: No

Command Undead: Yes (draugr and other dwarven undead only)

The church of Eiri is ubiquitous throughout dwarven lands. Green or blue dwarven settlements might have a simple shrine, but all iron dwarves must have a sacred temple of their creator-god in order to do their devotions. The Dwarf-father's temple, much like the colonies of the iron dwarves, follows a strict procedure in that all order and correctness descends from ancient Hârnholme, and in the absence of Hârnholme, from the Arinnfal.

In Hilmhirhol, the chief city of the Arinnfal, the *Vísor"r* dwells. He is the high priest of the temple, and sits in council with the other great priests (*Ríkor"r*) of which there are traditionally ten including himself. This is called the Council of Stone (the *Stóllrstein*) and they interpret the ancient eddas throughout their many years; often the ascendance of a *Vísor"r* will presage the writing of a large manuscript on eddic interpretation, the interpretation of law codes, and the recording of the holdings of the temple in a single book that is graven in stone, known as the *Heilabokr*. These holy-books are named after the *Vísor"r* who began them, and are frequently used as references by the *aetrocr* or clan-judges.

When a member of the Council of Stone dies, the *Vísor"r* is permitted to select a new one from amongst any priest in the temple. However, it is most likely that he will take into account the vote of the Council and in the most politic of circumstances he will choose a pool of potential replacements which the Council votes upon. In the end, however, the decision remains solely in the hands of the High Priest.

Upon the death of the *Vísor"r*, the each of the remaining nine council members may present a candidate for replacement. *Mikilor"ar* come from all over the world to the Arinnfal to cast their votes, though difficult to reach holds or those that are very far may simply send representatives or not attend at all. While this august ceremony was once held in the First Temple, a new hall has been built for it in Hilmirhol, since the First Temple lies beneath the sea. The proceedings are known as the Choosing (*Kíósrinn*) and may take many months, for the *Vísor"r* is not elected until three fourths of all present vote for a single candidate. During the Council of Choosing the members of the

temple who may vote are not permitted to leave the hall or receive news of the outside world.

Luckily, Eiri himself has been known to intercede to show which candidate he prefers, and if that occurs (by the lighting of the sacral braziers, which spring to life by Eiri's will) the entire temple instantly acquiesces and acknowledges the will of the god.

Standing below the Stóllrstein are the individual priests who rule over each great temple in a folkhall. These are known as *mikilor"ar*, and it is their duty to ensure the running of the temple under their charge. *Mikilor"ar* answer to a council of elders (of which there are nine) who are drawn from the oldest priests serving in the temple. It is this council which selects the new *mikilor"ar* when one passes away.

Below the *mikilor"ar* and his council, there are several ranks in individual temples. These are the *mi"ar*, the middle-priests, who's duty it is to sing eddas, keep records, and service the temple's supplicants, the *laesr* or lesser-priests, who serve the *mi"ar* and assist them in their duties, and the *ungor* or acolytes who are still being initiated.

Smaller temples follow the same format, save they often have truncated chains of command (no council, for example) and their chief priests are known as *smalor"ar* and receive no vote in the matters of the Choosing.

Dogma: The doctrine of Eiri is fairly simple. Craft, create, explore, delve, polish; worship is in the careful following of craftsmanship. There is nothing more pleasing to Eiri than the ring of hammers and the shine of beautiful things. War is evil, for it destroys dwarves and good crafts, but if it cannot be avoided it must be done completely.

Day-to-Day Activities: The priests of the Earthfather occupy their time by prayer and meditation, but also by active service with the clans of a folkhall. They build and labor as any other dwarves do. They knit together the clans, singing the eddas, keeping the records, and providing services.

Dvergmál of Eiri (Specialty Priest)

REQUIREMENTS: Strength 12, Wisdom 9

PRIME REQ: Wisdom

ALIGNMENT: LN, LE, LG, NG

WEAPONS: Warhammer, pick, axe, short sword

MAJOR SPHERES: Combat, Divination, Elemental, Guardian, Healing, Protection, Creation, Travelers

MINOR SPHERES: Astral, Necromantic, Wards

MAGICAL ITEMS: Any that a cleric may use as well as items normally only available to warriors.

REQ. PROFS: Mining

BONUS PROFS: Stonemasonry, Ancient Languages (Runic)

When wielding one of the weapons of their chosen god, the priest of the earthfather counts as holding a weapon with a magical bonus equal to their level/4 (maximum of +5 at level 20). This bonus is a real magical bonus, but the item itself is not enchanted when it leaves the hands of the cleric. Magical weapons of greater power retain their bonuses.

They may also cast *light* (as the 1st-level wizard spell) once per day.

At 3rd level, Dvergmál can cast *dig* (as the 4th-level wizard spell) or *stone shape* (as the 3rd-level priest spell) once per day.

At 5th level, Dvergmál can detect the way to the surface of any underground complex granted such a path exists by concentrating for 1d10 rounds. Aboveground they can never be flummoxed by magic short of artifact or god-level as to the direction of true north. They are never turned around or lost, and can always identify the direction they intended to go.

At 7th level, Dvergmál gain a number of attacks per round as though they were fighters of equivalent level. This means the Leitor"ar has 3/2 attacks/round at level 7 and gains 2/round at level 13.

At 10th level, a Dvergmál who's feet are touching bare earth (rock or stone) increases their Strength by 4 points to a maximum of 18/00 (every twenty five points of exceptional strength counts as 1 point).

At 15th level, Dvergmál are immune to damage from bludgeoning weapons or blunt objects (including falling boulders). They may still be knocked over, but take no damage.

Pantheon of the Hall

! These dwarven gods belong in the public spaces, those shared by the clans rather than kept secret, or separate. The sons born of Eiri and Helda serve their father (as the daughters of their union serve in the Pantheon of the Hearth). Thus, the four brothers Brunr, Glita, Grafar, and Nithrar are seen as inter-connected and linked, and all do homage to their parents—but first follow the desires of Eiri.

Brunr

Epithets: the Forgemaster, the Fireheart, the Forgelord, Brightbeard, the Forgefather
Intermediate God, LG

Family: Dvergrin

Portfolio: Fire, forges, volcanos

Symbol: A triangular mountain with a fire in its heart

Brunr is the patron deity of the forge and of forging, and all dwarven smiths give offerings to him. He is said to inhabit the deepest hearts of mountains, and the molten

blood of the earth is his to command. Brightbeard's statues and eikons are commonly seen in dwarven forges placed in special niches above the fire.

Glita

Epithets: the Reader, the Craftsman

Intermediate God, NG

Family: Dvergrin

Portfolio: Art and scholarship

Symbol: A chisel and hammer

Glita is sometimes confused with the Vinthar god Quilian Knowais—the two are certainly in the same business, what with their overlapping portfolios. However, Glita and Quilian are thought to be distinct from one another (if only because the Dvergrin must be the descendent of Eiri and Helda while the Vinthar is not said to be) but joined in ideology.

Glita's own realm is somewhat larger than Quilians amongst dwarves, for "art" is taken to mean any craft or skill that requires learning. Thus, Glita is a favorite of artisans and dwarves who make things with their hands (almost all of them). He is depicted as immensely old and wears a pair of lenses over his eyes to help him see.

Grafar

Epithets: the Architect, the Miner, the Engineer, the Builder, the Illuminator

Intermediate God, LN

Family: Dvergrin

Portfolio: Mines, engineering, planning

Symbol: A dwarven lantern

Grafar's priests are intensely important in all dwarven folkhalls. No new delvings or mines are begun without approval of the Sacred Architects, and the clan-records of each delving are held in their vaults. The Architects roam the underhalls and inspect the joinings and joists and also help plan new ventures. Many of the great dwarven feats of engineering are overseen by the Architects, or at least aided by them.

Grafar himself is a strict god, and his priests reflect his diligence in their fastidious attire, timeliness, and absolute adherence to the law and the rules of safe conduct and design.

Nithrar

Epithets: Goldenbeard, Keeneye

Intermediate God, LG

Family: Dvergrin

Portfolio: Gold, gems, coins, hidden wealth

Symbol: A dwarven coin with Nithrar's face imprinted on it

Of all the things dwarves love, there are two which top their lists: craftsmanship followed closely behind by gold and gemstones. Wealth is the second love of every dwarf,

behind finely made or elegantly crafted things. Family and clan, perhaps, balance upon a precious line there alongside them.

Every dwarf knows Nithrar Keeneye, for the Goldenbeard is the deity of hidden hoards, secluded veins of ore, and great finds of treasure. He is the patron of miners in a way that Grafar never could be—though Grafar may be asked to help design the mine, it is Nithrar who helps the dwarves find the gold.

Helda Stonemother

Epithets: the Stonemother

Greater Goddess, LG

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Protection, defense, agriculture, brewing

Symbol: An open hand, fingers facing downward, cupped

Helda (HELL-da) Stonemother is the mother of the entire dwarven race. She and Eiri bestowed life upon the first dwarves in the dawn of time, granting the gift to Baldr Son-of-Stone first and foremost. She is held second in esteem only to the Earthfather himself, and her worship is widespread amongst the dwarves.

The Stonemother is the patron of the hall and hearth; unlike her husband, she does not delve or wander but fortifies and defends. Every dwarven home has a private shrine to Helda, and her name is invoked in the raising of new halls or undertaking of new ventures. She is also the patron of the grains and brews, the hunters, farmers, and curers of the dwarven world. She is worshipped both in houses and in the open field, where she is thought to watch over her children.

Helda most often appears as an aged dwarf matron, clad in a healer's robe but armed with a shield and axe. She is kind to those who do good, who further the dwarven race, and who protect the halls and holds of her children. To those who she counts as enemy, however, she is staunch and unyielding.

Between Helda and Eiri, a good number of the dwarven gods are their children. Of those Hyrr, Matta, Skaldi, and Soeri serve Helda directly and are considered to be under her patronage.

The Church

Clergy: Clerics (Pantheon of the Hearth), Priests of the Stonemother

Clergy's Alignment: Any good

Turn Undead: No

Command Undead: Dwarven only

The Heldanic church is found everywhere dwarves are. Even when an official temple hasn't been established, all dwarven homes bear at least a small likeness of the Earthmother in them. Where the church is too small to merit its own temple, Heldanic

priests will generally operate from an Eiric temple since there are no dwarf settlements without one.

Hierarchically, the Heldanic temple makes good use of the structures established by the church of Eiri: Eiric temples are often used as staging posts and wayhouses by Heldanic priests traveling to or from the great meeting places of their faith.

The church of Helda is divided into spheres of influence, generally determined by the nearest large dwarven hall. All churches closest to that hall are assumed to be under the responsibility of the *Grytivar* or stone-priest there. From the top of the chain of command down to the very bottom, the church is governed by the Five Mothers of the Arinnfal (all of whom are female church elders, elected by the remaining Four mothers when one goes to stone).

Below the Five Mothers are the regional *Grytivar*, who are tasked with the well-being of all dwarves within their authority. In this monumental task they are assisted by the Gray Elders, a council of twelve priests chosen to aid the Stone-priest upon her ascension. Stone-priests themselves are chosen by the Elders of the previous hierophant.

Individual temple-heads are known as Gray Priests and they often have a small council similar to that of the Gray Elders. Each temple is also required to staff a High Healer, a Gaethaff (the gatekeeper of the settlement, leader of the militia, generally female), a Master of Grains and Brews, a Quartermaster, and a Master of Novices.

Heldanic temples are themselves generally humble affairs, small and located off away from the main focus of the settlement. Heldanite priests minister to all dwarves, and thus they pass freely between nobles, craftsfolk, and lowly commoners. Most dwarven women that make up the militias and defenders of the hearth and hall worship Helda, and thus her temples can often double as a militia headquarters and armory.

Dogma: Defend the hearth and the family, defend the hall and the people.

Day-to-Day Activities: Priests of Helda serve as gaethaffs, militia-dwarves, and battle-priestesses as well as serving the needs of the community. Many of the oldest Heldanites are known as the Mothers, and they dispatch their followers and priests as needed throughout the dwarven halls to ensure that families are well and defenses maintained.

Priest of the Stonemother
(Specialty Priest)

REQUIREMENTS: Constitution 12, Wisdom 9
PRIME REQ: Wisdom
ALIGNMENT: LG or NG
WEAPONS: Any blunt one-handed weapon

MAJOR SPHERES: Combat, Creation, Elemental (earth, fire), Guardian, Healing, Law, Necromantic, Protection, Sun, Wards

MINOR SPHERES: Charm, Elemental (air), Plant, Summoning

MAGICAL ITEMS: Any clerical

REQ. PROFS: Healing

BONUS PROFS: One of: Herbalism, Brewing, Firebuilding

These are the stone-priests of Helden, and as such they receive certain powers to withstand the rigors of combat. They may *aid* themselves (as per the second level priest spell) once per day; this action takes no time and they merely need to concentrate.

At 3rd level, the priest grants all friendly dwarves a +4 bonus to their morale scores; they do not need to see the priest, as this is deep radiating magic provided by the Stonemother.

At 5th level, the priest receives the *shield specialization* from C&T for free. In addition, whenever the priest has their shield at the ready they are granted a +1 bonus to any save against magic of any kind.

At 7th level, the priest receives a +2 bonus to their constitution; this may take them all the way up to 21 constitution and may not be combined with other constitution gaining effects save a *Technichus*.

At 10th level, the priest automatically passes all saving throws made to combat fear effects. In addition, the priest may increase their strength to 18/00 once per day for a number of rounds equal to one half their level.

At 15th level, the priest's shield and armor naturally count as enchanted items of a bonus equal to one fifth their level, even if they are not. If they are already enchanted, the higher enchantment takes precedence. If they are enchanted for effect but their plusses are less, the plusses are increased to the priest's rank and the effects remain.

Pantheon of the Hearth

! The daughters of Eiri and Helda form the so-called Pantheon of the Heart (though only Hyrr and Matta have any truck with homes and hearths). They are most frequently worshipped in the privacy of each family's house—again, save for Eridh, who seems to be the odd dwarf out.

Hyrr

Epithets: the Hearthwife, the Homebuilder

Intermediate Goddess, LG

Family: Dvergrin

Portfolio: Homes, marriage, healing

Symbol: A hearth stone adorned with an “h” rune

Hyrr (HEE-rr) is the mistress of the house and keeper of the home. Her sign is often graven above doorways and into the bottom lintels of the main door of the house. Priests of Hyrr perform dwarven marriages, which are a sacred right binding family to family.

Her priests have little to do outside the halls of the dwarves and are thus rarely seen beyond their boundaries. Outhall clans may host their own small temples or simply make use of the priesthoods that dwell in the nearby folkhalls.

Matta

Epithets: Longbraid, the Ox

Intermediate Goddess, LG

Family: Dvergrin

Portfolio: Strength, valor, battle, childbirth

Symbol: An ox's head

Matta (MAH-ta) the Ox is the patron goddess of the birthing bed, but also of valor in combat. Her priestesses are rarely present on the battlefield, but hymns to her are sometimes sung by dwarven contingents. The strange dual nature of dwarven combat (women defend the hearth and home, men sally forth to battle foes abroad) means that Matta is worshipped on both ends of the spectrum.

Her priestesses are often blunt but good humored, and they trouble themselves in all matters of the hall as though it were their right. They maintain networks of communication throughout the womenfolk of the clans, giving them more information than perhaps any other dwarven priesthood.

Eridh

Epithets: the Crowfeeder, the Tombbuilder, the Sonslayer

Intermediate Goddess, CE

Family: Dvergrin

Portfolio: War, chaos, carrion

Symbol: Three black crows

Eridh (AIR-ith) the Crowfeeder is the dwarven goddess of war and violence. When war stalks the land, the dwarves say "Eridh rides." She is reviled, feared, and hated but also given a modicum of respect. She is normally strictly controlled by Helda, her mother, but when she's let off the leash she runs wild.

The priests of Eridh—the Warfathers and Warmaidens—are among the most feared and dangerous dwarven priests in Arunia. They constantly seek to bring open bloodshed between their own kind as well as urging princes on foolhardy wars against goblins, orcs, and anything else in order to see blood spilled. The servants of the Crowfeeder are rightfully to be avoided when possible, used and discarded when necessary.

Skaldi

Epithets: the Maiden, the Fair

Intermediate Goddess, LG

Family: Dvergrin

Portfolio: Family, kinship, the clan

Symbol: A clan-shield

Skaldi (SKALL-dee) is the sister to Soeri the Oathkeeper and the incarnate goddess of the clan and kindred. It is Skaldi who is invoked at dwarven weddings, and Skaldi when the naming of a new child must be done. Skaldi oversees the union of families and the ties of clanhood, and she is the patron of young dwarf maids. She appears as a particularly fetching dwarf maid with braided gold-bronze hair.

The priesthood of Skaldi is almost universally female, and each clan often establishes a patron-temple where her priests can pray to the dwarvish ancestors of the clan as well as perform the ceremonies required to allow social life to continue.

Soeri

Epithets: the Oathkeeper, the Just

Lesser God, LN

Family: Dvergrin

Portfolio: Brotherhood, oaths

Symbol: A clenched fist of stone

Soeri (so-EH-ree) the Oathkeeper is the twin brother of Skaldi the Maiden and together they represent all aspects of dwarven family and kinship. He is implicitly the witness of every dwarven contract, lending an aura of gravity to everything a dwarf may say. Indeed, one of the many reasons dwarves are cagey about giving their word is because Soeri is watching. No dwarf wishes to commit himself to an action that he would not have Soeri hear and thereafter judge if the oath was fulfilled.

Soeri is a familial god, and can often be found represented beside the Earthfather and Stonemother in a dwarven household, right next to his sister, Skaldi. He is said to be the son of Eiri and Helda but unlike his parents and sister he is an exacting deity. He holds no room for mercy nor does he abide by the notion of mitigating circumstances. His law is inflexible, and there is no way one can break an oath and escape him. Soeri's wrath is said to follow any accursed oathbreaker, dogging him with evil luck till he ends his days.

The Oathkeeper is also said to guard the entrance to the halls of the blessed in the afterlife, and no dwarf who has broken an oath can pass by his iron standard. Those who are turned away are doomed to wander the unlighted halls of the damned, forever cut off from kin and clan.

Soeri himself is depicted as a dwarf of middle age, long in the beard and stern of

countenance. He dresses in simple clan-appropriate clothes, humble without being slovenly. He is often associated with the runic letter Othila as well as with the sign of a clenched stone fist.

The Other Dwarven Gods

Arodr

Epithets: the Songfather

Lesser God, CG

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Winds, poetry, eddas, history, furors

Aliases: Anunia, Aros

Symbol: A gray hunting horn with silver bands

Arodr (ah-ROE-dir) the Songfather is the dwarven interpretation of Aros/Anunia and is known amongst them as the Lord of History and the keeper of the ancient secrets of Runic. His name is invoked before the recitation of eddas and the winding of the great horns consecrated in his name. The dwarves most likely to worship Arodr are those who write histories and transcribe the ancient tales of the dwarven kith and kin.

His priesthood is small and they focus their attentions on scholars and explorers. Most dwarves who go off into the wild take with them both an eikon or a pendant of Eiri and one of Arodr.

Agirni

Epithets: the Hoarder, the Kithless

Intermediate God, LE

Family: Dvegrin

Portfolio: Greed, hordes, hidden wealth

Symbol: A golden *glamr* coin

Agírni (Ah-GIRR-nee) is one of the Dvegrin who do not follow either Helda or Eiri; he is the lord of wealth and greed, and is invoked by those who seek to build up their fortunes. He represents one of the worst perversions of dwarven secrecy, that is to hoard and keep wealth. He appears to be a hale dwarf in his middle age with a brown beard and hair but a single golden ring on his left hand.

The priests of Agnírni celebrate wealth and excess, but only that which is hoarded and never that which is spent. To this end they may appear severe, but alone among the dwarven temples are completely mercenary with their offerings.

Brynjar

Epithets: the Armourer, the Oakenshield

Intermediate God, LN

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Fortifications, defense, armorers

Aliases: Haeron, Calyeron

Symbol: An oak roundshield with a hammer upon it

The white-haired Brynjar (BRINN-yarr) is the dwarvish incarnation of Haeron, the Hammerer. He is the patron of defenses, armor, and armor smiths. He appears as an old sagely dwarf wearing a smith's leathers and holding a hammer. His sigil can be seen carved into the walls of many ancient dwarvish bastions as a charm, or cut into the facing side of shields so that dwarves may pray to him when they are hard beset.

Brynjar's priests serve the armorers and defensive engineers of every hall and settlement, working with them and blessing their endeavors.

Geilden

Epithets: the Creeping, the Silent

Lesser God, NE

Family: Dvergrin

Portfolio: Thieves, shadows

Symbol: A thief's pick

Geilden (GEEL-den) is a god of low dwarven cunning, the type which belongs to thieves and lockpicks. He is the patron of the sneaking shadow and the black-hearted thief as well as the simple footpad or cutpurse. He is reviled by most of the other dwarven gods for his untrustworthy and unsteady nature, and is the most likely to change sides in any given divine conflict. He wears a short black beard and close-cropped black hair and is most often depicted dressed in a black hooded cloak. Dwarves pray to him when they have secrets they must keep.

His priesthood makes a study of hiding their temples in plain sight. Secret chambers and vaults, hidden doors, and other such cunning mechanisms keep the uninitiated from stumbling into Geilden's lair... though a few coins spread around in any low district of any folkhall will likely reveal the nearest temple.

Kemr

Epithets: the Gatekeeper, the Guest

Intermediate God, TN

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Death

Aliases: Akem, Akanian

Symbol: A gatewarden's key

Kemr (KEMM-r), while he has no priests among the dwarves, is still a powerful force in their culture. His sign of the Gate and the Key adorns most dwarven crypts, and the priests of Eiri perform funerary rites in his name. It is the Guest who is referred to whenever the dwarves speak of death, and the hooded dwarf holding the Key of the

Seven Gates who they depict. Eirian priests raise altars to him in dwarven clan-tombs, and have statues of his grim presence carved to remind all dwarves that they must some day return to the earth. It is Kemr who guides dwarves into the Halls of the Ancestors, depositing them to be judged by the gatekeeper there.

Ljúg

Epithets: the False

Lesser God, CE

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Lies, tricks

Aliases: Galos, Lumia (?)

Symbol: A silver ring

Ljúg (LYUG) was, until the end of the 8th Age, thought to be an incarnation of Galos the Trickster. However, when Galos/Lumia was blinded, Ljúg never lost his sight. Nevertheless, most theologians agree that he is an aspect of that god. In his guise as the trickster, Ljúg appears to be a dwarf with a prominent gut and a luxurious black beard and green eyes. He is the master of lies and lord of deceit, and such is often invoked by dwarves who seek to conceal, overmaster, or betray.

His priests are smirking sinners whose temples are often targeted by dwarven princes. Whenever evil things occur in a hall, it is the Ljúgite temples that are first closed down, their properties confiscated. Due to this preponderance, they have learned to hide their true wealth in the vaults of their followers.

Meidhos

Epithets: the Weaver

Lesser God, LN

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Weaving, time

Aliases: Sarnon

Symbol: A spinner's wheel

Meidhos (MY-thos) is a god little worshipped by the dwarves. He is the patron of spinners and weavers and is sometimes invoked when there are matters of time to deal with, but otherwise he has no clergy and no presence amongst them. He is, in fact, an aspect of Sarnon the Wounded. Rarely, dwarves will blame Meidhos when fate turns against them, muttering that the "woof and the warp have twisted."

Mordrig

Epithets: the Mad, the Raging

Lesser God, CE

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: Vengeance, murder

Aliases: Talleal

Symbol: A bloody dagger

Many theorize that Mordrig (MORE-drig) is an aspect of Talleal since he shares many of the same urges. However, little can be said of the origins of this mysterious and hateful god. He appears with flaming red hair and a red beard, and is often depicted as dripping in gore. He is invoked when oaths are shattered or great vengeance must be enacted, and dwarves so doing will cut themselves with a dagger to coat it in blood. Often, they drop this blade at the feet of the accused, or give it as a sacrifice to the temple.

Mordrig's priesthood is completely outlawed in all dwarven halls and lands. His temples are secret affairs that, when discovered, tend to be quickly shut down. His priests are grim-faced servants to murder and rage, and will often seek out those who have been wronged and encourage them to seek recourse.

Vodulfr

Epithets: the Deepfather, the Sea King

Greater God, CE

Family: Aelio

Portfolio: The sea, merchants, storms

Aliases: Vodei, Kavalian

Symbol: An anchor with a chain wrapped about it

Vodulfr (voe-DUL-fur) is the dwarven aspect of Vodei, the eldest and most angry member of the Quarto. In dwarvish guise he is a petulant and angry green-bearded king who lives beneath the sea and endlessly wishing to suck down the living into his realm of dark semi-twilight. Blue dwarves in particular often worship Vodei not as a guardian, but as a sort of tutelary spirit to appease and divert.

Vodulfr's priests are generally good natured and kindly, eager to appease the Deepfather and keep his wrathful eye from the ships of the dwarves. The rare exceptions to this rule are dangerous dwarves indeed, and are generally thought to be unhinged or gods-touched themselves.

THE SMALLFOLK PANTHEON

Many religious scholars have been concerned or disturbed by the fact that the gods of men resemble men, the gods of elves resemble elves, and the gods of the smallfolk resemble the smallfolk. Some have said that this is because the gods themselves must be born from the people who worship them. Others, the vast majority of others, have retorted with Avaridus the Philosopher's words: "You can only read in the world what is already present in yourself."

Leesha Roseheart

Greater Goddess, NG

Family: Vinthar

Portfolio: Wanderlust, farming, halflings

Symbol: A heart entwined with roses

Leesha (LEE-shuh) Roseheart is the mother of halflings and gnomes, the lady of Laughter, and the lusty patron lady of all farmers and farms. She is said to have a companion in the form of a silver cat who is known as the protector of farmlands. She has been unfaithful to her husband Topaz Firegem in her time, laying with such varied folk as Lapris Cleverfingers, Pogrillius Tosscombe and, some say, Eiri Earthfather.

She is prone to defending the halfling-folk to the point of manifestation and no one, not even Haeron, can stand in her way. She is the unofficial head of the smallfolk pantheon, and her might is unmatched by any of their deities. Indeed, she can stand against the Felnumen themselves if she must.

Leesha appears as a halfling herself, heavy yet beautiful. It is said that her smile can bring peace to all things that see it and that her touch can awaken the very roots and vines of the earth. Her command is said to extend over weather and the very growing things.

She has been known to approve of halfling and gnomish heroes and promote them to the status of gods. The smallfolk pantheon began quite humbly with Topaz, Leesha, and Quilian representing the only true deities. Over time, smallfolk heroes were given the rank of demi- and full gods by Leesha.

In the smallfolk afterlife, which is of course the mythical Greensward, it is said that Leesha grows the Apples of Dusk which give her favored heroes their immortality. The Apples, long-sought by the Felnumen and their disgusting schemes, seem to be akin to the tallfolk's stories of the Font of Life.

The Church

Clergy: Stouthearts (specialty priests), warriors, warrior/thieves

Clergy's Alignment: Any good

Turn Undead: Yes

Command Undead: No

Leesha's temples are generally lavish affairs, well-decorated with grains, cereals, and fruit-of-the-vine. They are often made of wood, though more ancient ones may be constructed of stone. In all cases, vines and flowers will be found in abundance.

The temple of Leesha is ubiquitous amongst smallfolk, almost more so than any other temple. All smallfolk know her name and hew to her teachings first and foremost. She is the lady of wanderlust, but also of caring work and loving your neighbor (in some senses).

Stouthearts serve every smallfolk community; marriage must be done in the eyes of a Southeart, who binds the two parties together, death ceremonies are celebrated with the aid of a Stoutheart, as are births. They are the most common form of priests amongst halflings and gnomes.

Leesha's church believes in an intensely intimate relationship with the mother-goddess which rarely needs mediating through the clergy. Smallfolk leave dishes of milk for the Silver Cat, pray to Leesha for rains or good harvests, and generally keep their faith in small but important ways. Ceremony is saved for festival days and holy-days, marriages and deaths, births and harvests.

All Leeshan clerics are also trained in the long and epic history of the smallfolk, taught the stories of their ancestors and their migration from the semi-mythical Greensward to the world of Arunia. They learn the names of every smallfolk hero and can recite the ancient legends, usually with aplomb.

Dogma: Leesha teaches that the living growing world is a place of wonder. She preaches kindness to smallfolk and unremitting destruction to the despoilers of their homes: kobolds and gnolls. Those who follow her believe that goodness comes from within, that the strength of a pure heart is more powerful than any evil.

Of course, this dogma relents in the face of the pure hatred she holds for Felnumen. Followers of Leesha will gleefully slaughter gnolls or kobolds, and even extend this hatred to evil giants and giant-kin.

There is no mercy or quarter given to gnolls or kobolds by any Leeshan (as indeed most smallfolk would never even think of giving these monsters quarter) though the question of evil giants is debatable. Throughout history, however, these creatures have been so destructive to the way of life of the smallfolk (gnolls eat halflings and sometimes gnomes as well, while kobolds seek out gnomes for the slaughter) that the Leeshans see it as their duty to destroy them.

Day-to-Day Activities: Stouthearts tend their temples, but they also tend the every-day needs of their parish. Whether or not someone is a member of the inner cult of Leesha, Stouthearts are often found granting aid (both labor and monetary) to those in need.

Their most common duties are to help till the soil, fertilize it, or bless it. In addition to this, however, they can often be found helping at any worksites in a smallfolk village.

There are those Leeshans who travel, embodying the Roseheart's penchant for journeys and sojourners. These stoutheart priests take to the open road to do good deeds and bring Leesha's peace to the world. Itinerating Leeshan priests generally travel from smallfolk settlement to smallfolk settlement and accept payment for their services in the form of food or lodging.

Holy Days/Important Ceremonies: The Leeshans have several major holy-days throughout the year. The first and most prominent is the beginning of spring; on the 1st of Thaw, the smallfolk celebrate the Feast of the Greensward which heralds the return of life to the land. Secondary festival days generally fall on or near their counterparts in the Milean calendar.

Stoutheart of Leesha

(Specialty Priest)

REQUIREMENTS: Wisdom 9, Charisma 10

PRIME REQ: Wisdom

ALIGNMENT: NG

WEAPONS: Bill-hook, sickle, scythe, staff, club, net, spear

MAJOR SPHERES: All, Animal, Guardian, Healing, Plant, Protection, Summoning, Sun, Wards, Weather

MINOR SPHERES: Charm, Combat, Elemental, Necromantic

MAGICAL ITEMS: Any priestly or druidic

REQ. PROFS: Farming

BONUS PROFS: Religion (Leesha), Ancient History (halflings)

At 1st level, priests of Leesha may use a *soothing word* to calm anyone under the effect of *fear* (nonmagical or magical) over the course of one round.

At 3rd level, the Stoutheart becomes immune to fear. She may *pass without trace* through any farmland.

At 5th level, the Stoutheart and any companions may travel as though on a forced march for one day every week with no ill effects. Additionally, she may *create food and water* three times per week.

At 7th level, the Stoutheart may increase her constitution by one point to a maximum of 18.

At 10th level, the Stoutheart recovers a number of d6 hp on a day of solid rest equal to her level.

At 15th level, the Stoutheart may, once per day, awaken one tree that she touches in much the same way that a treant does. This tree fights as a treant of 12 HD and returns to an inanimate state after one hour or if it moves more than 60 yards from the Stoutheart.

Topaz Firegem

Greater God, NG

Family: Vinthar

Portfolio: Fire, magic, community

Symbol: A crystalline flame

Topaz (TOE-paz) Firegem is the chief god of the Smallfolk pantheon. He is the longtime husband of Leesha Roseheart (though she has snubbed, cuckolded, and scorned him time and time again) and is less nicely known as the Hornéd God. He is a serious creature and a member of the youngest race of deities, the Vinthar.

As the chief male in the Vinthian pantheon, Topaz bears great responsibility to ensure that the evil things from the monstrous realms that despise halflings and gnomes are kept at bay. He often fights alongside Halmun Deepdelve, Beryl Ironfoot, and Solmon Woodhome when the monstrous gods press close.

The Vinthar are an interfering race, and Topaz is one of the most interfering Vinthar of all. Like Leesha he often appears to his followers and even deigns to disguise himself and walk amongst them, masquerading as a gnomish magic-worker.

He despises the heros and gods that win his wife's affections, so he is often at odds with Pogriilius Tosscooble (her current fling) and Lapris Cleverfingers (one of her old paramours).

Topaz appears as a red-bearded gnome with a face heavily lined with cares. He generally wears flashy robes and curly slippers and carries a wand with a ruby on its tip carved into a fantastic flickering fire.

!

The Church

Clergy: Speciality priests, evokers

Clergy's Alignment: Any good

Turn Undead: Yes

Command Undead: No

Lapris' church is worshipped solely by gnomes. Halflings have no interest or capability with magic and so they would rather worship his rivals, Tosscooble or Cleverfingers. Amongst gnomes, however, his is one of the most common churches.

Temples to the Firegem are generally made in warm dry caves or the hollow boles of ancient trees. They are bedecked in reds and oranges, supplied with braziers which burn brilliantly, and wrapped in mystical atmospheres. Gnomish wizards of all colors, illusionist and evoker both, visit these temples with some frequency.

The chief priest of the Firegem is known as the Firekeeper. The Firekeeper is the high priest of the temple at Craftsman's Reach called the Labyrinth of Flames. All other high priests must bow before him, and he has the authority to summon what are known as the Mystic Synods to discuss the contents of the ancient but revered Books of the Spell.

!

Dogma: To learn, to know, to contemplate magic is the stuff of life.

Day-to-Day Activities: The priests of Topaz spend their days praying, tending to the community and its members. When not engaged in this activity, magical research and the preservation of tomes is their order of the day.

Major Centers of Worship: Craftsman's Reach, particularly the Labyrinth of Fire.

Affiliated Orders: None.

Priestly Vestments: Red robes and the ruby fire-gem are the common symbols of Topaz. Full fledged priests often wear a circlet of bronze as well.

Adventuring Garb: The circlet of bronze and the flame-like gemstones are the only thing that are common amongst all adventuring priests.

Priest of the Sacred Flame
(Specialty Priest)

REQUIREMENTS: Intelligence 12, Wisdom 8

PRIME REQ: Wisdom

ALIGNMENT: NG

WEAPONS: Staff, club, knife, dagger, sling

MAJOR SPHERES: All, divination, elemental (fire), guardian, healing, necromantic

MINOR SPHERES: Combat, elemental (air), protection, sun, time

MAGICAL ITEMS: Any priestly, any wizardly that is not a book or scroll

REQ. PROFS: Spellcraft

BONUS PROFS: Reading/Writing (any one), Firebuilding

Priests of the Sacred Flame are naturally protected from cold and can kindle a fire almost anywhere save a glacier as long as they have fuel.

At 3rd level, the priest of the sacred flame may affect normal fires or use a pyrotechnics spell once per day for every three levels of experience.

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At 5th level, the priest of the sacred flame receives a +3 bonus to dispel any evocations or fire-based magic. They also receive a +2 bonus to save against fire-based attacks.

!

At 7th level, the priest may cast a chromatic orb once per day as though he were a wizard of the same level. He doesn't require the gem normally necessary for this spell.

!

At 10th level, the priest can summon a fire elemental from any flame source that is potent enough once per day as though he were casting conjure fire elemental.

!

At 15th level, the priest can produce flame at will.

Arina Songster

Intermediate Goddess, NG

Family: Vinthar

Portfolio: Beauty, music, freedom

Superior: Quilian Knowais

Aliases: Raya

Symbol: A rebec with a bow drawing across it

Arina (ahh-REEN-ah) the Songster is the goddess of music and poetry, and many sages agree that she is the smallfolk's interpretation of Raya. She is the servant of Quilian Knowais and the companion of Leesha the Roseheart. She is the patron of festivals and music, and is herself a light-hearted goddess who interferes in small ways with the lives of the smallfolk.

Her priests are known as sacred poets, and they travel the lands with her songs in their hearts. Most of these priests are female, and whenever a halfling or gnomish town organizes a feast or festival they are there to preside and plan.

Beryl Ironfoot

Intermediate God, LG

Family: Vinthar

Portfolio: Warriors, war, bravery

Symbol: An upright spear

Beryl (BEAR-ill) Ironfoot is depicted as a gnome wearing a suit of mail or plate armor and clad in iron-plated boots. He is depicted as the divine agent of the halfling hero Machnanen, the Giant-Slayer of Old. Some say that he was a gnome himself before he helped Machnanen slay the Winter King and Lord of Frost. He is a staunch god, who looks out for his people and protects all smallfolk the world over.

His priests are often warriors and doers of battle-deeds, for such is his pleasure.

Halmun Deepdelve

Lesser God, TN

Family: Vinthar

Portfolio: Crafts, mining, gemstones, minerals

Symbol: A polished diamond

Halmun (HAL-mun) Deepdelve is another of the Vinthar who appears to be a gnome. He has a long white beard that tapers to a point, and he loves all gems, stones, and minerals. It is said that Halmun's halls are vast beyond imagining, and many rock gnomes worship him for his endless and tireless labors. He is also said to be a companion to the dwarvish god Eiri.

Halmun's priests are found primarily amongst rock gnomes, and his temples are burrowed into hillsides or within winding caves lit by candlelight.

Lapris Cleverfingers

Lesser God, CG

Family: Vinthar

Portfolio: Invention, experimentation

Superior: Quilian Knowais

Symbol: Crossed tinker's hammers

Lapris (LA-priss) Cleverfingers is the ward of Quilian Knowais, and beloved of both gnomes and halflings alike. He is often in the company of Pogrillius and is frequently depicted as a gnome with a golden beard and golden hair. He's the lord of invention and experimentation, and it is to him that the rock gnomes of Dúnwal Tower dedicate their works.

The priests of Lapris are always beholden to follow the rule of any Quilians in their vicinity. His priests sometimes set their minds to the unraveling of traps and ancient spellworks, and so can be classed as thieves. His actual divine agents spend most of their days working in Quilian establishments.

Machnanen

Lesser God, NG

Family: Vinthar

Portfolio: Giant-slaying, dexterity, deftness, battle

Symbol: A giant-slaying spear, crosswise

Machnanen (mahk-NAN-en) was the hero-companion of Beryl Ironfoot. A staunch halfling of great skill, he is the halfling god of battle—and in this aspect he represents canniness, skill at dodging, the throwing of stones, and other such halfling tricks. He was one of Leesha Roseheart's very *first* halfling flings, and was said to have defended the Greensward in the mythical beginning times.

He has no priests among halflings, though many halfling boys secretly worship him and wear the spear under their tunics, much to the consternation of the Matriarchs.

Pogrillius Tosscombe

Lesser God, CG

Family: Vinthar

Portfolio: Tricks, jokes, laughter

Symbol: A laughing mask

Pogrillius (pog-RILL-ee-us), more often simply called Pog, was a real living halfling of the 9th Age. He was deified by Leesha Roseheart, who has been having one of her indiscretions with him for quite some time. The very latest (and perhaps the very last) of the smallfolk Hero-Gods, Pog is the king of tricks and practical jokes. Equally loved by halflings and forest gnomes alike, he revels in good-natured chaos.

Pog's priests are few and far between indeed. Those who are touched with the power to enact his will in the world are often chased out of settlements when the Matrons discover their presence. They don't much mind, finding the whole thing great fun usually.

Quilian Knowais

Intermediate God, LN

Family: Vinthar

Portfolio: Scholarship, history, writing, knowledge

Symbol: A silver quill

(see Quilian Knowais above)

Solmon Woodhome

Intermediate God, CN

Family: Vinthar

Portfolio: Woodcraft, sneaking

Symbol: A sprouting acorn

The forest gnomes particularly revere Solmon (SAUL-mon) Woodhome, who appears as an ancient wizened gnome with nut brown skin and a short brown beard. He is the protector of forests, the teacher of all woodlore and woodcraft, and the gnomish master of silence. He has no allegiances amongst the other gods and seeks mostly to be left to himself.

Solmon's priests are also very few to be seen. They dwell in remote wilderness, choosing to isolate themselves from the body of the gnomish community.