

DECEPTION AT DASA

A guidebook/adventure set based on the Invincible Overlord™ series, adaptable to any fantasy role-playing system.



by Terry Randall



DECEPTION AT DASA

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Deception at Dasa

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GM Introduction



Deception at Dasa is a 32-page adventure which takes place in the city of Dasa on the Han-gar River in the Wheatlands District. It is designed for play by 5-6 Player Characters (PCs) of Skills 5 to 6. The adventure can be easily adapted for Characters of different Skill levels by increasing or decreasing the abilities and HTK scores of the Non-Player Characters (NPCs) or by changing the number of monsters encountered.

It is assumed that Characters participating in this adventure have joined the Overlord's army and are serving as elite scouts involved in stemming the rising tide of evil in Calandia. Six pregenerated PCs are provided should Players wish to use them.

Background

This adventure is set in the city of Dasa in the Wheatlands District, a region which is further detailed in the *Wheatlands District Guidebook* accompanying this module.

Dasa magically appeared in its present location in 286 SL. Some of the first scouts sent out by Lucius II met their death in this mysterious city, a stronghold of the enemy forces in the City-State. Since their deaths, it became increasingly difficult, and finally impossible, for agents of Lucius II to enter the city.

Intelligence gathered by the Overlord's forces has revealed that Galathrien, the ruler of Dasa, is the mastermind behind the disruptive events and evil creatures in western Calandia. Only recently has a fail-safe way been found to enter Dasa: by means of a portal through the land of Faerie. The Player Characters will enter Dasa in this way. Their mission is to eliminate Galathrien before they fall prey to the pitfalls which have slain other scouts.

Rank

For military purposes, the party member of the highest Skill level, or average of Skill levels if multi-classed, is appointed sergeant (*Dolvar*) when the group enlists in the Overlord's army. If there is a tie between two or more Characters, the one with abilities most appropriate to fighting and scouting should be the sergeant. For example, a Skill 4 ranger becomes sergeant before a Skill 4 magic-user. If there is still a tie, the Character with the greater Appeal (APL) score is the sergeant.

If the previous module in this series, *Betrayal at Bogwater*, has been played, it is possible that one of the PCs has been designated as a lieutenant and is permitted to wear a red and gold Gryphon Rider uniform if s/he wishes. It should be clarified that any Character in this position is still one of the Overlord's military scouts involved with the Gryphon Riders. The PC is an acting lieutenant and is not a full-fledged member of the Gryphon Rider mercenary corps. Membership in this elite unit comes only with personal recommendation by three Gryphon Riders and the approval of the officer in charge of recruiting.

If one Character is acting lieutenant, a second PC should be designated as sergeant and second-in-command of the PC scout contingent. The highest-ranking scout is responsible for making the group's report to their commanding officer, receiving new duty assignments, accounting for lost equipment or missing party members, recommending a Character for a special reward, or similar military tasks as required.

Aid and Assistance

Citizens of the City-State are expected to give aid and assistance to representatives of the Overlord on lawful business of the City-State. Scouts of the rank of sergeant and greater qualify for this privilege and may request such aid as custom allows. The requests are expected to be reasonable, justifiable, and to not put a burden on a household or business. This custom cannot be used to receive free outfitting from merchants in Briarwood or other cities. A typical use of the custom is seen in free crossing over toll bridges, and free or reduced-rate lodging provided to scouts in transit to duty stations.

Desertion

Any scout who fails to report for duty and does not show up after a ten-day grace period is considered to be a deserter if there is no evidence that s/he has been killed or captured. Excuses for late arrival are considered on a case-by-case basis. The punishment for desertion is from one to five years of hard labor. If a scout is involved in field work and it cannot be easily determined if s/he is dead, missing, or a deserter, s/he is considered to be missing in action after one month of prolonged absence.

Gryphon Riders

The Gryphon Riders comprise an elite mercenary troop led by former Black Lotus Guard commander Cham Morska (see *Betrayal at Bogwater* for statistics). Morska is under special orders for his unit to coordinate the patrols and expeditions of the crack scouts recruited by the Overlord. Major (*Ledhar*) Ern Lemhos (see Non-Player Characters) has overall command of Gryphon Riders in Thormar Province. The officer responsible for operations in the Wheatlands District is Captain (*Keitar*) Delia Castlin (see *Wheatlands Guidebook*), headquartered in Railekos. Scouts in this district will deal either with Keitar Castlin or one of her aides. However, because this adventure involves a situation that began in the Lake District, Player Characters are assigned to report to Captain Udo Toreignor at Gryphon Rider Headquarters in Bansk, Lake District.





Adventure Synopsis

GM's Background

Galathrien recently masterminded a plot to divert shipments of the Overlord's gold to Dasa, as explained in the adventure module *Betrayal at Bogwater*. In the course of foiling that plot, a secret entrance into Dasa was discovered. By entering a portal inside a Faerie mound near Bogwater, persons can emerge inside Galathrien's palace in Dasa, over 700 miles away. The Gryphon Rider command has decided to send a unit of hand-picked scouts through the portal. Once inside Dasa, the unit's mission will be to locate and assassinate Galathrien, a bestial, genderless creature (see *Non-Player Characters*).

Speed and efficiency are of utmost importance. Scouts who were in Dasa just before the outbreak of the war reported the city was full of mischievous beings and deadly pleasures. Those who enter the city through the Faerie portal must accomplish their mission before they fall prey to seemingly innocent, but deadly, diversions.

The Plot

When PCs enter Dasa, they surprise the portal guards. If they overcome the guards, they will have several opportunities to get close to Galathrien and slay the creature. However, none of these chances are likely to meet with success until the scouts make personal contacts in the city which lead them to a weapon against which Galathrien has no defense. If the Characters destroy Galathrien, their success may be spectacular beyond belief, since its destruction is likely to take the entire city of Dasa with it. If they do not destroy Galathrien, they die, become enslaved in the city, or might escape with the means to combat Vendris or Halimaj, the two other masters of evil in Calandia.

Basic Facts about Galathrien

Summarized following are some basic and important facts about Galathrien:

1) Galathrien sometimes appears as a handsome man or beautiful but is in reality a bestial, non-human creature. He is surrounded by corruption and depravity, and is sometimes called the Tempter, an accurate description of Galathrien's tactics of persuasion. Galathrien is based in Dasa, can teleport great distances unerringly, and is said to be conscious of all things that his minions are doing. Galathrien's influence extends far beyond the western third of Calandia, though that is where he

concentrates his efforts. Galathrien is the master and source of the evil in this part of the country.

- 2) It is impossible to get into Dasa unless you bear the Mark of Galathrien — a welt-like imprint magically impressed on the hand of those who serve Galathrien in that city. Dasa is magically warded, and it is said that no one, including the Overlord's spies, has succeeded in infiltrating it. However, since Galathrien expects his own people to come through the Faerie mound portal, that particular way is open to travel.
- 3) Galathrien is not especially well-guarded. He has confidence in the wards of his city and in the reliability of those he has corrupted or coerced into his service. He is highly visible, as he favors lavish displays and public appearances.

Important Information

Adventurers learn important information in the course of this adventure, which lead Characters naturally into the next module in this series, *The Lichmaster of Khaj'ram*. This information is summarized herein for easy reference by the GM.

- 1) Galathrien, Halimaj, and Vendris are the three rulers of evil in the City-State. Each has a Crystal Shard (see Unique Items), and none has a defense against the the Shard, which can forcefully remove any of them from this worldly Sphere of existence.
- 2) Since these three masters of evil have appeared in Calandia, it has not been possible to reach the Sphere of the Gods by means that have worked in the past (magic spells, items, etc.).
- 3) The powers of the Neutral Evil clerics of Dhuris are much stronger in Dasa than anywhere else in Calandia. The closer one of these clerics stands to Galathrien, the stronger the cleric's powers are.
- 4) Galathrien has powers resembling those of a demigod in some respects.
- 5) Halimaj, the Lichmaster of southeastern Calandia, is much feared by Galathrien. He is marshalling an army of undead which will soon march on populated areas near the Great Plateau. The newly-slain will join the ranks of his army, which will become an unstoppable mass growing in size with every new conquest.

Unique Items

Unique items are described herein, along with XP and GP values. These figures are not included in the XP awards for this adventure as noted under Endgame, and should be added to that total for any of these items that are acquired by the party.

Crystal Shard

[XP: 10,000 GP: 10,000]

The Crystal Shard resembles a jagged fragment of glass such as that from a broken window or mirror. This piece of semi-reflective translucent crystal is six inches long and one to three inches wide.

The Shard glows with a pulsating blue light of eye-searing intensity, and illuminates a 6" radius globe (the same as a Continual Light spell). There is nothing on the Shard to indicate its use or function. Any divination done on the item only reveals that it is a fragment of an artifact from a Sphere of existence distant from this one.

When the Shard is shattered, it creates a rift between Spheres, swallowing up everything within a 1" radius globe and sending it on a one-way journey to Mahrendi, the home of the gods of Calandia. The Crystal can be broken by smashing it with a weapon or throwing it against a hard surface. (A roll of 4 or greater on 1D20 means the Shard has shattered.) The rift remains open for

1D% turns (the percentile value represents an unpredictable period affected by conditions of flux between the Spheres). Galathrien keeps the Crystal Shard in anticipation of the day the creature may wish to use it against Halimaj or Vendris, Galathrien's allies in the invasion of Calandia.

Dasa appeared magically on the Physical Sphere, but is not completely stable in this realm of existence. If the Shard is broken within Dasa, the sudden rift caused by the Crystal destabilizes the city. The dimensional gap spreads throughout the town until all of Dasa is swallowed by the erratic portal between Spheres. Galathrien is unaware that this can happen, and, without the aid of divination, PCs likewise can have no clue about these consequences. If the Crystal is used within Dasa, the city and all within are swept through the widening rift within 1D6 turns. This is described at the appropriate place in the adventure. If the Crystal Shard is taken by the Characters and used anywhere else, it functions predictably as noted previously.

Whip of Frenzy

[XP: 2,000 GP: 15,000]

The Whip of Frenzy appears to be an ordinary 15' long bullwhip made of plain but good-quality latigo leather. When cracked in the air for one round by a Character proficient in the use of a whip, listeners within 5" must save vs. Spell or begin to go berserk. Their frenzy increases each subsequent round, and, on the fourth round of whip cracking, they fight as berserkers for 1D4 turns. During this time, they either attack twice per round or attack once per round with +2 "to hit." The effect ceases completely if there is any interruption in the cracking of the whip.

Frenzied persons listen for one round to brief commands shouted by the whip's user before charging off and venting their berserk aggressions. If there is no enemy to fight, the crowd behaves instead as a group of Celebrants (see *Wheatlands District Guidebook*), regardless of the orders of the one who used the whip. A Character of any alignment can use this item, but the GM might wish to withhold experience points from, or even change the alignment of, Good-aligned Characters who allow the frenzied crowd to behave as Celebrants.

Periapt of Proof against Undead

[XP: 2,000, GP: 15,000]

This engraved amethyst gem is set in a jewelry backing and worn on the clothing. It gives the wearer +4 to all saving throws against the attacks or effects of undead. It also gives the wearer a saving throw vs. Spells (with no bonus) against undead attacks that cannot normally be saved against, such as the draining of life levels by wraiths.

Periapt of Proof against Rotting

[XP: 1,000, GP: 10,000]

This engraved turquoise stone is mounted and worn as is the Periapt described previously. It leaves the wearer completely unaffected by attacks which wither limbs, or the contraction of wasting or rotting diseases such as leprosy.

Periapt of Proof against Liches

[XP: 2,000, GP: 15,000]

This engraved diamond is mounted in a platinum setting and worn on the clothing. It protects the wearer from the Paralyzation, Fear, and cold touch damage of a lich, but not from the lich's spells.

Spider Bite Poison

[XP: —, GP: 1,000 per 2 oz. vial]

This insinuating type D poison is a favorite of the Violet Spider sect of drow. Spider Bite is a gooey black substance with a spicy smell like that of pepper. The onset of the poison effects occur two segments after the poison is administered. The effects have a duration of 2D4 rounds. Spider Bite inflicts 10 HTK per round; if the duration lasts six or more rounds, the victim falls into a coma on round six and lasts for 1D3 hours, whether or not s/he is killed by the poison. A successful save vs. Poison cuts the damage in half and the victim will not become unconscious.

Wand of Levitation

[XP: 1,000, GP: 5,000]

This item can be used by any Character. It holds 80 charges. One charge levitates up to 200 lbs. for one hour.

Chimes of Opening

[XP: 1,000/each, GP: 5,000/each]

There are two of these chimes in existence. The chimes are items of Faeriekind, intended only to open or close a pre-existing gateway into Faerieland. The chime resembles a miniature gong of silver and gold. Tapped three times with a finger, the note it sounds works the magic and manipulates Faerie gateways.

Gesh

[XP: 0, GP: 100 gp/ounce]

Gesh is an addictive spice derived from the sap and pollen of certain wildflowers. It is a granular tan or brown powder which is slightly sweet in taste; it is mixed with food and consumed. The spice is also known by the slang terms "brown sugar" and "fun spice." Gesh produces a euphoric high in the user which lasts 24 to 48 hours. While under the influence of gesh, the user's good judgment is seriously impaired, thus enabling a purportedly cautious user to abuse the substance and become addicted in spite of his/her good intentions.

While affected by this euphoric substance, gesh users are content, gullible, and easily swayed. At the same time, the gesh reduces the user's INS by 1D6+4 points, down to a minimum score of 3, although this is never apparent to the one under the influence. A Character's intellect and fighting abilities are unimpaired. The addictive effect is cumulative over time. If gesh is ingested for a number of days equal to the STA score of the user, the user is addicted; the total days of use need not be consecutive, but once addicted, the victim goes through withdrawal if s/he is lacking the spice for more than 48 hours.

During withdrawal, the addicted Character's STR and DEX are reduced by 6 points, and s/he loses 1D6 HTK per day of withdrawal. A gesh addict goes through a number of days of cramping and convulsive withdrawal equal to 20 minus his/her STA. For example, a person with a STA of 16 suffers withdrawal for four days (20-16=4). These effects are akin to a physical disease; the victim can be completely healed with a Cure Disease or Neutralize Poison spell, but is not helped by Cure Light or Serious Wounds spells or by healing potions. The hazards of gesh abuse are known to few outside the alchemists and addicts. It is only with the aid of Galathrien that Eeril has enough gesh to addict his shireling troops and keep them addicted indefinitely.



Player Characters



Narvil Stenhngerik

Dwarf, Skill 5 Cleric

Deity: Ardruna

STR: 15, *INT:* 12, *INS:* 18

STA: 15 (+1), *DEX:* 11, *APL:* 14

HTK: 33, *AC:* 2

MV: 9", *AL:* N. Good

AT: 1, *DM:* by weapon

THACO: 18

HT: 3'11", *WT:* 150 lbs.

Weapon Proficiencies: war hammer, flail I

Weapons: +1 footman's flail, war hammer

Armor: +1 half-plate/chain (AC: 3), +1 shield

Specials: Infravision 60',
+4 to saves vs. Magic and Poison

Spells: (5/5/1) Skill 1: Bless, Cure Light Wounds, Entangle (as druid spell), Protection from Evil, Purify Food and Drink; Skill 2: Chant, Detect Charm, Hold Person, Speak With Animals, Silence 15' Radius; Skill 3: Dispel Magic, Plant Growth (as druid spell)

Languages: Dwarvish, Calandian, Orcish

Magic Items: Ring of Airy Water, Gauntlets of Ogre Power

Narvil is sixty years old. He is deeply tanned, has light brown hair, and has green eyes. His beard is intricately braided in two

strands and tied off at the ends through jade beads. Narvil was once a trader; he has not lost his knack as a shrewd bargainer. He is less avaricious than many of his kinsmen, but he collects wildlife lore as avidly as other dwarves collect gold. Narvil is fond of small animals and is fascinated with plants.

Narvil converted to the worship of Ardruna from traditional dwarvish gods. He is ostracized by many dwarves for his unorthodox religious beliefs, but his faith remains unshaken. Narvil appreciates the natural balance in things around him. As part of his clerical vocation, he is called to preserve life and nurture existence — but this old barroom brawler has no qualms about cracking skulls when the time for that rolls around. He is a steadfast companion, uncomplaining, and methodical in his actions.

Vizmit

Pixie, Skill 4/4 Thief/Illusionist

Deity: Opsav the Swift

STR: 9, *INT:* 15, *INS:* 10

STA: 9, *DEX:* 16 (+1, -2), *APL:* 16

HTK: 13, *AC:* 4

MV: 6"/24", *AL:* L. Neutral

AT: 1, *DM:* by weapon

THACO: 20

HT: 2' 1", *WT:* 21 lbs.

Weapon Proficiencies: pixie sword (as dagger), blow gun, sling

Weapons: +1 short sword (as dagger), blow gun

Armor: none

Specials: Thief Skills: PP: 45%, OL: 52%, F/RT: 50%, MS: 48%, H in S: 45%, HN: —, CW: 68%, RL: 20%;

Infravision 90';

Blend at will (-4 AC);

Polymorph Self at will;

Know Alignment at will;

Create Illusions (1x/day, w/aural and olfactory components)

Magic Resistance: 25%

Languages: Pixie, Calandian, Merchant, Elvish

Spells: Color Spray, Hypnotism, Wall of Fog, Invisibility, Mirror Image

Magic Items: Potion of Human Control

Vizmit's name means "small wit" in Pixie; this is an intentional misnomer. She has a sharp tongue and no consideration for social niceties common among humans. Once her word is given, she sticks to it strictly and is unforgiving of others who break theirs. If a companion can get past her rough exterior, there is much to appreciate in Vizmit's sensitive nature.

Vizmit's favorite Polymorphed form is a gerfalcon, and her favorite illusion is that of a groaning spirit (banshee).

Vizmit's hair is silver-white, her eyes are purple, and her skin is pinkish-peach. Her wings are purple-tinged.

Kreeger

Scout Sergeant

Centaur, Skill 5 Keitar (Knight class)*

Deity: Eodec Hardhoof

STR: 17 (+1, +1), INT: 12

INS: 10, STA: 15 (+1)

DEX: 15 (0, -1), APL: 13

HTK: 45, AC: 6/3

MV: 18", AL: C. Good

AT: 1 or 2

DM: 1D6/1D6 (hoof/hoof)

or by weapon

THACO: 16

HT: 8', WT: 1350 lbs.

Weapon Proficiencies: lance, composite long bow, scimitar, dagger, mace

Weapons: lance, composite long bow (with twenty +1 arrows), dagger, +1 scimitar

Armor: chain (torso), leather (flanks), shield

Specials: Charm Person (3x/day)

+1 "to hit" with scimitar and bow

Languages: Ta'lonese, Calandian, Shireling

Kreeger is the son of the chief of a Canyon District centaur herd. He was friend to a human knight in Han-gar Province who was killed by marauding evil creatures.

Kreeger fights in the Overlord's army as much to avenge his friend's death as to win glory and distinction. In combat he is intense and single-minded.

Kreeger is eager, eternally optimistic, brusque, and hearty. He is opinionated on every subject of which he has the least knowledge. However, he is quick to admit his ignorance when someone calls his bluff. Kreeger has a weakness for gambling and wagers on everything from races to what color shirt someone might wear. Kreeger is strawberry roan in color, with a blond-red mane and tail, and is extremely vain about his appearance.

* The knight, or keitar, is a cavalier-like Character class explained in detail in the *High Fen Guidebook*.

Shevian

Scout Lieutenant

Vale elf, Skill 3/4 Magic-User/Ranger

Deity: Rethwin

STR: 16 (0, +1), INT: 15, INS: 9

STA: 14, DEX: 17 (+2, -3), APL: 12

HTK: 31, AC: 3

MV: 12", AL: C. Good

AT: 1, DM: by weapon

THACO: 18

HT: 5'5", WT: 125 lbs.

Weapon Proficiencies: long bow I, long sword, dagger

Weapons: long bow (with five +1 arrows), long sword, dagger

Armor: +1 studded leather

Spells: (2/1) Skill 1: Burning Hands,

Comprehend Languages; Skill 2: Knock

Languages: Calandian, Elvish, Dwarvish, Orcish, Fog Giant, Demitroll

Magic Items: Wand of Levitation, Chime of Opening (works on Faerie portals only)

Shevian is a young Vale elf who is out to see the world. He is tall for an elf, he has blond hair below his shoulders, and steady grey eyes. Shevian joined the Overlord's army for the chance to travel, and, though he is willing to fight the evil in Calandia, he has no burning principles to honor by doing so. Shevian is languid and philosophical, and is also free-spirited and artistically inclined. He is a gifted musician and plays harp beautifully.

Shevian is not ambitious or especially interested in material wealth. Interaction with other races is a new and exciting experience for him, and he talks constantly. He has perfected the conversational art of asking leading questions, and, if given a chance, "converses" with his companions for hours at a stretch. Nevertheless, Shevian is sympathetic and sincere in his interest and tries to be sensitive to the needs of those around him.

Lessith

Lizardman, Skill 5 Fighter

Deity: G'gessgir

STR: 18/05 (+1, +3), INT: 8, INS: 7

STA: 17 (+3), DEX: 14, APL: 5

HTK: 50, AC: 5

MV: 9"/15", AL: L. Good

AT: 1, DM: by weapon (tail 1D4)

THACO: 16

HT: 7'2", WT: 320 lbs.

Weapon Proficiencies: bastard sword, dagger, heavy crossbow, net, trident

Weapons: dagger, tail mace, trident, net (the net has hooked and weighted ends and does 1D2 HTK of damage if victim struggles in it or if the net is roughly pulled off.)

Armor: none

Specials: Can see underwater as clearly as on land

Languages: Nilese, Calandian

Magic Items: Ring of Free Action

Lessith has dedicated his life to the lizardman deity G'gessgir, the Egg-Mother, Giver of Life. Modeling his life after the ideals of this deity, Lessith feels compelled to protect the helpless whose lives are threatened by evil throughout Calandia. As a result, Lessith is the foremost party member to face danger. He sometimes has to be reasoned with whenever it is important for caution or surprise to prevail.

Lessith does not tolerate needless killing or torture. If he witnesses this going on, he will demand that it stop or he will put an

end to it himself. Lessith's favorite fighting tactic is to hold a net in his left hand and a trident in his right hand (he is right-handed). He throws the net left-handed to entangle his opponent (at -2 "to hit"), then attacks with his trident.

Lessith cannot seem to keep money or other valuables; he either spends them or gives them away. He is as unwise as he is stubborn, but he is also willing to listen to the advice of those he respects.

Marna Mortaune

Human, Skill 6 Thief

STR: 10, INT: 18, INS: 14

STA: 10, DEX: 16 (+1, -2), APL: 16

HTK: 26, AC: 5

MV: 12", AL: Neutral

AT: 1, DM: By weapon

THACO: 19

HT: 5'7", WT: 125 lbs.

Weapon Proficiencies: long sword, short bow, dagger

Weapons: long sword, short bow, +2 dagger

Armor: studded leather

Specials: Thief Skills: PP: 55%, OL: 52% F/RT: 45%, MS: 47%, H in S: 37% HN: 20%, CW: 92%, RL: 30%

Languages: Calandian, Elvish, Shireling, Merchants' Cant, Thieves' Cant, Orchish, Nilese, Ta'lonese

Marna's brilliant intellect and charming personality have enabled her to run several successful con games, and she has earned her living more than once as a spy working for local lords. Marna joined the army partly to use her spying and scouting experience, but mainly because she had outstayed the welcome in her last place of residence. This thief is quick-tempered and moody, except when she is on a job, when she becomes cold as steel.

Marna prefers to avoid fights; she can easily talk her way out of them. She is slim and attractive, with long, curly brown hair and hazel eyes. She is reserved about her personal life, but she is a witty social companion.





Non-Player Characters

Statistics for Non-Player Characters (NPCs) important to this adventure are given following. New spells are explained following this section.

Goblins

Goblins of the Thormar's Peak Hand-crusher tribe perform guard duty in Dasa. The goblins encountered have the statistics given herein. Use the numbers of goblins specified unless an encounter description states otherwise. Also, unless stated otherwise, goblins always fight to subdue in order to take captives. Only if they lose half their numbers will they fight to kill, unless a morale check indicates that they flee.

Leader

Skill 7 Fighter

STR: 15, INT: 8, INS: 7
STA: 13, DEX: 9, APL: 10
HTK: 56, AC: 4
MV: 9", AL: L. Evil
AT: 1, DM: by weapon
THACO: 14
Weapon Proficiencies: bastard sword, dagger, flail, spear, short sword
Weapons: spear, short sword
Armor: chain mail
Specials: Infravision 60'

(5) Goblin guards

Skill 3 Fighters

HTK: 16, AC: 5
MV: 9", AL: L. Evil
AT: 1, DM: by weapon
THACO: 18
Weapon Proficiencies: dagger, light crossbow, spear
Weapons: dagger, light crossbow, spear
Armor: leather
Specials: Infravision 60'

Udo Toreignor

Captain of Gryphon Rider Scouts

Bansk, Lake District

Human, Skill 7 Fighter

STR: 13, INT: 14, INS: 9
STA: 10, DEX: 12, APL: 12
HTK: 60, AC: 1
MV: 12", AL: C. Neutral
AT: 1, DM: by weapon
THACO: 14
HT: 6'0", WT: 170 lbs.
Weapon Proficiencies: broad sword, dagger, halberd, long bow, short bow, short sword

Weapons: +2 broad sword, daggers (x3)

A armor: +1 plate mail, shield

Udo is in his early 30s and is boastful of his accomplishments as a scout. This is just a cover-up for his cowardice; he prefers to lead from the rear and has seldom distinguished himself in combat. However, he is a skillful administrator. The PC scouts are taking their orders from Udo as long as they are in the Lake District where this adventure begins. It is Cpt. Toreignor who chooses the Characters to infiltrate Dasa.

Cerel a'Tanith

Drow Elf, Skill 12 Assassin

STR: 14, INT: 13, INS: 10
STA: 12, DEX: 15 (0, -1), APL: 8
HTK: 52, AC: 5
MV: 12", AL: N. Evil
AT: 1
DM: by weapon; +1 to hit/DM with blowgun
THACO: 16
HT: 5'5", WT: 100 lbs.
Weapon Proficiencies: florentine fighting, blowgun I, dagger, short sword
Weapons: two +1 daggers; +2 short sword; blowgun (Range 1/3); ten darts (1-2 HTK); two vials Spider Bite poison (see Unique Items)
Armor: +1 ring mail
Specials: Thief Skills: PP: 85%, OL: 62%, F/RT: 65%, MS: 83%, H in S: 68%, HN: 40%, CW: 85%, RL: 50%; Backstab, 4x DM; percentage chance to assassinate Characters of Skill: 0-1 100%, 2-3 100%, 4-5 95%, 6-7 85%, 8-9 70%, 10-11 54%, 14-15 35%, 16-17 20%, 18+ 10%; 5% chance to assassinate Galathrien; Infravision: 12"; THACO +2 and DEX -2 in daylight
Spells: once per day: Dancing Lights, Faerie Fire, Darkness, Detect Magic, Know Alignment, Levitate
Magic Items: Ring of Invisibility

Cerel is a former member of the Violet Spider sect in Briarwood. He has turned to freelancing and has lately volunteered as a scout for the Overlord. Although he is quiet and observant with a capacity for careful planning, Cerel is not as cautious in his actions as he should be. This attitude makes him appear fearless, although he is courting death. Cerel will use his blowgun with poisoned darts to kill Galathrien. If that does not seem feasible, he will simply attempt to stick a knife into the Tempter,

counting on his Ring of Invisibility to help him get near and then get away. Both blowgun darts and dagger are coated with a Type D insinuating poison called Spider Bite (see Unique Items).

Galathrien

STR: 19 (+3, +7), INT: 18
INS: 18, STA: 22 (+6)
DEX: 19 (+3, -4), APL: 22 (3)
HTK: 100, AC: 1
MV: 18", AL: N. Evil
AT: 3/2, DM: 1D10
THACO: 7
Weapon Proficiencies: blowgun, whip
Weapons: +4 blowgun (range 1/2/4), whip
Armor: None
Magic Items: Whip of Frenzy, Periapt of Proof against Rotting, Periapt of Proof against Undead (see Unique Items)
Specials: Hit only by magical items +1 or better; has a saving throw of 6 in all categories; immune to Charm, Suggestion, Fear, and other spells affecting INS; Regenerates or loses HTK as described following; those viewing Galathrien while in its Polymorphed form for the first time must save against INS at -4 or be Charmed by its beauty (as per spell)
Spells: (Cast at Skill 15)

At will: Polymorph Self (into man or woman only), Charm Person, Command, Know Alignment, Comprehend Languages, True Seeing, Teleport without error (up to 30,000 gp weight to any destination in Calandia);
Once per turn: Intoxicate (see New Spells), Emotion (as illusionist spell), ESP, Cure Hangover (see New Spells), Create Lover (as Spectral Force);
Once per day: Suggestion, Delusion, Minor Creation, Major Creation (both as illusionist spell, with no components required), Gate (1-4 incubi or succubi in any combination, 60% chance of success);
Once per week: Mass Delusion, Mass Suggestions (as illusionist spell), Cause Disease (cirrhosis of the liver, kidney failure, pneumonia, or heart disease, effects not immediately evident to victims except for pneumonia), Gate Monsters (see New Spells);
Magic Resistance: 10%

Galathrien's influence in Calandia is far-ranging and subtle, corrupting people to evil ways by playing on their lusts, desires, and addictions. The creature is surrounded by depravity and is sometimes called the Tempter, an accurate description of Galathrien's tactics of persuasion.

Galathrien is the master and source of the evil in this part of the country. Its influence extends beyond the western third of Calandia, though that is where Galathrien concentrates its efforts. Through Galathrien's devices, hordes of evil creatures leave Dasa periodically to rampage through the countryside. Galathrien has also engineered the sudden appearance of monsters in places far from Dasa, using

Gate and Teleport abilities to summon them and put them where it wishes.

Galathrien is a beastial, non-human creature with toad-like, leathery skin, a bulbous body, and a head that blends into the torso without a neck. In this form, the creature has no gender, but Galathrien can Polymorph itself into the shape of a handsome man or beautiful woman at will. In Galathrien's natural form, it has an APL of 3, yet as a man or woman has a magically-enhanced aura of attractiveness. Persons viewing either of the human shapes must make a save vs. Spell or be Charmed, as explained previously. Galathrien uses its human guises almost exclusively; only a few victims put aside for Galathrien's

private pleasure have ever seen the creature's true form, and they are no longer capable of talking about it.

Galathrien feeds off the lusts and self-centered energies of humanoids, gaining or losing HTK depending on the type of energy (alignment) around it. While in Dasa, which is steeped in selfish indulgence, the Tempter Regenerates +3 HTK per round after the first round in which Galathrien is wounded. If Galathrien were in the middle of an area dominated by Good, the creature would grow weaker at the rate of -3 HTK per month, and would not Regenerate after receiving a wound.

New Spells

Cure Hangover (*Necromantic*)

<i>Skill level:</i> 1 - C	<i>Components:</i> S
<i>Range:</i> Touch	<i>TTC:</i> 1 segment
<i>Duration:</i> 1 day	<i>Saving Throw:</i> none
<i>Area of Effect:</i> one person	

This spell removes the symptoms of a hangover. In its reversed form, Cause Hangover, the effects last for 4D6 hours and the victim is allowed a save vs. Poison. If the save fails, s/he feels awful and has a thumping headache, becoming -1 to hit in combat.

Delusion (*Enchantment/Charm*)

<i>Skill:</i> 3 - I	<i>Components:</i> V
<i>Range:</i> Touch	<i>TTC:</i> 3 segments
<i>Duration:</i> Permanent	<i>Saving Throw:</i> negates effect
<i>Area of Effect:</i> one person	

Delusion makes its victim believe something flattering about him-/herself that is not true, as specified by the spell-caster. The victim believes the delusion is fact, and his/her behavior is appropriately affected by this "fact." The delusion can only be countered by a Remove Curse.

Intoxication (*Enchantment/Charm*)

<i>Skill:</i> 3 - C	<i>Components:</i> V, S
<i>Range:</i> Touch	<i>TTC:</i> 1 round
<i>Duration:</i> 1 turn/Skill of cleric	<i>Saving Throw:</i> halves effect
<i>Area of Effect:</i> 1 person	

This spell makes a person greatly intoxicated. It is normally cast on Dhuris-worshippers who must be in that state for ceremonial purposes, but can also be used as offensive magic. A person resisting the spell gains a saving throw which, if effective, cuts the intoxication in half (round fractions up). Its full effects modify a Character's attributes in the following way: INT: -6 INS -6, DEX -5, APL -3. If the opportunity for foolhardy action presents itself (GM's discretion), the victim of this spell must make a save against his/her reduced INS to see if s/he has the judgment not to take such action. There is no hangover when the spell wears off.

Mass Delusion (*Enchantment/Charm*)

<i>Skill:</i> 5 - I	<i>Components:</i> V, S
<i>Range:</i> 4" x 4"	<i>TTC:</i> 1 round
<i>Duration:</i> Permanent	<i>Saving Throw:</i> negates effect
<i>Area of Effect:</i> all within range	

This spell works the same as Delusion, but affects an unlimited number of people in the area of effect. A single delusion stated by the spell-caster applies to all affected by this spell.

Gate Monsters (*Conj./Summoning*)

<i>Skill:</i> n/a	<i>Components:</i> none
<i>Range:</i> n/a	<i>TTC:</i> 1 round
<i>Duration:</i> n/a	<i>Saving Throw:</i> special
<i>Area of Effect:</i> n/a	

This spell is unique to Galathrien and has a 100% chance of success. Galathrien can gate in one or more monsters of its choice up to a limit of 10 HTK dice total in any combination per use of the power. The monster must be pure Neutral or some kind of Evil alignment and is capable of being Charmed by Galathrien; that is, it must have an INT of at least 3 and be humanoid. Once the monster or monsters appear, a check is made to see if they are Charmed. If not, they vanish instantly. Otherwise, they remain and are Galathrien's to command as long as Galathrien wishes them to remain.

Dreamsend (*Enchantment/Charm*)

<i>Skill:</i> 4 - MU	<i>Components:</i> V
<i>Range:</i> 10 miles	<i>TTC:</i> 1 seg.
<i>Duration:</i> 1D4 hours	<i>Saving Throw:</i> none
<i>Area of Effect:</i> one person	

This spell induces dreams, the contents of which are the caster's choice, in the target person. With Dreamsend, the caster may also appear in the dream, choosing whatever form the caster wishes. The caster may do no damage to the recipient of the dream, however.

Summon Water Elemental (*Conj./Summon.*)

<i>Skill:</i> 5 - C	<i>Components:</i> V, S
<i>Range:</i> special	<i>TTC:</i> 1 rnd.
<i>Duration:</i> 1 turn/Skill of cleric	<i>Saving Throw:</i> none
<i>Area of Effect:</i> one water elemental	

This spell is unique to clerics of Seidrun. It allows the cleric to summon and control an elemental with the statistics given under **Escape** in Encounter 8: Prison. The cleric must be within 2" plus 1"/Skill level of a water source in order to use the spell (i.e., fountain, pool, lake, etc.).



DASA

Wheatlanders relate how the city appeared literally overnight in 286 SL, surrounding the site of Celebrants' Home on the south bank of the Han-gar River. The first deadly encounter of scouts with mischievous sprites in Dasa is described on page 13 of the *Background and Encounter Book* in the boxed rules set. Since that time, humanoids of predominantly Neutral or Evil alignments have had no difficulty entering the city, although the Overlord's scouts and spies have consistently been detected and destroyed. Those who take up residence within serve Galathrien (either voluntarily or tricked into it by the creature's powerful magics).

Since Lucius II declared hostilities, Dasa's gates have been closed to most who try to enter. This is a necessary precaution against infiltration by the Overlord's agents. In addition, protective spells around the city foil attempts to enter or spy therein by magical means. Now, all those who serve Galathrien and who have free admittance to the city bear the Mark of Galathrien — a welt-like imprint of peculiar design magically and permanently impressed on the back of the hand. Efforts to duplicate this mark and pass undetected through the city gates have met with failure.

For these reasons, the Player Characters will enter the city through the Faerie portal which has been discovered in Bogwater. Galathrien believes that the entrance is a secret, and expects only his own people to come through that gateway. For a time, at least, it is the only way to infiltrate Dasa with certainty.

The City

Dasa is barely a half-mile wide and a mile long. From the outside it looks like a fair city, with fortifications of gleaming white stone, round towers, and white-washed stone buildings within. But inside it is a different story. Over 15,000 humanoids are crammed into this warren of alleys and two-story structures. Although there is laughter and joy on the streets, the sordid side of life lurks not far beneath the surface. Important locations are detailed under the corresponding encounters, but the following overview is given for the GM's reference.

- 1) **Celebrant's Home.** This is a palatial mansion and temple dedicated to the worship of Dhuris. It is used exclusively by Celebrants, members of a fanatic cult described in the *Wheatlands District Guidebook*. The imported white marble, gilding, and statuary of the structure dominate the center of the city. Inside are bathing pools, dance halls, sleeping chambers and other facilities for decadent worship. At any one time, there are 4D10 Celebrants in and around this temple estate, or five times that if a ceremony is being held. Only Celebrants are permitted inside. An average Celebrant has these statistics:

Celebrant

Skill 0 Human

STR: 13, INT: 10, INS: 6

STA: 13, DEX: 10, APL: 15

HTK: 6, AC: 10

MV: 15", AL: N. Evil — C. Evil

AT: 1, DM: 1D3 (hand)

THACO: 20

Weapon Proficiencies: none

Weapons: none

Specials: Stays conscious and continues to fight until -10 HTK or below are reached. Celebrants attack in gangs and attempt to tear their victim(s) limb from limb.

- 2) **Galathrien's Palace.** Even more richly appointed than Celebrant's Home, the palace is a three-storied edifice of pillared marble replete with countless chambers, galleries, halls, and courtyards. The steeply-tiered steps of the main entrance overlook the Garden Square (11); from the top of the stairs Galathrien displays itself at weekly "Adoration" ceremonies.

Although several important encounters take place in this palace, the exact floorplan is unimportant. Whatever regal facilities can be imagined are here somewhere; there are audience chambers, slave quarters, kitchens, and so on. The interior is dominated by marble, mosaics, and lattice screens. The most common furnishings are stools, cushions, carpets, and plush furs rather than chairs or tables. The average palace guards are goblins as described under Non-Player Characters.

- 3) **Land Gate.** The city gate facing away from the river is heavily guarded. At all times there is a wizard on duty who verifies the authenticity of the Mark of Galathrien on any who enter through this gate. The city walls are guarded at all times by a company of 200 goblins, but there is a fighting force of four companies on call and considerable magical aid available should there be a need. A squad of ten guards at the Land Gate have the same statistics as Galathrien's other goblins guards (see Non-Player Characters).

There are several wizards in service to the Tempter. Whether encountered at the Land Gate or elsewhere, they have the following average statistics:

Wizard

Half-elf, Skill 9 magic-user

STR: 10, INT: 14, INS: 9

STA: 10, DEX: 13, APL: 14

HTK: 25, AC: 8

MV: 12", AL: N. Evil

AT: 1, DM: by weapon

THACO: 19

Weapon Proficiencies: dagger, sling

Weapons: +1 silver dagger

Armor: none

Magic Items: Potion of Flying, +2 Ring of Protection

Specials: 30% resistant to Sleep and Charm; Infravision 60'

Spells: 4/3/3/2/1 (The Skill 5 spell is always True Seeing, a special spell developed for magic-users, as the Skill 5 clerical spell of the same name.)

- 4) **Slave Market.** Slaves of all races are housed here and displayed for sale, including many folk captured by Galathrien's forces. Slaves wear a brass collar and are auctioned off. Some are expensive, and others go for as little as one silver piece, depending on how the bidding goes. Any PCs captured by goblins in the *Betrayal at Bogwater* adventure will be auctioned off here.
- 5) **Punishment Square.** Public punishments are held here, as much for the entertainment value as for the necessity of a punishment. Most of these spectacles, in fact, are unwarranted or unreasonable for the crime. Galathrien presides over these weekly sessions, often meting out the punishments.
- 6) **River Gate.** The River Gate is as heavily guarded as the Land Gate, but it is opened more often. Boats bearing supplies purchased or commandeered mostly from Han-gar Province

dock here daily, and are off-loaded by slaves. The guards here have the same statistics as those at the Land Gate.

- 7) **Slave Barracks.** This quarter of town houses the slaves owned by the City of Dasa (i.e., Galathrien) who do menial work throughout the city. It is also the residence of the Slavemaster, a half-troll called Purg who was gated here by Galathrien. He and several more of his kind are in charge of most of the slaves. Other half-trolls performing guard duties for the Tempter have the same statistics. (These creatures are not related to the demi-trolls of Leopa Province, described in *Raiders of Ironrock*.)

Purg

Half-troll Slavemaster

HTK: 43, *AC:* 6

MV: 12", *AL:* N. Evil

AT: 1 or 2

DM: by weapon or 2D4/2D4 +3 damage (hand/hand)

THACO: 13

Weapons: whip, flail

Armor: none

Ht: 7' 4", *Wt:* 290 lbs

Specials: Infravision 60'; regenerates +1 HTK/round starting three melee rounds after being injured.

- 8) **Gate of Misery.** Persons who are banished to the Dark Quarter enter that part of the city through this gate, which is manned at all times by ten palace guards, with other squads nearby in reserve.

- 9) **Dark Quarter.** Only the healthy and vigorous — or nearly so — are seen on the streets of Dasa. All persons whose health and/or sanity is destroyed by the abuses of life in this place are banished to the Dark Quarter and are not allowed out again. It is an entirely different society in this quarter of town than that on the main streets of Dasa: subdued, sickly people half-starved and waiting for death, the human debris created by the wild lifestyle in the rest of the city. There is no average set of statistics for persons encountered here.

- 10) **Gate of the Dead.** The only way persons leave the Dark Quarter is through this gate, which is little more than a chute emptying into the Han-gar River. Only the verifiably dead exit in this manner. The gate is guarded by more of the goblins who guard the city walls. It is a weak spot in the city's defenses, but its existence is unknown to any outside Dasa.

- 11) **Garden Square.** This great square between Celebrant's Home and the Palace is the gathering place for Galathrien's multitude of loyal followers. In a weekly ceremony called the Adoration, Galathrien, accompanied by a retinue of sycophants, slaves, and guards, stands atop the steps of the palace where people pay the creature homage. Other impromptu celebrations of reverence take place in the city when Galathrien appears, but the Adoration is the one attended by all who can jostle for a view in the crowded streets. Galathrien often casts Mass Delusion or Mass Suggestion at this event to sway the assembled crowd to its own ends.





Players' Introduction

PREP: Read this to the Players.

NOTE: For Players who did not play the *Betrayal at Bogwater* adventure, omit the first paragraph in the **PLAYERS** section and tell them they have been assigned as scouts to Gryphon Rider Headquarters, Bansk, Lake District, under the command of Captain Udo Toreignor.

PLAYERS: *Your last assignment was to prevent the theft of the Overlord's gold shipment at Bogwater. The attempt was made on the gold; afterwards, you reported the outcome of your mission to Gryphon Rider Captain Udo Toreignor in Bansk. After a day of inactivity, you are called in to receive orders for your next assignment.*

A slim drow elf joins you in the captain's offices. "This is Cerel a'Tanith," Captain Toreignor introduces him to you. "He'll be accompanying you on this mission. He has skills that will be useful, as I'll explain in a moment. In the meantime, forgive me if I repeat things you already know. Cerel needs a thorough briefing, too."

Toreignor spreads out a map of Thormar Province on the table. His finger stabs at a spot marked Dasa. "We've pinpointed the source of the troubles here in the west," he says. "Through your own good work and that of others, we've learned that a being named Galathrien directs the evil creatures moving in from the west coast. Galathrien hides in Dasa, which appeared overnight in the Wheatlands District almost two years ago."

The Captain continues. "Some of the first scouts sent by the Overlord died in Dasa. Sprites tricked them and killed them with innocent-seeming pleasures. Since the City-State has gone to a war-time footing, Dasa has been sealed up and our spies have been unable to infiltrate it. The city is magically protected, so no one has been able to enter magically. All of Dasa's inhabitants bear the Mark of Galathrien, a welt-like imprint magically set on the back of the left hand. We can forge the Mark, but all forgeries have been detected at the gate."

Toreignor paces across the floor, excitement in his voice. "We've gotten a lucky break. There is a Faerie mound not far from Bogwater, and inside it lies a portal which opens into the subcellar of Galathrien's palace in Dasa. The city is well protected, but this magical gateway is a weak spot in Galathrien's defenses. Galathrien expects only his or her own people to go through the portal. And that's where you come in.

"We can't send a large force — the Faeries won't permit such a force to cross their territory. Speed is essential, before the gate is permanently closed, or Galathrien realizes some of its forces have failed to report back through the gate."

The Gryphon Rider turns sharply on his heels and regards you intensely. "Your party is going to slip inside Dasa through this gateway. Once inside, you are to find Galathrien and assassinate him. Or her. There are conflicting reports about Galathrien's form. But we know that Galathrien is not especially well guarded. He — or she — has confidence in the wards on this city, and Galathrien appears often in public, the better to bask in the adoration of his, or her, minions. We'll soon put an end to that!"

Cerel a'Tanith speaks up. "What good will it do to destroy Galathrien? Surely someone else will step forward to take command, don't you think?"

Toreignor shakes his head. "Galathrien is unique. Those of Galathrien's followers we've interrogated never mention a second in command, and we think Galathrien's forces will fall into disarray without their leader to direct them. In fact, Galathrien's underlings are in awe of their leader, claiming he, or she, can teleport anywhere in the world, and that he, she, or whatever, sees and knows everything that Galathrien's minions do all the time. Why, if that were true, Galathrien would almost be a demigod! I wouldn't be surprised if this creature can teleport magically to some extent, of course — all the more reason for stealth and assassination, lest Galathrien slip through your fingers when confronted. Assassination is an ugly business. I know. That's why Cerel is here. You scouts will help get Cerel close to Galathrien, then let him handle the matter from there."

The drow makes a half-bow to your party at the mention of this name. "Elimination of such obstacles is my field of expertise," he admits sardonically.

"And," adds Toreignor, "if anything goes wrong, there are the rest of you to continue with other attempts. You will all be disguised with the mark of Galathrien — one of our wizards is waiting now to put the illusion of its appearance on your hands. It won't stand up under magical inspection in that city, but as long as you seem to belong, you shouldn't have to worry about being singled out and mur-

dered, like the scouts who went before you.

"Now, step this way to see our illusionist . . . and good luck. You'll need it."

GM NOTES: Logistics

PCs can be outfitted at their present location. The Gryphon Riders have no magical items to give the PCs, although they are free to use anything they already possess. Bansk is a large city, but with the war on, magical items have become rare and hard to come by. If PCs want to purchase useful magic in town, the availability and prices of such things should be adjusted accordingly (GM discretion).

PCs can be informed that a small task-force is awaiting their arrival at the mound. Those people will guide the PCs to the portal and explain how to enter.

As soon as they are ready to depart, PCs are expected to hasten to Bogwater, fifty miles away, where they are due this evening. The trip can be made in one long hard day in the saddle. The PCs will spend the night in Bogwater before entering the Faerie mound the next morning.

Ethics and Orders

Lawful Good PCs or others who do not like the idea of assassination can argue with this plan if they want. Regardless of their opinions, the orders remain unchanged. The Gryphon Rider command has decided that this is the best way to deal with the threat Galathrien poses — or at least the most efficient way — given the short notice and the possible one-shot nature of the Faerie portal into Dasa. PCs in ethical disagreement with this plan need not personally assist in the assassination attempt, but their cooperation and assistance in infiltrating Dasa is expected.

The Assassin

Cerel, a drow elf assassin, is professional and aloof. He cannot be provoked by PCs who find assassins distasteful. Cerel draws out PCs who have played important roles in previous adventures in order to flesh out his knowledge of what he is up against.

PCs who have lived in Briarwood or are native Calandians may save against INT. If successful, they recognize the a'Tanith name as that of the ruling non-evil drow nobility of Twin Peaks, and realize that Cerel is a member of this family.

Encounters

Go to Encounter 1: Back to Bogwater.

Encounters



Encounter 1

Back to Bogwater

PREP: Read this when PCs leave Bansk to begin their mission.

PLAYERS: *There is no time to sightsee on The Aldar's Road to Bogwater. Cobblestone paving, carts and wagons, and farmers and foot traffic all become a blur as your mounts alternately walk, trot, and canter at a ground-eating pace. You reach the shireling town after nightfall and report directly to the Lake District Guard barracks, a new building of stone at the north end of town. You are greeted by Captain Noric of the Lake District Guard.*

"Well, I'm glad to see you," the human soldier says. "The corporal will show you to your quarters. Then come on down and have dinner in the mess hall. I'll meet you there and fill you in about the Faerie mound."

GM NOTES:

Faerie Mound

If PCs are unfamiliar with the Faerie mound, Cpt. Noric explains the following: *"An LDG squad stands guard outside the Faerie mound, which is an artificial hill near Bogwater. When opened, the entrance leads into a Faerie kingdom in a different Sphere of existence, and from there a magical portal connects to the palace subcellar in Dasa. Galathrien has bribed and persuaded the Faeries to allow him free run between the Dasa portal and the Faerie mound exit. The stolen gold was to follow this route, which has also been used lately by dopplegangers and Handcrusher tribe goblins who serve Galathrien."*

Dasa Portal

PCs are warned that goblins form the bulk of the palace guard, and watch over the far side of the Dasa portal. There are no unpleasant surprises awaiting the scouts inside Faerie, but they will have their hands full when they step through into Dasa. In the morning at the Faerie mound, the PCs will receive a small silver and gold magical chime (Chime of Opening) that opens the Faerie portals. The Dasa gate is closed at the moment, and must be opened with the chime when the Characters are ready to step through it.

PCs can take this evening to make their plan of attack, remembering that their arrival in Dasa is supposed to be a secret. Cerel will help however he can, following the orders of the party leader with the highest military rank.

Epilogue

Those who have played *Betrayal at Bogwater* may be curious to know the aftermath of previous events. Inform them that Capt. Noric's LDG guard contingent was verified free of infiltrators and dispatched here, along with Poligar, a Gryphon Rider scout magic-user. With his help, the remaining dopplegangers (if any) were uncovered, and the gesh-dependent shirelings are now off duty while going through gesh withdrawal. If PCs are unfamiliar with gesh, there is no need to mention the substance. It is explained later, where they may encounter it in their Dasa adventures.

Encounters

Play continues in the morning with Encounter 2: Into the Faerie Mound.

Encounter 2

Into the Faerie Mound

PREP: Play this when the scouts leave Bogwater for the Faerie mound.

PLAYERS: *Accompanied by Cpt. Noric, you ride north out of Bogwater. A couple of miles away from town, you leave the road and ride northwest, parallel to a stream bed. The stream turns into a gully at the base of a hill, and your party rides to the crest above.*

In the meadowland beyond the hill rises a mound covered with emerald-green grass. It is ringed with seven rune-carved standing stones. A troop of human Lake District Guard soldiers is camped one-hundred yards from the mound. Some wave in greeting as your party approaches.

GM NOTES: Fifty LDG troops guard the mound, making periodic sweeps inside Faerie to be sure no goblins have come through the Dasa portal. Poligar is with the troops and is introduced to the scouts.

Poligar

Human, Skill 3 Magic-user

STR: 8, INT: 13, INS: 9

STA: 9, DEX: 16 (+1, -2), 3APL: 14

HTK: 8, AC: 8

MV: 12", AL: N. Good

AT: 1, DM: by weapon

THACO: 20

HT: 5'6", WT: 140 lbs.

Weapon Proficiencies: sling

Weapons: sling

Amor: none

Spells: 2/1

Magic Items: Gem of True Seeing

Poligar is a fresh-scrubbed volunteer scout from Briarwood. He is a hyperactive chatterbox of a fellow who finds it difficult to move quietly or keep his mouth shut for any length of time.

The Gem of True Seeing that he has is made with the aid of clerical magic from the deity Uric. In addition to the powers of a Gem of Seeing, this item can pierce disguises, reveal alignment, and show a creature's true form no matter how it is hidden. The Gem is in Poligar's safekeeping, loaned by the Gryphon Riders to help detect dopplegangers who had infiltrated the Lake District Guard at Bogwater. When the party enters the Faerie mound, Poligar goes with a whim of the moment and offers the Gem to the Characters, in hopes that it will help their mission inside Dasa. He has no authority to loan this Gem to the party, and, if it is lost, the PCs will be in trouble along with Poligar.

Poligar also gives the PCs the Chime of Opening mentioned earlier by Noric, unless the party has one of their own from the previous adventure. He keeps a second Chime for the use of the troop. The Chime resembles a small gong of gold and silver. When tapped three times with a finger, it opens Faerie gates, in particular the entrance to the mound and the Dasa portal. Poligar will lead the party into the mound, but Characters are instructed in the use of the Chime for when they make their escape from Dasa.

When the scouts are ready to enter the mound, read the following to the Players:

Poligar faces the east slope of the mound and taps his Chime of Opening three times. The tone is clear and startlingly loud. As the ring dies away, the earth slides open and a golden glow of bright sunlight

shines forth. The mage leads you into the wide earthen corridor, and into a sylvan glade under open skies, half the LDG troop following behind.

You follow a well-trodden path past silver-leaved trees. Finally you come to a rocky outcropping between two gray-barked trees. The face of the rock is smooth white granite, and on it are carved pillars and flowering vines. An archway is carved overhead, and upon it a phrase is lettered in Elvish.

Poligar informs the PCs they can also open the Dasa gate by speaking the Elvish phrase on the stone. However, they need the Chime to get out of the Faerie mound, or they must convince a local Faerie to open it for them.

Into Dasa

The LDG troops stand ready to assist the party in overcoming goblins beyond the Dasa gate, but they advance through the gate only if summoned by one of the Player Characters. (Trooper statistics are given in Encounter 3: Goblin Greetings.) Since the party's entrance should ideally be made with stealth, Cpt. Noric doesn't want to unnecessarily alert goblins to the presence of an armed force at the Faerie portal.

Encounters

When the Characters are ready to enter the portal into Dasa, continue with Encounter 3: Goblin Greetings.

Encounter 3

Goblin Greetings

PREP: Read this when Characters open the Dasa Faerie gate.

PLAYERS: *A shimmering curtain of blue light spans the carved archways on the granite face. Beyond is a large, dark space in which two squat, armored figures move. The figures are not distinct.*

GM NOTES: The indistinct figures seen through the gate are two goblins standing thirty feet from the portal. They are on guard duty and are strolling around out of boredom. Altogether there are six goblins (see the statistics under *Non-Player Characters*). Regardless of the PCs' plans, the goblins react in the following ways as soon as the portal appears.

- 1) If Dasa was never alerted that the Faerie gate was discovered (a possible result of the outcome of *Betrayal at Bogwater*), the goblin guards are unprepared for disaster. The only goblins on duty are the ones under NPCs. When the gate opens, the goblins think it must be more

Dasa allies coming through on regular business. If no one steps through the portal after three rounds, one of the goblins sticks his head through to see what the delay is. If anything suspicious happens or is seen at this point, one goblin goes for reinforcements (ten goblins, plus one leader), which arrive one turn later. Remaining goblins are within thirty feet of the gate but are defensively unprepared unless suspicious events alert them.

It is possible for PCs to bluff their way past the goblins in this situation. The goblins are unalerted to problems, and the Characters bear the Mark of Galathrien and are approaching in a way the goblins think only Dasa allies use. Only if PCs dally in the subcellar looking lost will goblin guards begin to suspect something is wrong. If this happens, the leader asks the PCs what unit they're with. Save against goblin leader's INT to see if he is convinced by the answer. If not, the gig is up and the goblins attack.

- 2) If PCs played *Betrayal at Bogwater* and chased goblins or dopplegangers back through the portal, the folks in Dasa foresee possible trouble. Double the number of goblins on duty.

In the first round after the portal opens, all goblins on duty approach the gate and take position at the end of that round. In the second round, the goblins pose, crossbows ready, partially concealed behind pillars in the subcellar thirty feet from the gate. One goblin leaves to bring reinforcements (ten goblins, plus one leader), which arrive one turn later.

Goblin Fight

If scouts fight with goblins and the conflict lasts longer than ten rounds, the reinforcements arrive. If the LDG troops are involved, one of the reinforcing goblins leaves (if possible) and returns with twenty goblins at the end of another turn. If the fray continues for an additional turn, twenty more goblins and two of Galathrien's wizards join the battle (see statistics under Dasa: Land Gate).

The PCs should slip out of the subcellar at the earliest opportunity and not be sidetracked by combat. The stairs exiting the subcellar are 100 feet away from the Faerie gate, at the opposite end of the pillared and vault-roofed hall. If PCs have fought goblins without the help of the LDG, the PCs are pursued upstairs if any goblins are left alive to follow. If the LDG is involved, the goblins have their hands full and ignore PCs who slip past them.

If a fight takes place in the subcellar, the goblin guard force is permanently increased to thirty goblins and one wizard,

thus making it very unlikely that PCs will be able to exit Dasa in the same manner in which they entered it.

(25) Lake District Guard

Human Skill 3 Fighters

HTK: 15, AC: 7

MV: 12", AL: C. Good — L. Good

AT: 1, DM: by weapon

THACO: 18

Armor: ring mail

Weapon Proficiencies: halberd, short sword, dagger, short bow

Weapons: halberd, short sword, dagger

Encounters

If PCs get out of the subcellar, go to Encounter 4: Upstairs.

If any PCs are captured, go to Encounter 8: Prison.

If any PCs are killed, read Encounter 13: Death in Dasa.

Encounter 4

Upstairs

PREP: Play this encounter once the PCs are out of the subcellar and into the palace.

PLAYERS: *The stairs out of the subcellar lead upwards to a 25' x 30' room which appears to be a storage cellar. This room is filled with sacks of food, racks of wine and liquor bottles, and other miscellaneous items. Up another flight, the stairs terminate in an archway opening at the midpoint of a long ten-foot wide corridor.*

GM NOTES: Cellar

If PCs are pursued from the subcellar and wish to duck into the cellar to hide, alter the above description as needed. There are plenty of hiding places among crates and barrels, but such concealment is not very secure and a cursory search by pursuers will discover them.

Corridor

When the PCs step out into the corridor, read the following to the Players:

An arched and vaulted ten-foot wide corridor extends to the left and right, illuminated at intervals with oil lamps. To the left, the passage leads to an exterior courtyard beyond an open door. Two goblins stand guard outside the door, their backs to the building. Along the corridor to the right are several doors on the sides and at the end of the passageway. From that direction comes the sound of clattering pans and crockery and the smell of cooking.

Encounters

If PCs are caught by pursuit, play Encounter 8: Prison.

If PCs head for the outdoors, go to Encounter 9: Out of the Palace.

If the PCs move farther into the palace by heading to the right down the passage, play Encounter 5: Mistaken Identity.

Encounter 5

Mistaken Identity

PREP: Play this encounter if the PCs meet Galathrien's Master of Entertainments, Erel.

PLAYERS: *A robed, dark-haired figure sweeps imperiously out of a door at the end of the hall and strides purposefully toward you. He is a half-elf of near-middle years, with intense dark eyes and a well-groomed goatee. His plum-colored robes are far more flamboyant than any you have seen before. At first his eyes are on the courtyard door behind you, but then his eyebrow raises with surprise as soon as he sees you.*

"Well!" the fellow exclaims, "I didn't expect you so soon! But just as well—the Master is anxious to interview you. You found the servant's entrance with no difficulty, I take it?" He glances at the courtyard behind you and doesn't wait for a reply. He stands back half a step and quickly looks you over, paying special attention to your weapons and armor. He nods once, approvingly. "They certainly look the part," he says. "The crowd will love it. And if you're not too clumsy with them, the Master may reward you well! Now come along."

He turns in a swirl of silken robes and leads back the way he came.

GM NOTES: The half-elf is Erel, a cleric of Dhuris and Galathrien's Master of Entertainments. He has mistaken the PCs for the latest group of Dasa inhabitants chosen to compete in the monthly Games. If Galathrien finds such contestants sufficiently entertaining, they are taken into his personal service in the Palace — a coveted lifestyle for those who serve the Tempter.

Erel

Half-elf, Skill 7 Cleric

Deity: Dhuris

STR: 12, INT: 18, INS: 11

STA: 7, DEX: 13, APL: 17

HTK: 34, AC: 10

MV: 12", AL: N. Evil

AT: 1, DM: by weapon

THACO: 16

Weapon Proficiencies: flail, whip, quarterstaff

Weapons: none

Armor: none

Spells: 3/3/2/1

Magic Items: Incense of Meditation

Specials: Infravision 60';

30% resistant to Sleep, Charm;

+05% to the reaction rolls of others, in addition to normal APL adjustments.

Erel is a proud and vain cleric who is puffed up over his position of service to Galathrien. Like most of the Palace staff, he is both Charmed by Galathrien and under the influence of a Delusion spell.

Erel believes that women find him irresistible, except for the dim-witted few who don't appreciate his qualities. There is a 75% chance that he will make advances to the most attractive female member of the party (if applicable) when the opportunity is available.

It should be obvious to the Characters that they have been mistaken for someone else. If they point this out or resist going with the half-elf, he becomes suspicious and alerts the guards. He also becomes suspicious if they ask his name or who he is, since the real Games contestants know exactly to whom they are reporting. Barring these events, Erel leads the party deeper into the Palace and up to the third floor. Once they leave the service corridor near the cellars, there are many people everywhere the PCs go. It should be very difficult for them to slip away or clobber the half-elf without someone noticing their suspicious actions and alerting the guards. This possibility is discussed under **Attacking Erel**, following.

A Notable Difference

Erel refuses to chit-chat as the party moves through the palace. As the PCs follow him, read the following:

This is a palace truly worthy of the name. The halls are broad and high, paved and lined with marble. Gilt and statuary decorations are everywhere, interspersed with crystal candelabras, smokeless brass lamps burning sweet-scented oils, and plush carpets used as wall hangings and on sideboards. Somewhere in the distance can be heard laughter and faint music.

Even more striking than the decor is the variety of people you see here. Sprites and pixies wing through the air, and brownies scurry past at knee height. Squat orange-hued goblins stand guard at stairwells and large doorways, avoided by most other folk; shirelings polish furniture and dust porcelain vases, while elves step quickly by on urgent errands. Scantly-clad humans of great beauty sit languidly on corner benches, sipping wine or kissing a partner beside them.

Let all PCs save against their INT, with Cerel and any other assassin Characters adding a bonus of -4. If at least one PC makes the save, share this observation with all Characters:

Of all the inhabitants of this place, your party is the only group dressed the way it is. It is apparent that within Galathrien's palace only goblins carry arms, and all others are dressed according to their task or occupation. In spite of physical variety, there is a uniformity of appearance here. People stare at your attire, then exchange understanding looks as they recognize the half-elf leading your group.

Attacking Erel

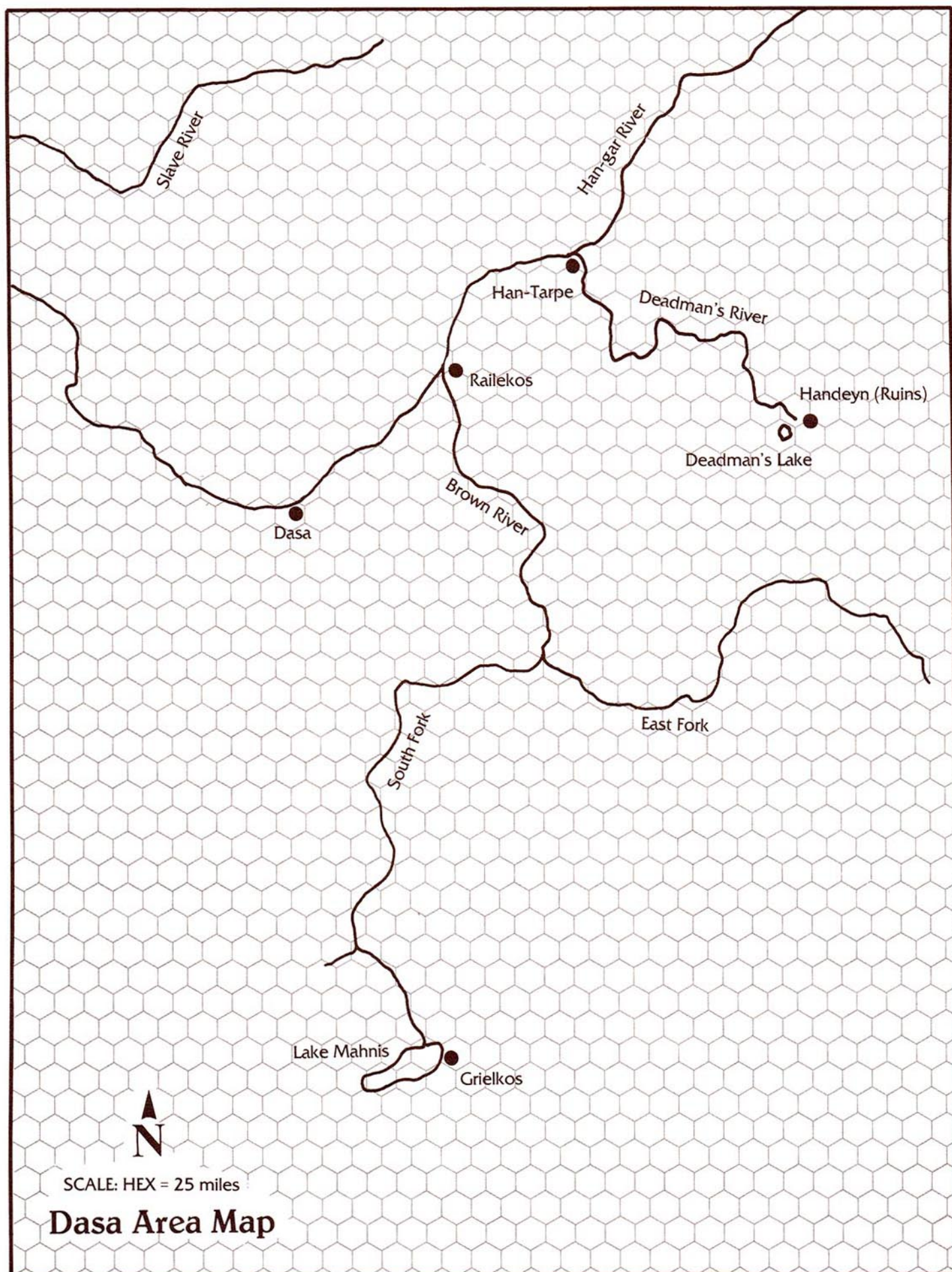
If Characters decide to attack Erel, perhaps to extort information, they can make the attempt at any time. Roll 1D6. On a result of 3 or less, there is no one in sight and the coast is clear for the attempt. On the first round of the attack, roll 1D6 again. On a result of 5 or less, some palace inhabitant stumbles upon the scene or is drawn to it by the noise and summons guards. Erel is too surprised to do much fighting back. If PCs succeed in waylaying him, there are plenty of rooms they can slip into to question Erel in privacy.

The cleric answers any questions the PCs have in order to avoid pain or injury. Immediately read Encounter 16: True Confessions if Erel divulges any information. However, he lies in any way possible to get PCs to touch the pouch at his waist, saying it contains valuables, or the key to Galathrien's study, or anything else that might get a scout to look inside. The pouch contains 1D8+5 gps in coins, and Erel's signet ring (worth 40 gp), but the trick to the ploy is that the pouch is magically trapped with a Magic Mouth spell. As soon as it is touched by anyone other than Erel, the Magic Mouth appears and begins to yell in a hearty and far-carrying shout: "Help! Fire! Murder! Theft! I'm being stolen! Help! Thief! Killer! Fire!" Erel will throw the pouch at someone if he has to to set the alarm off. The Mouth continues its ravings for four minutes, and is certain to bring help in 1D4 rounds.

If Erel is left somewhere tied up or dead, he is discovered an hour after PCs depart the area. If he is forced to lead the way to some destination of the Character's choice, he yells for help as soon as he is near goblin guards regardless of any threat to his life. Under the effects of Galathrien's spells, Erel is more concerned for his Master's welfare than he is for his own.

In short, anything untoward happening with Erel alerts guards and sooner or later an all-out manhunt of the palace commences. The scout party has such a distinctive appearance and has been noticed by so many that they are easy to identify.

If the Characters are in this situation, they will not be able to locate Galathrien and do any harm at this point. Instead, they have a 50% chance of escaping out of the





palace and into the city, or a 50% chance of being captured by an overwhelming force of goblins and one or two wizards (statistics are given under Dasa: Land Gate). These chances can be modified at GM discretion. If a manhunt is on, any further encounters within the palace are up to the GM to create if needed.

Encounters

If Erel is successfully interrogated, play Encounter 16: True Confessions.

If PCs follow Erel to Galathrien, play Encounter 6: The Antechamber.

If PCs flee a manhunt and escape into the city, go to Encounter 9: Out of the Palace.

If PCs are captured instead, play Encounter 8: Prison.

Encounter 6

The Antechamber

PREP: Play this encounter if PCs have gone with Erel to Galathrien's antechambers.

PLAYERS: *Your guide brings you to a quieter wing of the palace, decorated in an even more regal fashion than what you have already seen. Two hulking green-skinned creatures with whips and scimitars guard a massive door of gold. The half-elf leads you through the doorway and into a richly-appointed antechamber.*

The room is vacant except for a woman wearing a brass collar who stands before the far door, which is twin to the one you came through. The woman bows to your guide and knocks on that door; when it opens, she passes through to announce your arrival. As you wait, you notice there are numerous stools and cushioned bench seats placed around the antechamber, a secretary's table, and a sideboard decked with refreshments.

GM NOTES: The guards are half-trolls with the same statistics as those given for Purg under Dasa: Slave Barracks. They respond to any disturbance in the antechamber after pulling a bellrope in the center of the room which summons twenty goblin troops in four rounds.

This antechamber adjoins Galathrien's private rooms and is the place where Galathrien interviews persons like Games contestants. The woman is one of the many slaves who attend "him." Slaves are non-combatants with Armor Class 10 and 1D4 HTK. One half hour after PCs arrive, Galathrien enters the antechamber.

While awaiting Galathrien's arrival, Erel chats and makes small talk with the group. Characters may glean useful information in this way (GM's discretion), but Erel will not mention who or what they are

slated to go up against in the Games. As described under Encounter 5: Mistaken Identity, Erel's suspicions can still be aroused by blatant ignorance on the PCs part. The GM should base Erel's reaction on the way Characters converse with him, depending on how they are role-playing the scene. A single outcry from Erel brings the half-troll guards. There is also a 20% chance that Galathrien will teleport into the room to see what is amiss.

Door and Vault

There are two things of special interest in this chamber. One is a secret door at the north end of the room which leads to the slave quarters on the floor below. It is used as a discreet entrance by visiting slaves, and is a way for PCs to leave the room undetected should they find it. The downstairs exit is unconcealed and is guarded by two goblins, but they do not question anyone leaving in that manner.

Also in the antechamber is one entrance on the east side of the room to the extra-dimensional vault where Galathrien keeps the Crystal Shard and other valuables. If PCs happen to notice this anomaly in the wall near the far door, methods for getting into that space are explained under Encounter 14: The Vault. PCs can detect the presence of the vault by looking through the Gem of True Seeing, or by casting Dispel Magic, Dispel Illusion, or Detect Illusion (all reveal the construct in the wall). Characters with the racial ability of detecting secret doors have the regular chance to notice the vault.

Encounters

If guards are called in for any reason and the PCs successfully flee, play Encounter 9: Out of the Palace.

If guards capture PCs, go to Encounter 8: Prison. Read Encounter 13: Death in Dasa to any who are killed.

If PCs put Erel out of the way without alerting guards, an interrogation of him reveals the information under Encounter 16: True Confessions.

If the room is searched and the vault is found, go to Encounter 14: The Vault.

If the party decides to leave by strolling out past the guards, play Encounter 9: Out of the Palace.

If PCs try to exit through the other (non-secret) antechamber door, or if a half hour has elapsed since their entrance, go to Encounter 7: Galathrien.

Encounter 7

Galathrien

PREP: Play this when PCs meet Galathrien in the antechamber to its palace rooms.

PLAYERS: *The far door swings silently open, and a tall robed figure steps towards you. It is a woman, by far the most beautiful you have ever seen. Her presence is electrifying, compelling you to focus your attention only on her. You are dimly aware that Erel kneels and bows to the floor in obeisance to this stunning woman. There is the unspoken feeling in the air that you should do the same.*

GM NOTES: Galathrien can change its appearance at will, and takes a female form as often as a male one. The Dasa Lord is always easy to identify by its god-like beauty and overwhelming charismatic attraction. If the party is comprised mostly of female PCs, the Tempter appears as a man, and the above description should be altered to reflect that. For scouts paying attention to such details, the female Galathrien appears to be 5' 10" tall, weighs about 130 pounds, with violet eyes and curly blond-brown hair piled high on her head. "She" does not look powerful of form and seems easy to attack. "She" wears two gem-set pins on her over-robe; these are the Periapts of Proof Against Rotting and of Proof Against Undead.

If Erel has been disposed of by the PCs, or anything else unusual is evident when Galathrien enters the room, Galathrien teleports away immediately. Two segments later the half-troll guards enter to subdue the Characters, joined by twenty goblin guards in 1D4 rounds. Characters cannot flee through the far antechamber door, which is Wizard Locked.

Charm Effects

The moment PCs first see Galathrien, even if "she" teleports away, each Character must make a save against INS at +4. If the roll is failed, the PC is Charmed by Galathrien, with the same duration and effects as the spell. This will complicate assassination plans and may seriously hinder the mission. The GM should make sure that Charmed Characters are role-played in the true spirit of sudden friendship toward Galathrien.

This adventure assumes that at least one PC remains uncharmed to carry on with the mission. If all scouts become Charmed, the GM should let the Characters compete in the Games (Encounter 10: Games), and then blend into Dasa's population until the Charm wears off. Since it is possible for days, weeks, or months of game time to pass in this way, it is up to the GM to devise any miscellaneous encounters needed during that time. Continue play by having un-Charmed Characters exiled to the Dark Quarter for real or trumped-up reasons, then pick up the game with Encounter 18: Dark Quarter.



First Impressions

PCs who do not bow and act reverential arouse Galathrien's suspicions. If this happens, the Tempter uses True Seeing and Know Alignment on the suspicious Characters. Lawful Good Characters detected in this manner are always suspect; there were some in Dasa, but they were curiosities corrupted by the city's temptations and therefore no longer Lawful Good. True Seeing reveals the forged Mark of Galathrien on any Character whose left hand is in sight. (See **Dismissed** for Galathrien's reactions.)

If anything else out of the ordinary is detected, Galathrien poses the question, "Why are you here?", and monitors the PCs' surface thoughts with ESP. Characters must save against INT to successfully conceal his or her true intentions. If detected, the Tempter's further responses are described under **Dismissed**, following. Otherwise, good role-playing and a passable reaction roll will satisfy Galathrien's suspicions — for now.

Interview

Read the following to the Players (remembering to alter the description if Galathrien appears as a male):

Galathrien sits by the secretary's table, leisurely looking you over. "So, you want

to join my personal service," comes her deep, dulcet voice. A mocking smile curls the corner of her lip. "We shall see if you're good enough to entertain me in the Games. First, tell me why you want to serve here, in the palace. Starting with . . . you."

Pick a Character at random with whom to start the interview. The Tempter is haughty and proud, and speaks down to the Characters in a condescending, patronizing manner.

Galathrien asks each the same question. The creature is looking for servility among those who work and live in the palace. PCs who do not seem meek enough will fight in the Games, but will not be considered for palace duty afterwards. The second question asked of each PC is: "Why should I take you into the palace instead of someone else?" PCs should feel put on the spot and forced to play the parts of Dasa inhabitants convincingly.

Dismissed

After the questioning, read the following to the Players:

Galathrien rises to her feet, and speaks to the half-elf who came with you. "Take

them to the arena, Erel. I've seen better, but they'll do for now." She turns back to your group. "I look forward to the bloodshed,"

she says with a smile, and sweeps out of the room.

The Tempter has not forgotten suspicious Characters, such as a scout with a false Mark on the hand. If Galathrien has been alerted to these things, an escort of twenty goblin guards awaits Erel and his charges outside the antechamber door when the party leaves.

If Galathrien is attacked at any time during this encounter, "she" immediately teleports away. Two segments later the half-troll guards enter the room, Erel and the guards fight to subdue the Characters, joined by twenty goblins in 1D4 rounds.

If by chance the PCs succeed in killing Galathrien before it teleports away, they have accomplished their mission and are free to leave as soon as possible.

Encounters

If any PCS fight and are captured by anyone in the antechamber, go to Encounter 8: Prison.

If the PCs escape the palace, go to Encounter 9: Out of the Palace.

If PCs continue to pose as contestants for the Games, go to Encounter 10: Games.

If the PCs have slain Galathrien, go to Endgame.

Encounter 8

Prison

PREP: Play this encounter if the PCs have been captured after fighting goblins in the subcellar, or are captured by guards anywhere in the palace or Dasa.

PLAYERS: *Stripped of all possessions, you are bound by the goblin guards. Herded along with spear jabs and curses, rough hands hurry you to the back wing of Galathrien's palace. Your destination is the grim donjon tower there, built on to the end of the guard's quarters.*

You are taken down two flights of stairs to the dank, musty depths of the tower. The way is dark, lit for now by a single, flickering torch. There seem to be no doors or cells in this prison, but your guards soon stop by a mildewed alcove in the stone hallway.

A rusty grate is lifted from the floor of the alcove. There is a noisome odor wafting up from the pit at the same time you are half pushed, half thrown over the edge of it, dropping helplessly to the floor eight feet below. Particles of rust sift down as the grate slams back into place with finality. Goblins take their guard posts in the hallway overhead, and the torch is extinguished. The pit is slimy, wet, cold, and smells nauseatingly of sewage and decay. The ominous silence is broken only by the chitter and scuttling of rats, and the rush of water nearby.

If the PCs explore the pit, continue by reading the following:

The pit widens into a small chamber of damp and slimy stone. At the far end are two small archways, barred, worn into the stone by the water which you hear flowing on the other side. The unpleasant smell here is that of sewage. The floor is slick and slimy; it seems that the sewage water runs over its banks now and then, frequently enough to keep this chamber damp with overflow.

GM NOTES: Characters thrown into the prison pit take 1D4 HTK damage from their fall to the bottom. However, a successful save against DEX halves the damage.

The goblins ignore the PCs completely, and those guards cannot be seen from any vantage point at the bottom of the grated shaft.

With much time and effort, the PCs can free themselves of their bindings. However, pixies and other Characters small enough to slip through bars are shackled with a chain and hefty ball wide enough to prevent such escape. If they can get free of this hindrance, they should be allowed to do so.

Galathrien and the guards know the pits connect with the sewer system and under-

ground water flow of the city, but they are not concerned with prisoners escaping this way (see **Escape Attempts**, following). The bars set into the archways are relatively new and well maintained. They are not rusted or easily worked free from the stone and mortar in which they are set.

Doing Time

Scouts learn no more about their prison than what has been described previously. Guards are changed every six hours; if PCs have any way to detect this, there are four on duty near their pit at any one time.

Galathrien plans to leave the scouts in this hole for three weeks, during which time they will be given food spiked with gesh, an addictive spice with harmful withdrawal effects described in Encounter 17: The Golden Goblet. When the scouts are finally brought out of the pit, they should be harmless, since their gesh addiction will compel them to do Galathrien's bidding or probably die of withdrawal. Their interrogation and other matters will wait until the prisoners are addicted and tractable. If Characters fail to escape, this is what lies in store for them. If this happens, they have failed in their mission; conclude play with Endgame.

NOTE: Cleric PCs who have the Create Food and Water spell may use this spell to enable the party to avoid eating the gesh-spiked food.

Escape Attempts

If scouts want to escape, it is necessary for the resolution of this adventure that they end up sooner or later in the Dark Quarter, where they will make contacts important to the success of their mission. Therefore, they should be discouraged in attempts to leave the same way in which they came. The best way to do this is to have them caught and overwhelmed by guards if the PCs escape through the grate or the donjon tower. A wizard or two may join the guard force if needed to subdue PCs. The PCs will be returned to their prison pit and the guard doubled to insure no further hope of escape in that direction.

The best way to escape is through the sewers. Pixies and other small Characters without shackles can easily slip through the bars. Others might want to use their bend bars ability, magic, or other methods to get out through the arches. If the entire party escapes within two days, read **Sewer Trek**, following.

If only individuals such as pixies escape, read **Sewer Trek** to them privately. Role-play a meeting between these PCs and Elina (described under Encounter 11: Seidrun's Friend), and allow those PCs to return in company with Elina under **Rescue**, following.

Rescue

After two days in prison, read the following:

Unexpectedly, there is a change in the sound of the water flow. A rushing is heard upstream, and the smelly fluid begins to surge over its bank, through the arches, and across the chamber floor. The roar of cascading filth and water grows closer. It sounds like a flood wave swelling the waters beyond the arches. Suddenly, a large watery form rises out of the flood stream and grasps the bars of one archway. Then, there is the groan of metal bars being wrenched out of the wall. A female voice calls out from the direction of the sewage tunnel, "Quickly — this way! I'll lead you out of here!"

The form is a water elemental under the control of Elina, a priestess of Seidrun, the water goddess. It does not respond if attacked by the scouts.

The guards also hear the screech of metal and crash of mortar and stone. If PCs don't leave in the next four rounds, they will be overwhelmed by goblins who enter the pit to investigate and stop their escape. If scouts persist in attacking the water elemental, Elina and the water spirit depart and leave them to their own devices.

Sewer Trek

Read the following to the Players as the PCs escape through the sewers:

Through sewer water that is mostly three feet deep and three-and-a-half to four feet in some places, you slosh downstream. The passage meanders and winds under the streets of Dasa, but even in the dark you can tell you have come far enough to be out from under the palace. Smaller side passages lead into the tunnel you are in, and from one of them a strong draft of clean, fresh air blows against your face. A glimmer of light from overhead illuminates the side passage, reflecting off of rungs which lead up one wall to the city street above.

If escaping PCs are in the company of Elina, the elemental prevents goblins from pursuing. The priestess tells scouts her name if asked, but silences further conversation, saying, "Wait 'til we're out of here. We'll talk then."

PCs of a form which prevents ladder climbing, such as centaurs, will not be able to escape in this manner. Elina leads any such PC to a cess-pit with a covered ramp for dumping. The Character should save against DEX to make it up the slimey ramp without mishap.

Encounters

If PCs fail to escape, go to Endgame.

If the PCs get out on their own, play continues with Encounter 18: Dark Quarter.

If the PCs are rescued by Elina, go to Encounter 11: Seidrun's Friend.

Encounter 9

Out of the Palace

PREP: Use this encounter when PCs leave the palace through a normal entrance or exit.

PLAYERS: *The palace exits are well guarded — on the outside. The goblin guards do not seem too particular about who leaves the palace, and it is easy to walk right past the guards. Walking across a small exterior courtyard, you pass through a final gate, also guarded only on the outside, and turn into a broad thoroughfare which rings the palace. It is easy to blend in with the crowd.*

GM NOTES: If the Characters have fled past guards in the palace, a manhunt will soon begin. Besides learning about the city and Galathrien, these scouts should also be concerned with finding a hiding place or otherwise blending in with the local population. They remain easy to identify if they are not wearing local clothes, or if they are walking around armed and armored.

If the PCs are hunted and have not taken steps to camouflage themselves, roll 1D6 for each hour they spend wandering the streets. On a result of 1 or 2, they encounter a troop of goblins (see statistics under Non-Player Characters). One guard departs for reinforcements, which arrive in 1D4 rounds. Others fight to subdue. After four hours on the streets, a result of 3 on 1D6 means citizens spot the PCs and raise an alarm; guards arrive in that location 1D4 rounds later. Do not roll for manhunt encounters when PCs are in a business establishment mentioned under Encounters.

When Characters flee guards, an isolated passerby will tell them they ought to go hide out in the Dark Quarter, where guards leave people alone. The GM should subtly lead Characters to explore that district, since the subsequent encounter with the cleric Elina can be vital to the optimal conclusion of this adventure.

Walking Tour

If PCs spend at least one hour walking around town, describe the general layout of Dasa as they have observed it. Point out that the city is divided into districts where different types of entertainment and businesses are predominant; refer to coding on the Dasa map to identify these districts. In all places, people seem happy and cheerful and are having a good time. Even those who work enjoy their tasks, but most people seem to have leisure and are spending it in entertaining, if decadent, pursuits.

Information about Dasa should be limited to what PCs could reasonably observe. For instance, they would be ignorant of the Gate of the Dead, and they may not be able to tell that the half-elves at the city gates are wizards.

Places of Refuge

When Characters tire of walking around, they may wish to enter one of the local business or entertainment establishments. Among other things, they have passed inviting taverns and raucous gambling halls. If PCs want to enter one or more of these places, go to Encounters.

Intelligence

The following information should be imparted while Characters wander around. The GM can alter or combine interactions as needed, depending on what the party is doing.

- 1) **Twillam, Shireling Street Peddler:** *A shireling street peddler offers to sell you "fun spice" (the "spice" is gesh, which is explained under Encounter 15: The Golden Goblet) for 10 gp/oz., promising it will make you feel great. He comments, "Boy, this stuff sure is cheap since the Great Three took over. You don't know about The Great Three? Where've you been hiding? Galathrien, of course, Vendris in the north, and Halimaj in the southeast. Who else? They're a lot more fun than Lucius the Overlord. Now gesh is cheap, and so is wine. It's always a party here!"*
- 2) **Female cleric of Dhuris, overheard speaking to her companion on the street corner:** *"... it's certainly true. We clerics of Dhuris are much more powerful now, with Galathrien around. At the last Adoration I came within fifty feet of him, and I've had more spells than normal at my command all week long. He's god-sent, for certain. Maybe even a demigod, like they say. ..."*
- 3) **Goblin fighter to another outside a gambling hall:** *"Might as well have fun now. After Galathrien surprises Briarwood with the rakshasas next week, we'll be too busy with the next offensive ... Hah! Won't those Great Plateau idiots be surprised when a hundred rakshasas show up in the middle of the city?"*
- 4) **Woman in alley:** *The woman scolds her intoxicated husband in a hushed voice. The man is pale and shaking and looks nauseous. "Must you drink so much, Komos? Do you want to be banished to the Dark Quarter? And you will be if people see what you've done to your health. I don't want you to disappear in the night like all the others, and never see you again. ..."*

- 5) **A blue-winged pixie swatting at a sniffing leprechaun:** *The pixie admonishes quietly, "I don't care if you don't want to do that kind of work. Don't ever complain about the Tempter, or you'll be sent to the Dark Quarter. And you'll starve if I can't smuggle food in to you. Now hush!"*

- 6) **A beautiful, scantily-clad woman speaking to her female companion, who has a vacant-eyed stare:** *"Anyone can get near Galathrien," she says. "Just be there in the morning at the Adoration, day after tomorrow, and push your way close. I got to kneel at his feet last time, only ten yards away. He's so handsome!"*

Encounters

If PCs are captured by guards, play Encounter 8: Prison.

If PCs enter a tavern, play Encounter 15: The Golden Goblet.

If PCs enter a gambling house, go to Encounter 17: The Rolling Bones.

If PCs wish to explore the Dark Quarter, go to Encounter 18: Dark Quarter.

Characters should be frustrated in any attempts to reenter the palace at this point. If they try to do so, they are confronted by guards who become suspicious of their appearance, mannerisms, or ignorance of a password — whatever is needed for convincing role-playing. If the guards succeed in arresting them, play Encounter 8: Prison; if they retreat into the city, steer them to the Dark Quarter and play Encounter 18: Dark Quarter.

Encounter 10

Games

PREP: Use this encounter if PCs continue their ruse and compete in the Games.

PLAYERS: *You are taken to an interior open-air courtyard ringed with spectators on balconies. The courtyard has only two gate entrances on the ground floor, a spacious enclosure which is barren of all covering except fine, raked gravel. You are led through one of the gates by Erel, who stands with you briefly. "You know the rules," he says. "Put him out of the fight any way you can, and make it look good. The longer you can entertain the crowd, the more Galathrien will be pleased. Here, let me bless your weapon."*

NOTE: The last statement is addressed to the most powerful fighter in the group.

The weapon glows for a moment. "There," says the cleric. "That will do full injury. Ah — there she is now. I take my leave. Fight well."

As the Master of Entertainments closes the gate behind you, you glimpse Galathrien taking her place on a canopied dais along the center wall. Then the gate on the far side of the informal arena swings open, and a one-legged beggar hobbles into the courtyard.

GM NOTES: Assuming that the PCs are only locals without particular weapons skills or magical weapons, Erel has Blessed a weapon so that it can do full damage to the rakshasa. The weapon should be treated as a +3 weapon for hit and damage purposes.

Scouts face the rakshasa Sellyn, part of a gated force Galathrien has gathered to invade Briarwood in two days. Sellyn angered the Tempter by his insolence and is forced to fight in the Games for the amusement of Galathrien. The rakshasa has assumed the illusionary beggar aspect because it should appear misleadingly harmless to his opponents.

Sellyn

Rakshasa

HTK: 40, **AC:** -4

MV: 15", **AL:** L. Evil

INT: very

AT: 3, **DM:** 1D3/1D3/1D4+1

THACO: 13

Spells: Protection from Good, Sleep, Reduce (reverse of Enlarge), Web.

Specials: Hit only by magical weapons; magical weapons below +3 do half-damage; blessed crossbow bolts kill him; ESP at will, Create Illusion at will; can use magic-user spells of up to Skill 3 and Skill 1 clerical spells; unaffected by spells under Skill 8.

Sellyn first casts Protection from Good on himself, then attacks with his Sleep spell. He then casts Web on fighter-type opponents who appear the most threatening. He casts Reduce on the next most dangerous-appearing enemy, then closes for melee. Sellyn uses his superior speed to retreat and dodge in for an attack. He fights to kill.

What the PCs Don't Know . . .

Galathrien has learned that the real contestants for the Games have reported, and that therefore the PCs are not the real thing. If his suspicions were not aroused before, he uses this opportunity to check alignments and see through the Mark of Galathrien illusions. If all Characters have been charmed by him, he has them stripped of all personal belongings except for their clothes after the combat and put out into the city, figuring they are not an immediate threat and will soon be corrupted by the temptations of Dasa. If they are not all

Charmed, survivors are surrounded by a superior force of guards after the combat and cast into prison. If they should chance to escape before they are taken to prison, go immediately to Encounter 9: Out of the Palace.

Sneak Attack

If PCs use this opportunity to attack Galathrien he promptly teleports away. Erel, two wizards (statistics as given under Dasa: Land Gate) and ten guards attempt to subdue the Characters. If by some lucky break they succeed in killing the Tempter in this one-shot attempt, their mission is complete. The wizards, Erel, and guards fight to kill instead. If the PCs win free of guards they can leave Dasa through the Faerie portal.

Encounters

If all PCs were Charmed during their interview with Galathrien, continuing this adventure must wait until the Charm wears off. Refer to Encounter 7: Galathrien for notes on how to continue play.

If the PCs are taken by guards after the Games, go to Encounter 8: Prison.

If the PCs have slain Galathrien and evaded the guards, go to Endgame.

If the PCs are slain by guards, go to Encounter 13: Death in Dasa.

Encounter 11

Seidrun's Friend

PREP: Play this when Characters meet Elina in the Dark Quarter, or converse with her following a prison escape.

PLAYERS: "I'm a cleric of Seidrun," the woman says. "Elina Taulorikh of Grielkos, former slave of Galathrien." She smiles bitterly as she fingers the brass slave collar around her neck. "I did some divination which told of your coming, and word traveled quickly to me when you arrived. I know enough to help you bring Galathrien down. I'll help in every way I can."

GM NOTES: Elina knows a great deal of information that can prove invaluable to the scouts and their mission. Elina was captured while on a pilgrimage and forced to serve Galathrien; when he caught her eavesdropping, he exiled her to the Dark Quarter in a fit of anger. Elina acts more from motives of personal revenge than altruism for the masses of Dasa inhabitants. She should be role-played as hard-headed, pragmatic, and brave; she is a clever woman willing to put herself at risk to further her own objectives.

Elina Taulorikh

Human, Skill 9 Cleric

Deity: Seidrun

STR: 12, **INT:** 17, **INS:** 15

STA: 9, **DEX:** 12, **APL:** 16

HTK: 53, **AC:** 10

MV: 12", **AL:** C. Neutral

AT: 1, **DM:** by weapon

THACO: 16

HT: 5'6", **WT:** 125 lbs.

Weapon Proficiencies: trident, quarterstaff, mace, flail

Weapons: none

Armor: none

Magic Items: none

Spells: (6/5/3/2/1) **Skill 1:** Command x2, Cure Light Wounds x2, Detect Magic, Protection from Law; **Skill 2:** Detect Charm, Hold Person, Know Alignment, Silence 15' Radius, Spiritual Hammer; **Skill 3:** Dispel Magic, Locate Object, Remove Charm (as Remove Curse); **Skill 4:** Cure Serious Wounds, Lower Water; **Skill 5:** Summon Water Elemental (See New Spells)

Elina shares the following information with the PCs. This may be read in the order given following, or appropriate sections can be related in response to PC questions.

Elina's History

"I was captured by goblins while on a pilgrimage and brought here, enslaved and forced to serve Galathrien. Galathrien can take the form of a man or woman, you know, and is deadly charming in either form. I've seen people forget themselves and do whatever he — or she — asked of them — but the charm never worked on me. I had the presence of mind to spy on Galathrien every chance I got, and I learned far more than the creature suspects. Then Galathrien caught me eavesdropping one day and exiled me here, to the Dark Quarter. I haven't been here long. What I know is valuable."

Elina pauses and takes this opportunity to cast Detect Charm on the party. If any PCs remain Charmed by Galathrien, she casts Remove Charm on those Characters in order to eliminate the potential security risk.

Rivals for Power

"Three powers have divided Calandia between themselves to wage war against the City-State. Galathrien is one power. But I learned that Galathrien has a special fear of Halimaj, the Lichmaster of the southeastern desert. Halimaj marshals an army of undead which will march on the Great Plateau in the next few months — but Galathrien is certain they will head this way first. All that are slain by that force rise up and join the undead army. Galathrien

fears the Lichmaster will steal its followers and forces and add them to the ranks of the undead.

"In fact, Galathrien has such a horror of death and undead that the being constantly wears two Periapt to protect against a surprise visit by Halimaj. One is a Periapt of Proof against Rotting, the other a Periapt of Proof against Undead."

A Secret Weapon

"Galathrien is vain and boasts too much. I have heard Galathrien brag of something called the Crystal Shard. This being and its allies each have one. I gathered they are fragments of an artifact from a distant Sphere. Galathrien bragged once, 'Let Halimaj bother me, and I'll break the Shard at his feet. That will be the end of him! He wouldn't dare use a Shard to get rid of me or Vendris would turn on him. But I have nothing to lose by doing so!'"

The Vault

"The Shard is kept in the extradimensional vault in Galathrien's chambers, along with the creature's most valued belongings. Galathrien relies on illusionary concealment and glyphs to keep the vault safe, but I don't think it can be too difficult to break into. I know where it is from spying on Galathrien.

"There is a small dimensional nexus at the center of the palace. The vault is a part of that nexus. The palace appeared around that point, so the vault can be accessed from more than one room in the palace. I don't think Galathrien planned it that way: it must be an accidental result of how Dasa was gated to this place."

Adoration

"Every week Galathrien poses for the throngs of the city. Galathrien casts spells which make them loyal and give them pleasure. This being is so busy being admired, Galathrien's guard is down and he makes an easy target. The palace is virtually deserted at that time. With your help, it should be possible to get the Crystal Shard while everyone is at the Adoration. I can lead us through the palace to the steps behind Galathrien, and you can help overcome any resistance we meet. We break the Shard near the Tempter and destroy the creature with it. True, there are guards, but not many inside the palace. They're concerned with threats from the crowd, not from within."

The next Adoration takes place the following day. Elina has given a lot of thought and consideration to this plan, but needs capable help in carrying it off. She does her best to convince the Player Characters to go along with it, and will not participate in any alternative plan.

If PCs want to go ahead with some other plan, the GM must determine how, if, and when they get out of the Dark Quarter and within proximity of Galathrien. Except at Adoration, the Tempter always teleports away after an initial attack and lets guards, clerics, and wizards deal with the PCs, as described under **Sneak Attack** in Encounter 10: Games. Only at Adoration, with pride at stake, will Galathrien stand and fight.

Encounters

If the PCs go along with Elina's plan (either now or later), go to Encounter 12: Return to the Palace.

If the PCs pursue an alternative plan and are captured by guards, play Encounter 8: Prison.

If the PCs attack Galathrien at Adoration in the course of following an alternative plan, go to Encounter 19: Adoration. If the PCs slay Galathrien at any other time, play Encounter 20: Death of Galathrien.

If the PCs are killed by guards, play Encounter 13: Death in Dasa.

Encounter 12

Return to the Palace

PREP: Play this when PCs find themselves in the Dark Quarter and go along with Elina's plan to eliminate Galathrien.

PLAYERS: On the morning of the Adoration, Elina leads you into the sewer tunnels beneath the streets of Dasa. The way is dark and noxious as you slog through fetid water three feet deep in places. On and on she leads, turning down side channels on a seemingly endless trek. Finally she comes to a stop before a grate which bars the passage.

"This channel runs under the palace," she explains over the gurgle of dirty water. "I suppose the grate is to prevent people from the Dark Quarter from sneaking out this way. But we have help most of those poor derelicts lack. Stand back."

A moment later the cleric murmurs words of power, and the water surges around your feet. A water elemental rises from the drainage channel and, at Elina's command, grips and rends the bars from their stone setting. Your path is clear, and the elemental surges ahead, leading the way. Turning down a narrow side tunnel, the water becomes cleaner. At the end of the tunnel, a cascade of clean water drains down from the overhead grate, open to the daylight sky above. The elemental becomes part of the waterfall and flows upward. Apparently the area is clear, for the creature openly lifts the unsecured grate and slides

it aside with a rasp of metal on stone. Dismissed by Elina, it blends formlessly into the waterflow and disappears.

GM NOTES: The cleric's knowledge of the sewers was acquired with the aid of water elementals that have scouted the area for her. The party has come to an interior courtyard of the palace where the laundry is done by servants and slaves. Since everyone has assembled for Adoration today, the place is deserted. The clean water flow is fountain run-off normally channeled through a series of wash troughs when the laundry is in use.

Creatures over five feet tall must bend over or crawl to get through this last water channel. The drainage shaft which exits into the laundry courtyard is five feet in diameter and ten feet deep. Most creatures should be able to emerge through this shaft, but a centaur must be hoisted and suffers 1D4 HTK of damage from abrasions and cuts on his/her way up. If necessary to help get a centaur out, Elina keeps the water elemental around to push and carry the centaur up the water-slick drainage hole. Other PCs can climb out by making a save against DEX at +4. It is possible for one Character to tie sheets or other drying laundry together and lower the rope down the hole. With this aid, PCs climb out by a save against DEX at -4.

The Laundry

In the laundry courtyard, PCs can rinse themselves clean from their sewer trek, and can choose from a variety of dry clothes to wear. Here are robes worn by clerics of Dhuris, gauzy sarongs worn by slaves, plain brown tunics and trousers worn by servants, and a mix of other glamorous or serviceable attire. The clothes PCs wear may either attract suspicion or aid in their passage through the palace, so note how each is dressed. Elina advises that an appropriately regal-looking human Character don the robes of a senior cleric of Dhuris, a helpful ruse in getting past guards. As the PCs take care of this business, read the following:

With obvious distaste, Elina sheds her robes and pulls on the diaphanous drapery of one of the Tempter's personal slaves. She shrugs. "This way I look like I belong in Galathrien's quarters. We humans look alike to the goblins; only one of the other slaves would recognize me and know I've been exiled — but they should all be at Adoration this morning. Shall we go?"

Equipment

If one or more Characters have been stripped of weapons and other useful gear, it is possible to re-equip the Characters on their way through the palace. Elina can

show them places where single goblin guards can be waylaid for their weaponry and the bodies hidden afterwards. The weapons available in this way are limited to spears, daggers, and light crossbows.

No thief tools can be procured. However, magic-users and clerics in need of components can be supplied from a kitchen storeroom used by Galathrien's wizards. The storeroom is locked. PCs must pick the lock or get the keys from the steward, who is occupied doing kitchen inventory along with five cooks. They can carry this out in any way they desire, but forcing the storeroom door or any shouted alarm brings 1D3 guards and an encounter as described under **Guards**, following.

Palyn (Steward)

Drow elf, Skill 0

STR: 8, INT: 13, INS: 14

STA: 12, DEX: 10, APL: 11

HTK: 4, AC: 10

MV: 12", AL: N. Evil

AT: 1, DM: by weapon

THACO: 20

Weapon Proficiencies: throwing dagger

Weapons: throwing dagger

Armor: none

Spells (innate): Dancing Lights, Faerie Fire, Detect Magic

Specials: carries master key to storerooms; also fits 25% of all other locks in the palace

(5) Cooks

Human, Skill 0

HTK: 2, 2, 3, 4, 5, AC: 10

MV: 12", AL: N. Evil

AT: 1, DM: by weapon

THACO: 20

Weapon Proficiencies: none

Weapons: frying pans, rolling pins, etc. (1D3 HTK damage each)

Armor: none

Once needed supplies are acquired, Elina takes the party to the temporarily-deserted slave quarters on the floor below Galathrien's rooms. From there, a private staircase gives entrance to Galathrien's antechamber. The PCs must overcome the two goblins that guard the staircase. Each has common guard statistics as given under NPCs. They are bored and are not on their guard until the party tries to go upstairs at this unusual hour. Guards react as described following under **Guards**. If PCs make it past them, their way is unobstructed and they may enter Galathrien's antechamber with no further difficulty. (See **Encounters**.)

Guards

While walking through the palace, the PCs have a base 80% chance of fooling encountered creatures with their disguises, but only a 30% chance if they are armed and armored in a way not common to the palace (as explained under Encounter 5:

Mistaken Identity). This chance should be modified downward (GM discretion) for inconsistencies such as wet hair, wet clothes, a "cleric" carrying a guard's spear, and so on. Suspicious inhabitants say nothing, but summon 1D3+1 guards who appear in 1D3 rounds, approaching from behind the PCs. If PCs leave guards alive, a manhunt begins. In this case, PCs have only a 25% chance of reaching the slave quarters before they are cornered by a force of 20 guards who fight to subdue.

Encounters

If PCs are captured by guards, play Encounter 8: Prison.

If PCs are slain, play Encounter 13: Death in Dasa.

If PCs reach the antechamber, play Encounter 14: The Vault.

Encounter 13

Death in Dasa

PREP: Read this to any Player whose Character dies in Dasa.

PLAYERS: *One unexpected blow is all it takes. Darkness falls over you as the ground dives upwards toward your face. You know no more.*



GM NOTES: Unless PCs can take slain companions with them out of Dasa, there is no chance to have them restored to life.

Encounters

Surviving Characters continue the current encounter. If all PCs die, play Endgame.

Encounter 14

The Vault

PREP: Play this once the extradimensional vault is revealed in Galathrien's antechamber.

PLAYERS: *A three-foot square of rainbow-shimmering color is visible midway up the far wall. Colored lights shift back and forth there, nodes of brilliance flashing and fading in a definite pattern.*

GM NOTES: If PCs are accompanied by Elina into the antechamber, she cautions them to be quiet due to the half-troll guards in the hall outside the antechamber door. (If this is the PCs' first visit to this room, a brief description can be read in Encounter 6: The Antechamber, but eliminate the references to NPCs.) Elina casts Dispel Magic to reveal the vault, unless another Character wants to use a spell to do so. The vault can be detected via Dispel Magic, Dispel Illusion, Detect Illusion, or the use of a Gem of True Seeing, etc..

This extradimensional space is in the form of a three-foot-square cube. Galathrien normally uses the opposite face, which adjoins his private chambers; other surfaces open towards the ceiling and into the floor and are not used to access the vault. Since the vault's location here is an accident of the dimensional nexus at the heart of Galathrien's palace, this side which opens into the antechamber has naturally been hidden and trapped.

The vault is protected not with a Glyph of Warding, as Elina believes, but with a Symbol of Hopelessness and a Magic Mouth. If Dispel Magic is cast the vault is automatically revealed, but the GM should check the success of this spell in negating the Magic Mouth and the Symbol, which were cast at Skill 15. If any other form of magic was used to reveal the vault, the magical traps remain in force.

Magical Traps

The magical traps are triggered the moment someone touches the vault surface in a methodical pattern which is not identical to the correct opening sequence, described following. The Magic Mouth lets off a piercing, high-pitched whistle that lasts for one turn. If the cleric Elina is with

the group, she casts Silence as soon as possible to quiet the trap. However, the first initial noise is enough to alert the two half-trolls who guard the outer antechamber door. If the Magic Mouth continues for more than three rounds, ten goblin guards respond to the alarm, arriving within 1D4 rounds. If PCs are investigating the vault following Encounter 6: The Antechamber, Galathrien teleports in as well. He fights using the tactics under Encounter 19: Adoration. All combats in this encounter are to the death.

Simultaneously with the Magic Mouth, the Symbol of Hopelessness flares to life and affects all who look at or towards the vault at that time. Beings must save vs. Magic or surrender if attacked. After any melee with guards, if the PCs are victorious, affected Characters will leave, certain that it is impossible to get into the vault, and that there is no way to vanquish Galathrien. These effects last for fifteen turns.

(2) Half-troll guards

HTK: 34, 41, *AC:* 6

MV: 12", *AL:* N. Evil

INT: low

AT: 1 or 2

DM: by weapon or 2D4/2D4

(hand/hand)

THACO: 15

Armor: none

Weapons: scimitar

Specials: Infravision 60'; regenerates +1 HTK/round starting three melee rounds after being injured.

Cracking the Vault

The vault is "locked" with a type of puzzle lock, requiring that certain colored lights in its surface be touched in a prescribed order. No tools are needed to open it. Thieves have a 5% chance per Skill of figuring out this pattern. A roll to accomplish this may be made once per hour of experimentation with color sequences. To this base chance is added any DEX or racial bonuses due to a thief's Open Lock skill, and +5% per point of INT over 14. The NPC Cerel a'Tanith has a 55% chance per hour of cracking the vault. Non-thief Characters have a percentage chance equal to their INT score. Only one person can work on the vault at a time, and only one success roll may be made per hour.

Although it was not designed for this use, there is a 10% chance (one attempt only) that a Faerie Chime of Opening will manipulate and open the dimensional flux which forms the vault. However, the tone of the chime also alerts the half-troll guards, if they are still alive.

If PCs were awaiting an interview with Galathrien, they only have time for one attempt before the Tempter enters the room

and catches them in the act. In that case, Galathrien attacks and fights with the tactics described under Encounter 19: Adoration. If the party is here with Elina, Adoration ends after six hours and six attempts to open the vault. The GM should roll 1D6 each turn thereafter; on a result of 1, Galathrien walks in and fights as noted previously.

Contents

When the vault is opened, read the following:

The colored surface of the vault shimmers and fades, revealing a blue-lit depth beyond. The light from the extradimensional space is eye-searing, emanating from a hand-length shard of crystal which floats in the void within. Next to the shard floats a scroll case; beyond it an iron flask glints darkly, and a diamond-jeweled pin drifts apart from the rest.

The Crystal Shard is described under Unique Items, as is the diamond pin (Periapt of Proof Against Liches). The glow of the Shard can be concealed by cloth or in a pouch. When the Crystal is broken inside Dasa, regardless of Galathrien's location, it has the effects described under Encounter 20: Death of Galathrien. The iron flask holds ten doses of Potion of Undead Control of a type which controls all manner of undead. In the scroll case is an accurate and detailed map showing the route to the ruined city of Khaj'ram in the Drylands District. The long-lost city is Halimaj's stronghold in the southeast.

To the Tempter

Immediately after these items are secured, Elina leads the party through the palace to the main steps where Galathrien is enthroned for Adoration. The chances of encounters within the palace are the same as detailed under Encounter 12: Return to the Palace.

Encounters

If PCs investigated the vault while waiting to meet Galathrien, return to Encounter 6: The Antechamber.

If the PCs have come here with the cleric Elina, proceed with Encounter 19: Adoration after successfully traversing the palace.

If the PCs have been slain, play Encounter 13: Death in Dasa.

If the PCs have been surprised by Galathrien and killed the creature, play Encounter 20: Death of Galathrien.

Encounter 15

The Golden Goblet

PREP: Play this encounter if PCs walking around Dasa want to stop in a tavern or take lodgings somewhere.

PLAYERS: *The tavern with the sign of the Golden Goblet looks inviting. Laughter and the clink of mugs can be heard on the street outside. Within, a welcoming hearth fire and cozy, dark atmosphere promise refuge from the city streets.*

In the taproom, men and women sit at tables covered with platters and tankards. Shirelings carry food from the kitchen and potables from the tapboard. Several sprites and pixies flit through the air, delivering condiments to patrons, lingering to gossip, and sneaking sips from untended tankards.

From the shadows by the door, a slim and graceful dark-haired woman steps forward. "Welcome," she breathes huskily. Aside from her scant clothing, there is something slightly amiss in her appearance, but it is difficult to identify what, distracting as her beauty is.

GM NOTES: If PCs openly ask for lodgings they get them, but there is a 50% chance per day they arouse suspicions among the staff or patrons. If they are being hunted in the city and ask for aid in hiding, they are met with apparent friendliness and assistance. In either case, ten goblin guards are summoned secretly and appear one turn later. Similar help arrives if PCs fight in the tavern for any reason. If Characters flee the establishment, a patron hisses, "You won't be safe unless you hide in the Dark Quarter!" as they leave. If these events occur, go to **Encounters**.

Warm Reception

The scouts are greeted by Tevia, a succubus who oversees the Golden Goblet for Galathrien. The thing that is odd about her appearance is her great bat-like wings, not immediately visible in the dim lighting. Male PCs should save vs. Spell to avoid being fascinated by her beauty. If the roll fails, they do not notice the wings and remain bemused by her attractiveness. (If there is a majority of female Characters in the party, this encounter may be changed to an incubus, described in the *Wheatlands District Guidebook*; alter the description and scenario accordingly.)

Tevia

Succubus

STR: 11, INT: 14
INS: 13, STA: 5 (-1)
DEX: 9, APL: 20 (+3, -4)
HTK: 40, AC: 0
MV: 9"/18", AL: N. Evil

AT: 2 (claw/claw), DM: 1D6/1D6

THACO: 13

Weapon Proficiencies: none

Weapons: none

Armor: none

Spells: Charm Human Male, Illusion, Dreamsend (see New Spells), Suggestion, Dimensional Door (to and from the Sphere of the Gods), Mindprobe (as ESP), Unholy Word, Invisibility, Teleport, Emotional Manipulation (causes love as per Emotion spell), Glamour (limited shapechange)
Specials: Hit only by +2 or better magical weapons; Fatal Kiss — drains life from victim. If victim can roll his INSx3 or less on 1D%, he can break the succubus' spell and avoid her unholy kiss. (See *Wheatlands District Guidebook* for more details.)

Tevia is a congenial hostess, but, once the party is ensconced at a table, she attempts to seduce the male human PC with the highest APL. If he is not fascinated by her beauty, she uses her Charm spell on him. Whether or not the spell works, she asks that Character to go "speak" with her in private. She takes him down a hall to a room and attempts to seduce him. If successful, she kills him afterward with her Fatal Kiss ability, and shirelings drag the body out the back door of the Golden Goblet. If questioned about the PC's whereabouts, she claims ignorance and expresses surprise that he did not return to the party. If these tactics fail, Tevia ignores the party, but ensnares them if possible with food or drink as described following.

While in the tavern, PCs overhear this bit of conversation between a cleric of Dhuris and a companion:

"I tried again and again to get to the Sphere of the Gods. I have the Amulet. Why doesn't it work? I'm a faithful cleric. And Sphere Shift doesn't work, either . . . maybe there are no more gods."

A clerical PC "recognizes" the reference to the Sphere Shift spell (as Plane Shift); a save against INT lets a PC deduce that the "Amulet" is an Amulet of the Spheres (functions as an Amulet of the Planes). The cleric who spoke of this does not have the Amulet with him, but any attempt to search or rob him provokes the barroom brawl (see **Barroom Brawl**, following).

Deceiving Appearances

After Tevia makes her seduction attempt a sprite waits on the scouts and does his best to convince them to order food or drink. If the PCs ask about Tevia, the sprite (or any tavern-goer they question) merely comments, "She's a beautiful succubus, isn't she? Galathrien gated her in only a month ago, and already she's made a success out of

the Golden Goblet. She's much better than the others were!"

If the PCs order food, it is tainted with gesh, described following. Any drink received is raffik, although it is disguised with pixie illusion magic to look and taste like whatever was actually ordered.

Gesh

Gesh is an addictive substance added as spice to food. PCs recognize the subtle taste of the "fun spice" if they have consumed it previously in *Betrayal at Bogwater*. Gesh impairs judgment, reducing INS by 1D6+4 points to a minimum score of 3. This is not apparent to the victim, who never notices his/her condition, and believes s/he feels and performs terrifically well. Subsequent saves against INS should be made secretly by the GM against the victim's new, reduced score. Basic intelligence and fighting abilities remain unimpaired. Effects last twenty-four hours.

Gesh effects are cumulative and result in addiction if a Character consumes the spice for as many days as s/he has STA points. Only the temporary impairment of INS from the PC's brief stay at the Golden Goblet is relevant to this adventure. For PCs previously exposed to gesh in *Betrayal at Bogwater*, refer to that module for details on addiction and withdrawal.

Raffik

This potent alcohol reduces INS by 1D6 points, to a minimum of 3. Each mug consumed results in one hour of euphoria, followed by one hour of surly temper and aggressive feelings. For example, three mugs of raffik result in three hours of euphoria followed by three hours of aggression. Save against reduced INS to avoid fighting in stressful or conflict-filled situations (GM discretion). If a person drinks as many mugs of raffik as s/he has STA points, s/he goes berserk and attacks the nearest available target: enemies, strangers, or friends, in that order.

Barroom Brawl

If for any reason PCs fight in the tavern, human patrons stay out of the way and the non-human staff turns on the Characters, fighting to subdue and capture the PCs. Besides Tevia and the guards who will be summoned, the following creatures confront the party.

(4) Sprites

HTK: 3, 4, 6, 8, AC: 6
MV: 9"/18", AL: N. Good
AT: 1, DM: by weapon
INT: very
THACO: 18, SZ: S (2' tall)
Weapon Proficiencies: dagger (1D2 HTK)
Weapons: daggers

Armor: none

Specials: daggers coated with sleep poison; save vs. Poison or sleep for 1D4 hours; become invisible at will; Detect Good/Evil at 5"; Move Silently.

(5) Shirelings

Skill 0 Servants

HTK: 3, 3, 4, 5, 6, *AC:* 10

MV: 9", *AL:* Neutral

DM: by weapon, *AT:* 1

THACO: 20

Armor: none

Weapon Proficiencies: none

Weapons: frying pans, pokers, tankards (1D3 HTK damage each)

(3) Pixies

Skill 3 Illusionists

HTK: 8, 9, 12, *AC:* 6

MV: 6"/12", *AL:* N. Evil

AT: 1, *DM:* by weapon

THACO: 20

Armor: none

Weapon Proficiencies: sword

Weapons: none

Spells: (2/1) Pixie #1 — Blindness, Color Spray, Darkness

Pixie #2 — Blur, Hypnotism, Light

Pixie #3 — Deafness, Phantasmal Force, Wall of Fog

At will — Know Alignment, Polymorph Self

Once per day — Create Illusions

Specials: Infravision, 90'

MR: 25%

Encounters

If captured, play Encounter 8: Prison. If the party has learned of the Dark Quarter and wishes to flee there, play Encounter 18: Dark Quarter. Otherwise, return to Encounter 9: Out of the Palace.

Encounter 16

True Confessions

PREP: Play this if Characters overcome Erel and get him to answer questions.

PLAYERS: *The cleric turns pale and looks about with wild eyes. "Don't hurt me! I'll tell you anything! What do you want to know? Who you're fighting? It's one of those hundred rakshasas Galathrien gated in to attack Briarwood. The Master is teleporting them there the day after Adoration, so we have to take advantage of them now. It's either fight one of them, or some decrepit derelict from the Dark Quarter. Those are boring fights, and now and then when they turn on Galathrien, we have to kill those treacherous pigs and put an early end to the Games."*

GM NOTES: Erel rattles on about other inconsequential palace business if pressed,

and can elaborate on the Dark Quarter as it is described in Encounter 18: Dark Quarter. He knows nothing else of special interest to the PCs' mission.

The rakshasa information is intended to increase the urgency of the scouts' mission. There is nothing they can do directly about the rakshasas, but the attack on Briarwood can be forestalled by eliminating Galathrien no later than next Adoration, which takes place on the third day after the PCs' arrival in Dasa.

Encounters

Return to the encounter in which Erel was jumped: either Encounter 5: Mistaken Identity or Encounter 6: The Antechamber.

Encounter 17

The Rolling Bones

PREP: Play this encounter if PCs want to visit a gambling hall.

PLAYERS: *At the sign of The Rolling Bones, shouts and cheers come out from beyond the door. Inside the gambling hall, tens of figures avidly playing knucklebones and other games of chance cluster around tables. A green-skinned lady of unearthly beauty sways up to you and smiles charmingly. "What table can I show you folks to?" she asks.*

GM NOTES: If PCs are hunted in the city and ask for aid in hiding, they are met with apparent friendliness, but ten goblin guards are summoned secretly and appear one turn later. Similar help arrives if PCs fight in the gambling hall for any reason. If Characters flee the establishment, a patron shouts, "I bet two to one they make it to the Dark Quarter!" as they leave. If these events occur, go to **Encounters**.

The hostess is a dryad named Edohi who greets guests and gets them involved in games. The half-troll proprietors who work for Galathrien remain out of sight in upstairs offices. If PCs are reluctant to gamble, Edohi uses her Charm to tempt them into it. If PCs want to gamble but have no money, she offers to advance them gold with no surety, stating that she trusts them to pay it back. She makes this sound like a personal loan; it is not, but this is the way in which the gambling house stakes its claim on defaulting debtors.

Edohi

Dryad

HTK: 10, *AC:* 9

MV: 12", *AL:* Neutral

AT: 1, *DM:* by weapon

INT: High

THACO: 16

Armor: none

Weapon Proficiencies: dagger

Weapons: dagger

Specials: Charm 3x day, -3 to victim's save; can speak with plants

"Sports Book"

If PCs spend at least one turn here, they overhear the following conversation from a neighboring table:

First voice: *"I'm betting 200 the rakshasas get inside the Overlord's palace before the guards can stop 'em."*

Second voice: *"Sucker bet! I'll take that, and give you 3 to 2 that half of them will be killed trying to get in."*

First voice: *"Fifty out of a hundred? Nah — Briarwood will be too surprised. They'll stomp right through town. Make it 5 to 2."*

Second voice: *"Hmmm. 5 to 2 is alright, but only for the day it's supposed to go off — the day after next Adoration. Agreed?"*

First voice: *"Agreed."*

Scouts can easily learn that the next Adoration takes place three days after their arrival in Dasa.

Gambling

Any dice game can be played at The Rolling Bones; rules and suggestions for such pastimes are given in the standard rule book. If a Character receives a cash advance from Edohi and loses it in play, the dryad offers more money. If that is lost as well, each delinquent PC is approached by three half-trolls demanding immediate repayment. Half-trolls have the statistics given under Dasa: Slave Barracks.

If Characters are incapable of paying cash, the half-trolls attempt to take the debtor PC away. Gamblers spectate and bet on any resulting melee, but guards arrive one turn later to deal with the PCs.

If half-trolls succeed in making off with a Character, s/he is taken to the Gate of Misery and exiled to the Dark Quarter. The remaining PCs clearly hear this fate discussed among the gamblers, and will know where to go to find their companion.

Encounters

If PCs are captured, play Encounter 8: Prison.

If the PCs have learned of the Dark Quarter and wishes to go there, play Encounter 18: Dark Quarter. Otherwise, return to Encounter 9: Out of the Palace.

Encounter 18

Dark Quarter

PREP: Read **Players** notes #1 to Characters exploring near this part of Dasa, or who plan to enter the Dark Quarter. Read #1, #2 and #3 to any PCs who are gambling debtors (from Encounter 17: The Rolling Bones), who will be exiled to the Dark Quarter through the Gate of Misery. Read #3 to PCs entering the area following an escape from prison (Encounter 8: Prison).

PLAYERS:

- 1) *A continuous wall cordons off an entire section of Dasa westward of Galathrien's palace. Small towers top the wall at close-spaced intervals, each one a guard post for goblins. The goblins look only in one direction: westward, into the Dark Quarter, as if to protect Dasa from its inhabitants (or to prevent them from getting out).*

Passersby mutter references to the Gate of Misery, the single, heavily guarded portal which gives access to this forbidding part of town. Houses and sheds are built against the wall on the Dasa side, although in the Dark Quarter there is a clear space the length of the guarded barrier. Unusual movement draws the eye to the roof-tops against the wall. A moment of observation reveals two figures scaling the wall openly between guard towers, carrying bundles and baskets, then disappearing over the wall with their burdens. Clearly they are seen by guards, but no move is made to stop them. Apparently it is easy to get into the Dark Quarter—but another matter to get out.

- 2) *Ten goblins stand before the Gate of Misery. You are pushed towards them, and half-dragged inside a guardhouse. There you are searched, roughly and thoroughly, and all your belongings are taken but the clothes on your back. Then you are marched to the Gate. With a straining effort, four goblins push it open and you are shoved inside. As the gate groans closed, more goblins prod at you with spears, urging you away from the Gate and into the quiet streets ahead.*
- 3) *This part of town is unlike the active bustle which surrounds the palace. There is no one on the streets but a few derelict figures slumped against walls or asleep in filthy gutters. Houses are in disrepair, lacking windows and sometimes doors. A hush lies over the district, with only an occasional curse or plaintive cry resounding from one of the windowless hovels. A faint miasma lin-*

gers in the air—the odor of garbage and unwashed clothes and illness.

GM NOTES: If PCs have just escaped from prison and arrive here, go to **Dasa Derelicts**, following.

Only exiles pass through the Gate of Misery. Guards are bribed to turn a blind eye to children, pixies, and other small folk who cross back and forth over the wall—they are smuggling food to relatives inside. Other persons can enter over the wall, but they are not let out again.

PCs trying to sneak over the wall need only save against DEX, since there are plenty of structures and odd corners to aid in this maneuver. This part of the city wall is not magically warded and can also be flown over. The wall is fifteen feet high; to descend within the Dark Quarter, PCs can hang by their hands and drop to the ground. A successful save against DEX means they take no damage from the drop (modifiers apply as appropriate). If the roll fails, a PC suffers 1D4 HTK of damage.

Gate of Misery

The regular guard complement here is described in **Dasa: Gate of Misery**. Ten squads of twenty guards each can arrive at this location in 2D4 rounds to quell any outbreak of trouble. A cleric on call at the gate permanently paralyzes the wings of pixies and other flying races exiled to this district. Belongings are taken from all exiles before they are sent through the Gate. Fifty guards patrol the base of the wall within the Dark Quarter. Those nearest the Gate guarantee that an exile does not try to dash back out again. They also keep the people of this district from escaping over the wall, but do not hinder any who climb it in order to enter the Dark Quarter.

Dasa Derelicts

The Dark Quarter is the underside of the festive lifestyle visible in greater Dasa. Inhabitants who are broken by the hedonism in the rest of the city are banished to this district, where their ruined health or vice-racked bodies do not blight the entertainments of others. Those who anger Galathrien or Galathrien's minions are also sent here, along with dissidents, people who question the normal course of life in greater Dasa, and a few voluntary exiles who accompany their banished loved ones.

The mortality in the Dark Quarter is high. Provision of food, firewood, or shelter is not a priority in this district. People rely on smuggled goods for sustenance. Illness and disease is rampant, and many people, such as drug addicts, die outright from the withdrawal symptoms they undergo. This is a grim and gloomy district, where forlorn people quietly await death from illness, cold, or starvation. The

Gate of the Dead is the only way inhabitants exit this district.

Finding a Friend

It should be relatively easy for the PCs to locate an exiled companion in the district. Newcomers stand out for a brief time among the other exiles. Any inhabitant can say where the companion is to be found. When PCs are all together and have had time to observe something of the district, read the following:

Out of a doorway steps a woman, who strides toward you with purposeful steps. She does not move like the others you have seen in the Dark Quarter; her bearing is upright and she shows no sign of illness or ruined health. Her clothes are warmer and finer than most, but a brass slave collar is about her neck.

She stops before you. "Word has traveled quickly about you," she says. "I have foreseen your coming—and I can help you. Please come with me."

This is Elina, cleric of Seidrun. She has more detailed information to give the PCs in the next encounter. If the Characters do not follow her to a private place, she continues to talk to them on the street.

The GM should use every means to lead the PCs to interact with Elina, and steer them away from attempts to break out of the Dark Quarter by force at this time. Any such attempts should fail, and district inhabitants cannot be roused to help the PCs break out. Guards can be provoked to fight back, but cannot be drawn away from the wall. Wall guards are +2 "to hit" with crossbows to prevent Dark Quarter exiles from getting over the wall.

Encounters

Continue play with Encounter 11: Seidrun's Friend.

Encounter 19

Adoration

PREP: Play this whenever the party attacks Galathrien at Adoration, with or without the Crystal Shard.

PLAYERS: *Tiered steps at the front of the palace lead to the plaza below. Atop the steps is a canopied platform, and enthroned on this dais is Galathrien, appearing as a female on this day. A constant procession of supplicants and admirers moves slowly up the stairs to kneel briefly before her.*

Behind the Tempter stand ten goblin guards. Slaves sit near her feet, and two clerics of Dhuris flank Galathrien on the step below. Forty or more guards stand in two files lining the steps to keep order in the crowd.

GM NOTES: If PCs approach the Adoration from within the palace, Elina takes them down service corridors to within thirty feet of the palace entrance. Four goblins stand guard facing into the palace, two on each side of the closed double doors. Any scuffle which is not unduly loud does not carry beyond the doors and alert other guards.

The palace doors are twenty feet in back of Galathrien's dais, and never open during Adoration. The ten goblins behind the throne notice immediately if this happens, but are surprised by it. Two rounds after guards respond to a disturbance, the clerics of Dhuris join in as well. Twenty more guards from the stairs follow if needed, although the rest remain to watch the crowd. If Galathrien is personally threatened, or if the scuffle lasts longer than four rounds, the Tempter steps in with the tactics given following. Anyone disrupting Adoration is slain.

(2) Clerics of Dhuris

Human, Skill 6 Clerics

Deity: Dhuris

HTK: 40, 43, AC: 8

MV: 12", AL: N. Evil

AT: 1, DM: by weapon

THACO: 18

Weapon Proficiencies: flail I, whip

Weapons: +1 flail

Armor: None

Magic Items: None

Specials: +1 to save vs. Charm and other INS-affecting spells

Spells: Cure Hangover, Bless, Command, Chant, Hold Person, Silence 15' Radius, Cause Blindness, Dispel Magic

Galathrien's Tactics

The Tempter casts Command, shouting "Stop!" so that "his" guards have a chance to overwhelm the intruders. There is a 75% chance Galathrien has already cast Delusion, Mass Delusion, Suggestion, and Mass Suggestion on the Adoration gathering. If not, Galathrien casts Mass Suggestion on

the area where the PCs are, suggesting everyone lay down their arms and talk with "him." Unaffected guards then rush in, capture and slay the scouts. Galathrien uses other spells of persuasion in a similar manner. If necessary, Galathrien casts Cause Disease on the most powerful-appearing PC, then wades into the melee to fight it out personally. If Galathrien loses half "his" HTK, "he" falls back into the crowd and uses the Whip of Frenzy to provoke the mob and set them on the PCs.

The Crystal Shard

If PCs have the Shard, breaking it within 1" of Galathrien vanquishes the Tempter from this Sphere. At any other distance, Galathrien has time to teleport away to safety and does so immediately.

Encounters

If Galathrien is slain or the Shard used, play Encounter 20: Death of Galathrien.

If scouts are slain, play Encounter 13: Death in Dasa.

If PCs flee, they are pursued until caught and slain, or they escape the city; in either case, play Endgame.

Encounter 20

Death of Galathrien

PREP: If Galathrien is slain with the Crystal Shard, read **PLAYERS** notes. If the Shard breaks at any time in the city, read **PLAYERS** notes and alter description as needed. If the Tempter is slain any other way, omit **PLAYERS** notes and go to **GM NOTES**.

PLAYERS: *A howling blue-black void yawns open at Galathrien's feet. Wind whips around you, sucking into the expanding darkness. Galathrien stands, transfixed in horror, as the emptiness envelopes "him." With a silent cry, the Tempter appears in its true form, and a bulbous, frog-like, genderless body with leathery*

skin whirls away into nothingness.

But the rift continues to widen, growing at a frightening pace. Pavement, furnishings, air all vanish before its greedy expansion. The void you have unleashed heads your way.

GM NOTES: At this point, PCs must get out of the city the best way they can. A week after the Tempter's death, internal dissension splits Dasa into factions, and people can come and go freely through the city gates. If the dimensional rift is unleashed escape is a more urgent matter, since the entire city is consumed within 1D6 turns.

Let PCs decide how they want to get away. If they have slain Galathrien at Adoration, the crowd turns into a mob and the guards have their hands full saving their own lives. PCs can easily disengage from combat, but if they enter the hysterical mob, it will attack them as Celebrants (statistics under Dasa: Celebrant's Home). City gates remain manned and closed to exit unless and until it is apparent that the city is being destroyed by the rift and the gates are rushed by the mob. The Faerie gate remains functional in the subcellar, but may vanish rapidly if the rift had its opening in the palace.

Scouts should be able to get away from Dasa, but only with good planning and timely movement. This should be quite harrowing if the rift is consuming the city and panicked mobs block the streets and gates. If scouts fought when they first entered the subcellar, the strengthened guard recognizes and attacks them if they try to approach the Faerie gate.

If PCs escape through the Faerie gate, they are back at Bogwater and make their report in Bansk. Otherwise, they are in the Wheatlands District over 700 miles away. In that case, they should journey the 200 miles to Railekos to make their report.

Encounters

Play concludes with Endgame.





Endgame

At the end of this adventure, refer to one or more of the following categories. PCs gain experience points as noted, plus points for any monsters slain or treasure gained, if applicable.

- ‡ PCs failed to escape from prison.
Read #1.
- ‡ PCs failed to eliminate Galathrien.
Read #2.
- ‡ PCs eliminated Galathrien.
Read #3.
- ‡ PCs gained intelligence about Halimaj.
Read #4.
- ‡ Dasa continues to exist.
Read #5.
- ‡ Dasa vanished in dimensional rift.
Read #6.

- 1) *Your memory blurs in this dark hole which is your prison. When you are brought to speak with Galathrien, you are in good spirits and don't care much about your encounter or your mission. Galathrien is nothing like the creature that has been described: Galathrien is kind, benevolent, and awe-inspiring. With Galathrien's blessings, you are set free in the city, happily content with your new work as a streetsweeper.*

This PC is a gesh addict who blends into the bemused hordes of Dasa. S/He spends his/her time in a drugged haze and will eventually die of his/her addiction. For purposes of this adventure s/he has failed in the mission.

XP: 100

- 2) *Gryphon Rider Udo Toreignor hears your report with dissatisfaction. "I suppose we shouldn't expect a handful of scouts to succeed against one as powerful as Galathrien. It doesn't matter now. The Faerie portal has been sealed in Dasa and we've lost our chance to get through Galathrien's defenses that way. You are on leave for a time. Dismissed."*

Regardless of the reasons why, failure is a bitter disappointment to the Gryphon Riders and to Lucius II. Galathrien is at large and will continue to foment trouble. The surviving scouts are not in great favor and have plenty of time to train and relax before another assignment is thrown their way.

XP: 100.

- 3) *Captain Toreignor is ecstatic and summons his commander, Major Lemhos. The Major shakes hands with (if applicable) and compliments your party, grinning broadly. "The Overlord, and all of Briarwood, will be happy to hear this news. As for us Gryphon*

Riders — we'd like to show our gratitude." Major Lemhos and Captain Toreignor exchange glances and turn back to you. The Major stands at attention and clears his throat.

"We invite you to join the Gryphon Rider Corps," he says. "You'll continue to serve Lucius II, but as one of us. We oversee plenty of scouts who've volunteered to aid the Overlord. But, only the best are invited to join the Gryphon Riders — and only Gryphon Riders receive the most challenging assignments. You are welcome among us."

Refer to the *Wheatlands District Guidebooks* or the *Calandia Guidebook* (the latter is sold separately) for more information on the Gryphon Riders. PCs who do not join continue to adventure as ordinary scouts with no change in status. PCs who accept the invitation gain many benefits and privileges as members of an elite mercenary unit. Among other things, Gryphon Riders have certain authority over military troops. All Riders receive free outfitting, room, board, training, and medical care if they desire. They may wear red and gold Gryphon Rider uniforms if they wish, although they are normally incognito on missions. A common Gryphon Rider draws a salary of 15 gp per Skill per month: Sergeants receive 30 gp per Skill and officers 60 gp per Skill.

A PC who served as acting Lieutenant during this adventure is confirmed in that rank as an active duty Gryphon Rider officer. Anyone who served as Sergeant is also confirmed in that rank. If there was no Lieutenant, the Sergeant is promoted to officer and someone else made Sergeant (see GM Introduction).

XP: Whether or not PCs join, each surviving PC receives 6,000 XP for the success of this mission. PCs who played particularly important roles may receive a bonus 1,000 XP (GM discretion). Each PC also receives a bonus of 1,000 gp.

- 4) *Captain Toreignor shakes his head in amazement as he learns of the intelligence you have gathered about Halimaj. "I don't know how you do it. Halimaj is a threat we can no longer ignore. We'll want to move on this soon. I don't think I need to tell you who our first choice will be to send into the desert."*

For their valuable information, PCs are awarded a cash bonus of 300 gp each.

XP: 500 each.

- 5) *Dasa continues to exist, but the hordes once loyal to Galathrien quickly fall*

apart. No more organized attackers maraud through the countryside, and persons come and go in Dasa at will. While the folk of that city remain distracted by internal disagreement, Thormar Provincial Army units are moving to take possession of the enemy city. It is the first major victory for the Overlord's forces in this frustrating war.

XP: PCs gain no additional XP.

- 6) *The entire city of Dasa vanished in the dimensional rift caused by the Crystal Shard. The shock of the rift was felt by mystics and meditating clerics as far away as Briarwood. At least most of the organized forces of the Tempter vanished along with the walled city. The only thing that remains on the site is Celebrant's Home, the temple which stood there originally, although it is now in shattered ruins.*

PCs caught in the rift and swept away between dimensions find themselves in Mahrendi, the home Sphere of Calandian deities. They cannot be recalled to the Physical Sphere; it is currently not possible to travel to or from the Sphere of the Gods by normal means.

XP: For completely eliminating Galathrien's power base, PCs receive an additional 2,000 XP each.

XP's for actions accomplished:

- PCs eliminated Galathrien in time to prevent rakshasa attack in Briarwood.
1,000 XP each
- PCs did not succumb to potentially-deadly Dasa amusements (gambling, tainted food or drink).
500 XP each
- PCs escaped from prison without Elina's aid.
200 XP each
- PCs learned of the Crystal Shard and what it can do.
200 XP each
- PCs eliminated Galathrien without the help of the Shard.
1,000 XP each

How to Use This Book

Standards terms/abbreviations 'D' is used as an abbreviation for "die" or "dice." 1D20 means roll one 20-sided die; 1D100 (or D%) means roll two 10-sided dice sequentially, generating a percentage or number between 01 and 00 (read 00 as 100); 3D6 means roll three 6-sided dice and add the results for the sum, etc..

With the notation 1D2, a 4-sided die is used; 1-2 has a value of 1, and 3-4 has a value of 2. With 1D3, a 6-sided die is used; 1-2 has a value of 1, 3-4 has a value of 2, and 5-6 has a value of 3.

Value assumes that the value of one gold piece is about \$20 in current U.S. dollars. An income of 10 gold pieces (or gp) would be a very profitable day for a merchant, but 1-5 gold pieces is a more likely sum for a day's effort. Henchmen's wages are usually 2 gp per day per 2 skill levels, with a dramatic increase for jobs that are perceived to be dangerous.

Armor Class works on a scale in which a lower number is better. A Character with no armor has AC: 10 (unless otherwise stated within a Character's race statistics). A shield adds one to make it AC: 9; chain mail is AC: 5; and plate and shield is AC: 2. (See the standard rule book for details).

HTK means Hits To Kill. This is the number of points of damage that a Character or monster may sustain before being killed. Player Characters and Non-Player Characters determine how many HTK they have by rolling one die for every skill level they have (unless otherwise stated); the number of sides the die has depends on the Character's class (see standard rule book for more information on determining how many HTK PCs and NPCs have).

Monsters always use 8-sided dice to determine how many HTK they have.

Movement (MV) is the speed of a Character or monster on a constant basis. It can be adjusted to whatever scale is needed by adjusting ground scale accordingly (the most common is 1 square or hex = 10 feet).

There may be two or more numbers given. This indicates that the Character or monster can travel in more than one mode (see standard rule book).

THACO is a convenient statistic meaning "To Hit Armor Class 0." When you know a Character's or monster's THACO, you will know the number required to score a successful hit on 1D20 (or multiply that number by 5 to get the percentage chance of success). A target's Armor Class is subtracted from the attacker's THACO to obtain the required die roll on 1D20.

For example, if a Character's THACO is 16 and his target is wearing chain mail with no shield (AC: 5), the Character needs to roll 11 or higher on 1D20 ($16-5=11$) or roll 55% or higher on a D% ($11 \times 5\% = 55\%$).

Characteristics (or attributes, ability scores, or statistics) are derived from 3D6. The lowest score for a human is 3 and the highest score is an 18/00 (see standard rule book for more information).

Spells: A series of numbers given in a Character's statistics indicates the number of spells per skill level that the Character has. For example, 3/3/2 means that the Character has three Skill 1 spells, three Skill 2 spells, and two Skill 3 spells. (See the standard rule book.)

Saving Throws (save vs.): Saving throw values are listed for each Character class in the standard rule book. To make a successful saving throw, a Player must roll the saving throw value or higher on 1D20. A successful saving throw often reduces or negates certain types of damage.

Saving throw bonuses are added to the number the Character rolls on 1D20. For instance, the save vs. Breath Weapon for a Skill 4 cleric is 15. He must normally roll a 15 or higher to save vs. Breath Weapon; if is wearing armor which gives a +2 vs. Breath Weapons, however, he need only roll a 13 or higher to make a successful saving throw ($13+2=15$).

Saving throw penalties are subtracted from the number a Character rolls on 1D20. For example, the same Skill 4 cleric suffering a -2 penalty vs. Breath Weapons would have to roll a 17 or higher to make a successful saving throw ($17-2=15$).

Ability Rolls on a Character's statistics work much like saving throws. On certain occasions, your Character will be directed to "save against" a basic statistic.

For example, if a Player wants his Character to detect a lie or get information, he may have to save on a die roll against his Insight (INS).

Roll 1D20 for all ability rolls. If the resulting number is *equal to or lower than* the statistic, the save is successful. With such a roll, a Character is able to tell if a person is lying, for example.

Ability rolls are often modified. If instructed to make an INS ability roll (roll against a Character's INS) at +3, add 3 to the die roll. For example, if a Character's INS is 12 and rolls a 10, he fails to make the save ($10+3 = 13$).

Reading the Entries

Each entry in this book has three sections: PREP, PLAYERS, and GM NOTES. The portion of the text that tells what the GM should know is printed in regular (Roman) type (normally the PREP and GM NOTES sections). What the GM reads to the Players is printed in *italic type* (normally the PLAYERS section).

Any information that is of special interest to the GM in conducting the adventure will be indicated by the words: **GM NOTE** or simply **NOTE**.

Example:

Encounter 13

The Chapel

PREP: Having left the large hallway (area #12), the party has decided to enter a small, 20' x 15' chapel.

PLAYERS: *This 20' x 15' room contains three pews and an altar which is*

flanked by two five-foot high candelabras. Behind the altar, the bright white outline of a cross contrasts to the dull, aged off-white of the walls surrounding it. To the right of the doorway rests a stone brazier filled with a clear, glistening liquid.

GM NOTES: The outline on the wall was left when this chapel's cross was removed and destroyed.

The liquid in the brazier is Unholy Water which will do 1D6+1 HTK of damage to any cleric or paladin who happens to touch it.

Any L. Good cleric or paladin who remains in this chapel for more than two rounds will see all other party members transform into hideous humanoid vampires. The GM should secretly confer this information to any cleric or paladin Player.

This transformation is an illusion and only occurs in the mind of the aforementioned Character(s). Once an affected Character leaves the chapel,

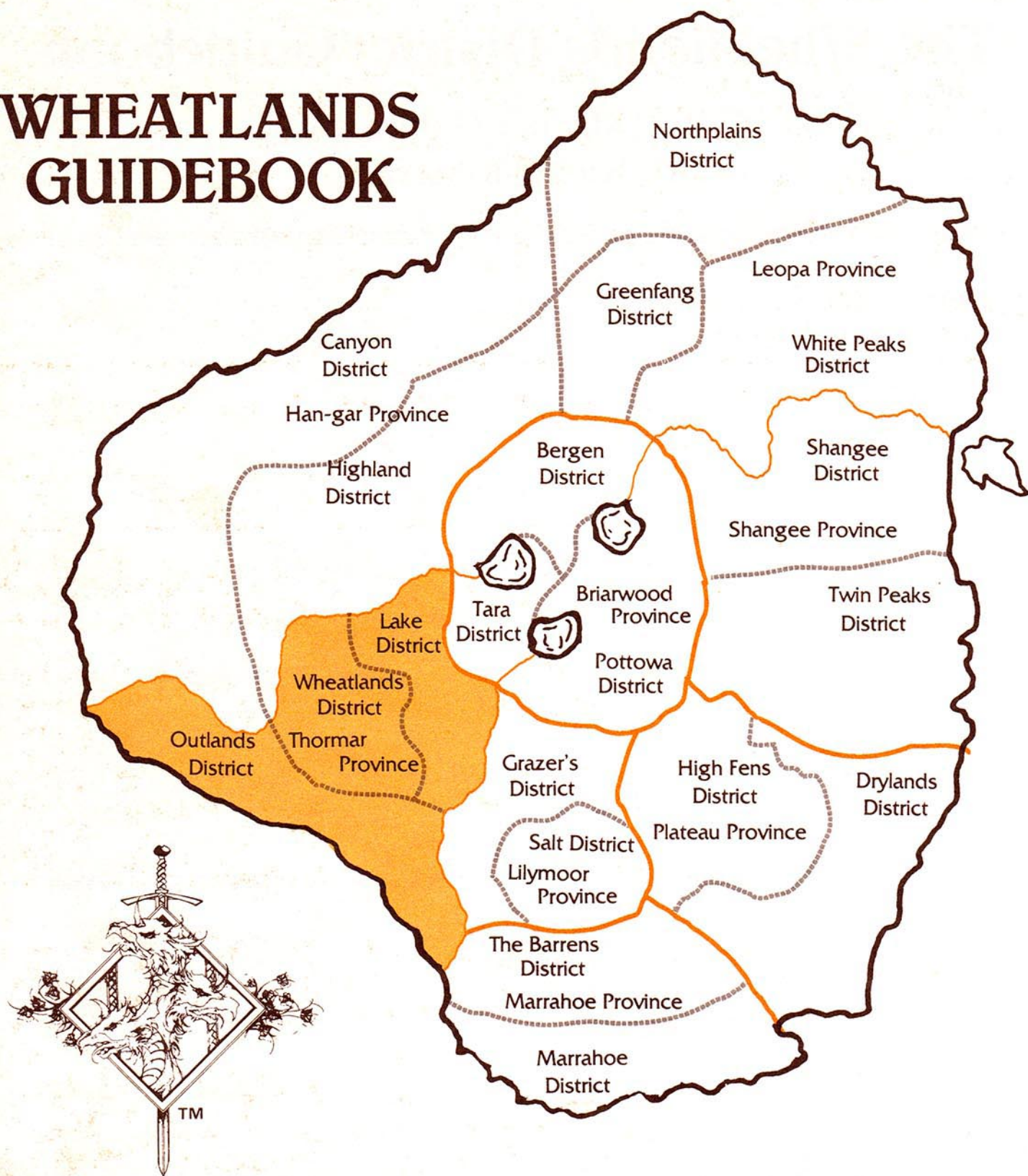
the effect is broken. The room and its contents are otherwise normal.

TERMINOLOGY

STR	.....	Strength
INT	.....	Intellect
INS	.....	Insight
DEX	.....	Dexterity
STA	.....	Stamina
APL	.....	Appeal
HTK	.....	Hits To Kill
AC	.....	Armor Class
MV	.....	Movement
AL	.....	Alignment
AT	.....	Attacks
DM	.....	Damage
THACO	.....	To Hit Armor Class 0
SZ	.....	Size
L. Good	.....	Lawful Good
L. Neutral	.....	Lawful Neutral
L. Evil	.....	Lawful Evil
Neutral	.....	Neutral
N. Good	.....	Neutral Good
N. Evil	.....	Neutral Evil
C. Good	.....	Chaotic Good

C. Neutral	.....	Chaotic Neutral
C. Evil	.....	Chaotic Evil
PP	.....	Pick Pockets
OL	.....	Open Locks
H in S	.....	Hide in Shadows
F/RT	.....	Find/Remove Traps
RL	.....	Read Languages
CW	.....	Climb Walls
MS	.....	Move Silently
HN	.....	Hear Noise
PC	.....	Player Character
NPC	.....	Non-Player Character
mp	.....	mithril piece(s)
pp	.....	platinum piece(s)
gp or GP	.....	gold piece(s)
ep	.....	electrum piece(s)
sp	.....	silver piece(s)
cp	.....	copper piece(s)
GM	.....	Game Master
S	.....	Smaller than man-size
M	.....	Man-size
L	.....	Larger than man-size
MU	.....	Magic-User
I	.....	Illusionist
C	.....	Cleric(al)
D	.....	Druid(ical)

WHEATLANDS GUIDEBOOK



The Wheatlands District in Thormar Province is longer than the country of Sweden and nearly twice as wide at its widest point. Its flatland terrain is dominated by fertile prairies and rolling plains, with only the district-spanning ridge of the Highland Rise to break the open vista.

This territory is home to grain farmers and the native nomadic herdsman known as Hut People. But the Wheatlands is deceptively pastoral in appearance. Mysterious barrow mounds and aggressive haunts await the traveler in out-of-the-way places. Worse, this district has been chosen as the base of operations by one of the masterminds of evil who wages war on the City-State. Subtle corruption and unnatural threats are afoot in the countryside, overwhelming innocent and wary alike in a grip of relentless evil.

The Wheatlands District Guidebook

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Introduction

Guidebooks

The continent of Calandia, home to the City-State of the Invincible Overlord, is divided into eight provinces and nineteen districts. This guidebook details the Wheatlands District of Thormar Province, the region between the Lilymoor and Han-gar Rivers which produces the bulk of grain and staple crops which feed the populace of Calandia.

Information pertinent to the continent as a whole is given in the *Calandia Guidebook* set, which is available separately. That work includes information on Character classes, customs, government, deities, the Calandian cosmos, and much more. Customs and social relationships in the City-State are also summarized in the guidebooks accompanying the first three adventure modules in this series: *Raiders of Ironrock*, *The Wraith of Derric's Deep*, and *Betrayal at Bogwater*.

Language

The language of the City-State is by no means the same as English. An English-Calandian/Calandian-English dictionary is included with the *Calandia Guidebook* set. This dictionary explains Calandian grammar, language, and the alphabet.

For Players and Game Masters (GMs) who do not have the *Calandia Guidebook* set, many Calandian words are anglicized herein for ease of use or pronunciation. In some cases, the Calandian word itself is used when that word best expresses a foreign concept which cannot be literally translated into English, or in giving a particular piece of information. The first time a Calandian word is used in conjunction with its English equivalent, it appears in italics and is set off in parenthesis after the English word. That word appears subsequently without distinguishing marks. New words which are not included in the *Calandia Dictionary* are listed with a pronunciation guide and definition notes in the **Glossary** at the end of this book.

Political Boundaries

The City-State is divided into provinces and districts. Each district is further subdivided into boroughs, which are divisions used primarily for calculating senate representation and taxes. Only province and district names are used in this and other modules.

Governors

A Governor-General (*Aldar*) rules a province as the personal representative of the Invincible Overlord. The office of Aldar was created when Lucius II disbanded his great army of unification and dispatched its forces to strategic locations around Calandia. The Aldari are the trusted nobles of Briarwood who were put in charge of those forces. There are eight of these governors, each of whom is also general of a provincial army. The Aldar of Thormar Province is the dwarvish Prince (*Bevmor*) Darzig of Loran.

District Governors (*Den-Aldari*) rule the various provincial districts. These authorities hold varying personal ranks but, in each case, they come from a trusted and influential clan historically involved in the governance of its district. In addition to other duties, Den-Aldari frequently command elements of the provincial army stationed in their respective districts. The Den-Aldar of the Wheatlands District is Count (*Beldhar*) Firis Drunaros na'Urici.

Religion and Deities

Calandian gods are not identical to the foreign deities with which some of their worshippers have equated them. In this book, native gods are referred to by the Calandian names by which they are most widely known. A detailed treatment of these deities and their foreign counterparts is given in the *Religion in Calandia* book in the *Calandia Guidebook* set. These gods are also listed with their equivalent foreign names in the index of the *Map and Population Book* in the boxed Overlord rules set.

The deities Ardruna, Dhuris, and Uric are of special interest in this region of Calandia.

Ardruna has been likened to the foreign deity Ra because of her association with the sun and the hawk. Ardruna is the goddess of life and fertility and the patroness of nurturing, growth, and peace. She is popular with farmers, healers, and those who create items of beauty. Ardruna controls the amount of sun that the land receives, and is responsible for the weather in times of drought. At times, Ardruna appears as a hawk or other bird, or she may send a bird to aid someone who has appealed for divine intervention.

Farming and agriculture are the dominant businesses in the Wheatlands. Therefore, approximately 60% of the human worshippers in this district are followers of the Neutral Good goddess Ardruna.

Dhuris is an androgynous god or goddess who can take on the appearance of either a seductive woman or a virile man at will. This Neutral Evil deity of temptation is known as the Seductress or the Tempter, depending on the gender assumed at any one time. Dhuris is a popular deity with those who pursue self-indulgence and material rewards. This decadent god/dess delights in physical pleasures and the eventual corruption of his/her worshippers.

Worshippers of Dhuris settled near the Han-gar River in parts of the northern Wheatlands District. They account for over 10% of the district's human population. Many of them belong to the fanatic cult known as Celebrants, the most uninhibited and decadent sect in the Temple of Dhuris.

Uric is the god of pureness and cleanliness. Furthermore, Uric is one of the three eldest gods of the Calandian pantheon. This greater god is Lawful Good and is strongly identified with fairness, kindness, justice, and truth.

Clerics of Uric are expected to act as arbitrators of disputes. They often serve as government-appointed judges, just as most legal authorities are trained through temple-affiliated institutions of law. Clerics of this god are expected to have ethics and behavior beyond reproach, in keeping with the standard of pureness in thought and deed represented by this deity. Most human worshippers in the southern Wheatlands District, or 30% of the total district population, are followers of Uric.

Other Deities

Shirelings in this district are, with few exceptions, followers of Barnabus Fullfruit, the Chaotic Good shireling deity of fields and harvests. The indigenous Hut People follow a variety of totem animal spirit-gods unique to their culture and beliefs. These animal deities are described briefly under **Populations**.



Native and Foreign Gods

Calandian Name	Foreign Reference	Alignment	Sphere of Influence
Ardruna	<i>Ra</i>	NG	<i>sun, life, fertility</i>
Bragla	—	LN	<i>death</i>
Brelig	—	CE	<i>mischief, discord</i>
Coram	—	LN	<i>wisdom, knowledge</i>
Dhuris	—	NE	<i>temptation</i>
Gambros	<i>Bat</i>	CE	<i>evil, destruction</i>
Lan Loros	<i>Fog</i>	CN	<i>fog</i>
Lenoris	<i>Druids</i>	N	<i>woodland nature</i>
Lovianis	—	LE	<i>power, vengeance, assassins</i>
Melios	<i>Healing</i>	LG	<i>scruples, service, healing</i>
Nalagar	<i>Apollo</i>	CG	<i>sun, music, generosity, prophesy</i>
Peren	<i>Odin</i>	NG	<i>altruism and clan leadership</i>
Riegin	<i>Tyr</i>	LG	<i>war, honor, and law</i>
Seidrun	<i>Uller</i>	CN	<i>water, weather, and hunting</i>
Uric	<i>Pureness</i>	LG	<i>pureness, fairness, kindness, justice</i>

Demigods

Calandian Name	Foreign Reference	Alignment	Sphere of Influence
Erin the Dark Hunter	—	NE	<i>death (finds souls for Bragla)</i>
Gadnor	—	CN	<i>berserkers, combat, werebears</i>
Vikkar Tornor	—	LN	<i>oaths, justice</i>
Barcus	—	CE	<i>lies, deceit</i>
Silvertongue	—	NG	<i>hunting</i>
Derius the Archer	—	LG	<i>heroic deeds</i>
Shau Lin	—		





Geography

Terrain

Overview

The Wheatlands District contains the most fertile expanse of prairie grassland in Calandia. Like the fruit-and-vegetable-producing Lake District to the northeast, the Wheatlands District helps comprise the breadbasket of Calandia. From this district alone, a surplus of grain staples and meat is produced which finds its way to the dinner tables of almost 50% of the households of the City-State.

The Wheatlands District spans a 1,000-mile cross section of Thormar Province, from the Han-gar River in the north to the Lilymoor River in the south. It is tied to the trade centers of the Great Plateau by these two mighty river systems. At its widest, the district reaches over 450 miles from the Ford River to the Wheatlands/Lake District boundary west of Thormar Peak. At its narrowest, it is a mere 200 miles, edged by the Lilymoor River.

Like other regions of Thormar Province, the Wheatlands District is a place of farming villages and scattered settlements. Trade is concentrated in the commercial centers of Railekos and Dafarn on the Han-gar and Lilymoor Rivers; elsewhere, village and rural life is the standard. Great expanses of prairie go unbroken by any life except animals and the Hut People (*Keifperi*), the indigenous natives.

Highland Rise (*Audfical*)

The Highland Rise is a shoulder of elevated terrain which runs the length of Thormar Province from the Great Plateau to the sea coast. It cuts through the Province in a northeast-to-southwesterly direction, and serves as a gentle divide for run-off and waterflow throughout the region. In the Wheatlands District, the Rise is a noticeable hill-line in the southern portion of the district. Water north of the rise flows mostly into the Han-gar River, then to the south into the Lilymoor River. Its typical chalk and limestone composition is found throughout its length, but is exploited most heavily in the Wheatlands quarries along its southern length.

Greenlands (*Sfielnebrosi*)

The Greenlands, which begin in the Lake District, is a belt of prairie terrain which continues uninterrupted into the Wheatlands District. Except for a few karst outcroppings, it is dominated by thick topsoil over a chalk and limestone substratum. The Greenlands are the most heavily cultivated part of the Wheatlands District, giving way to plains in the western expanses of the district where livestock are grazed.

Grasslands (*Subrosi*)

Grasslands dominate the terrain and ecology of the Wheatlands District. Beginning with rich prairies near the eastern Lake District border, the countryside turns into dryer savannahs overgrown with tall grasses, which to the west blend gradually into the dry, scrub-grown plains which constitute the Outlands District.

This terrain supports an abundance of grazing herd animals such as antelope and gazelle, as well as the feline and other predators which are drawn to this kind of food supply. In this district, only the color and shape of the grasses distinguishes where a cultivated field ends and wild grains and grasses begin. Wood is in short supply; what few fences exist consist of laboriously-piled

stones, brush barriers, or hedgerows years in the growing. Even these are not always adequate to stop the advance of antelope and the rhinoceros-like granjie which have roamed this country since time immemorable.

In the south, between the Lilymoor and the Highland Rise, tall grasses grow beside ravines and gullies which channel rainfall down the slope of the Rise into the Lilymoor River. The grazing along the Rise is the sparsest in the region. On its north slope, ravines are less common, replaced instead by numerous streams and creeks which feed run-off into seasonal ponds and sinks in the district's center. Lake Mahnis, the largest in Thormar Province, lies near this geographic center. It is a natural catch-basin for waters which do not flow into the north or south river systems.

Between the Highland Rise and the Han-gar River are the richest grasslands in the Wheatlands District. The prairie near the eastern Lake District border is under cultivation in wheat and other grains, while free-grazing herds are found in the western half of the district. The Ford and the Brown Rivers and their tributaries drain the majority of this region in slow, meandering routes to the Han-gar. Closer to Thormar's Peak, the Deadman and Snag Rivers flow through rougher terrain in shallow and rapid-filled courses.

Agriculture

Cultivation of grains is the major economic activity pursued in the Wheatlands District. Wheat, barley, and oats are grown in the heartland of the region between Lake Mahnis and the Lake District border. Corn does well in the drier and sandier soils along the Highland Rise. Millet, beans, and cash crops such as flax and sugar beets are grown between the Brown and the Ford Rivers. Rice is cultivated in terraced fields along the tributaries of the Snag River.

Grains and other crops grown in this district do not conform to any sort of regional plan, although the Den-Aldar has attempted to impose such order on the local farmers. Shirelings and humans grow whatever strikes their fancy; to a large extent they are influenced by whatever is in demand at the fairs and trading markets. The result is a patchwork of crops and frequent crop rotation as farmers experiment with produce that will grow well under local conditions while bringing in a good price at market.

Livestock do well in the Wheatlands, but hold a distant second place to the herdsman's prosperity of the Grazers District. Beef cattle and prize breeding bulls are a common sight here, as are goats and some sheep. The animals are kept out of cultivated areas by hedges and left to roam the remaining grasslands freely.

Waterways

Lake Mahnis

Lake Mahnis is the largest body of water in the Wheatlands District. It lies almost in the geographic center of the region, between the Highland Rise and the Brown River. The lake is fed by run-off from the Rise, and its overflow in turn contributes to the headwaters of the Brown.

Lake Mahnis is a magnificent blue-green body of water almost fifty miles long, and over twenty miles wide at its broadest point. Its exact depth has never been measured, although its sides shelve

to depths of 200 feet before dropping off steeply. Like other ancient lakes to the east, some dinosaur-like creatures and giant prehistoric fish live in the depths of this lake. Boats avoid crossing the lake for this reason, but plenty of fishing goes on around its shores.

Creeks and Ponds

Water does not tend to collect as lakes in the prairies of the Wheatlands District. Rather, it flows through a myriad of small creeks and streams until a larger watercourse is eventually joined. Yet, a number of ponds dot the region, filled with seasonal rains and run-off, or formed as backwaters where creeks move through terrain of different elevations. The many creeks and ponds are, at most, slight obstacles to travelers, easily forded or bypassed. At best, they save wayfarers from thirst and support many small freeholds in widespread and unlikely places.

Han-gar River

The Han-gar River delineates the northern border of the Wheatlands District. It flows from east to west through the district, and is one of Calandia's oldest commercially-used waterways. Most major river trading communities in the Wheatlands are concentrated along this river.

The river bank throughout most of this district is steep, crumbly, and heavily undercut, just as it is in the Lake District. Along its western quarter the ground slopes more gently into the river basin, but, for most of its length, the Han-gar is a trough eroded starkly into the topsoil. Riverside freeholds and villages are sometimes ravaged by floods following exceptionally heavy rains. Sandbars and snags cause periodic difficulties when navigating this river, but not enough to reduce the number of grain barges and small craft which ply its waters.

Han-gar Tributaries

Four important river systems are tributaries to the Han-gar in the Wheatlands District. These are covered following.

Snag River (*Gruis Nemn*)

The Snag lies in the northeastern corner of the district, fed by ponds that drain the Thormar's Peak hinterland. True to its name, its length is blocked with submerged tree trunks, rocks, sand bars, and other hazards spread over a swiftly-descended, rapids-filled length. The Snag is home to a remarkable number of fish which like swift water, including trout and salmon. There are more fishing villages along this waterway than along comparable lengths of the Han-gar.

Temperatures and Elevations

Locale*	Elevation (in feet)	Avg.Temp. (Annually)
Han-Tarpe	1,100	55
Railekos	1,000	53
Tenilan	2,300	63
Dasa	1,000	48
Grielkos	2,000	53
Estehl	3,200	58
Faidmer	2,100	52
Dafarn	1,000	63
Evaenport	1,800	50

*Most of this district's population lives in small freeholds and villages of under 1,000. The places named here have populations of at least 3,000.

Deadman's River (*Siemord Nemn*)

Between the Snag and the Brown Rivers runs Deadman's River. In ancient times, folk of the Highlands District to the north sent their dead in funeral barges down the Han-gar River. As the deceased voyaged out of sight of their kin, the souls went on their way, so it was thought, to the lands of the dead. Actually, through a fluke of currents, a large number of those barges washed ashore near the mouth of this Wheatlands District river, which received its name for this reason. The area is plagued with ghosts, spirits, and other restless entities drawn here during that long-ago time. Deadman's River is avoided by locals except in the late fall, when it is put to practical use as a shipping waterway for grain harvests.

At the head of this river is Deadman's Lake, shunned as the home and uneasy resting place of the spirits which haunt the river. The truth of this claim is open to debate, but it is a fact that every settlement founded near the lake has been mysteriously destroyed, or its inhabitants vanished without a trace (see **Haunted Places**).

Brown River (*Rair Nemn*)

The Brown River enters the Han-gar at its halfway point through the Wheatlands District. This low-flowing river connects many farming areas on its meandering course through rolling prairies. The Brown, named for its murky, silt-filled water, is the most heavily-traveled waterway in the district. Transportation along it does not move rapidly, but progress is steady both up- and downsteam and unhindered by navigational hazards. The Brown floods at fairly predictable seasonal intervals; in spite of the upheaval this creates in riverside communities, it leaves behind rich silt deposits and refertilizes the more heavily cultivated riverside fields. Railekos, the Wheatlands District's capital, is located on the east bank where the Brown enters the Han-gar. Built on a rocky promontory, it is normally untouched by floodwaters.

Ford River (*Calder Nemn*)

The Ford marks almost half of the western district boundary, dividing the Wheatlands from the Outlands District. True to its name, the river is easily crossed, for it is wide, shallow, and at most times of the year is filled with only a trickle of water in the center of a much broader dry riverbed. The river freezes in winter, but roars to life again with the spring and summer storms that fill its banks.

Lilymoor River (*Lilabau*)

The Lilymoor flows along the southern border of the Wheatlands District. Grasslands on both banks tumble gradually into the river. The Lilymoor River overflows these slopes at times, but seldom with the sudden, devastating effect of the Han-gar. Here, as in other portions of its route, the river is known for its sedate flow and trouble-free navigation.

There is little worthwhile fishing in the Lilymoor River, and the Wheatlands along this stretch is for the most part untroubled by water-dwelling monsters. Although many hot springs are found to the east, there are none of note in this district.

Lilymoor Tributaries

Three important waterways flow through the Wheatlands on their way to the Lilymoor River.

Scafohl River (*Skafohl Nemn*)

The Scafohl begins in the Highland Rise, traversing only about 100 miles of Wheatlands territory before entering the Lake District. The Scafohl is worth mentioning because it extends farther into the interior of the Wheatlands than any other Lilymoor tributary. Use of the Scafohl River can reduce travel time for corn and quarried stone en route to upriver markets. However, this waterway is notorious for rapids and treacherous waters. Only the most skilled of rivermen traverse its length, and they charge appropriate prices for the dangers they undergo.



Sandy River (*Enisk Nemm*)

The Sandy is distinguished by its relatively straight course and clear riverbed. Sandy banks and a deep bottom of small boulders make this one of the most easily traveled rivers in all of Thormar Province. It is the most heavily-used river south of the Highland Rise in this district. Dafarn, at the mouth of the Sandy, has grown to be the center of trade in the southern Wheatlands.

Icey River (*Inazit Nemm*)

The Icey parallels part of the western district border, like the Ford to the north. This waterway is much like the Sandy, but its course is more tortuous and the riverbed more shallow. It is used for transportation only in the summer and fall. In the winter, its depleted waters freeze solid, while in the spring, thawing ice and rushing waters make it impassable.

Minerals

Almost the entire substratum of the Wheatlands District is mineral-poor limestone or sandstone mixed with other sedimentary rocks. These formations are covered with thick, deep topsoil which lends the prairies their distinctive appearance and fertile nature. The underlying geology is most evident along the length of the Highland Rise, where it is easiest to find what few valuable stones and minerals are brought close to the surface.

Chalk and sandstone are quarried in the hills near Estehl on the Scafohl River. These quarries have been in production for many generations, supplying a small but steady demand for their products. Estehl sandstone bricks are a popular construction material south of the Highland Rise. Other brickworks have sprung up in the area, competing with kiln-baked rather than quarried products. This industry is the greatest user of clays found along the banks of the upper Scafohl.

Small silver deposits exist in the rocky foothills on the northern flank of the Highland Rise. These and much larger copper deposits were originally discovered and worked by the Hut People (see **Populations**). Clansmen have taken over the mining of copper ore, which is shipped to Grielkos, where it is processed into a usable form of copper. With the exception of bronze manufactured in Railekos, copper is the largest and most valuable non-agricultural export from the Wheatlands District.

Bronze is created by the amalgamation of copper and tin. Tin is mined in the Highland District and imported to Railekos metalworks where there is already a supply of Grielkos copper. There is a continuing search for tin deposits in the Wheatlands District, but these efforts have never yet met with success.

Climate

Temperatures near the center of Calandia are quite warm, dropping to freezing and lower near the coast. Because the Wheatlands District is in the middle of these two extremes, the temperatures experienced there are more moderate than in many other districts. Temperatures range from the mid to low 70s near the Lake District border, to the high 30s and low 40s near the western Outlands border.

As elevation increases, temperatures drop five degrees for every 1,000-foot rise above sea-level. Temperatures given under Temperatures and Elevations are a representative annual average, and do not take wind chill, or seasonal, or other factors into account.

Weather

Predominant weather fronts move across Calandia from northeast to southwest. This means that fronts break first on the Leopa Mountains, pass over the Great Plateau, and exhaust themselves over agricultural Thormar Province. After weather fronts strike the Lake District, only a moderate amount of precipitation remains to fall on the Wheatlands District. This area experiences cool, rainy winters averaging less precipitation than more easterly districts, and hot, humid summers with thundershowers common in the late afternoon.

Precipitation

Most rainfall in this district is gentle and steady, with the exception of brief cloudbursts related to thundershowers in the summer and early fall. The Highland Rise is a natural divide in the district; rainfall to the south of it flows into the Lilymoor, while that falling to the north flows into the Han-gar. The water table is close to the surface of the ground in most places. Many creeks and brooks which are normally fed by run-off dry up in summer, but water is usually just beneath the surface and can be reached by shallow digging in dry streambeds.

Storms

The most violent storms which strike this region are the tail end of thunderstorms and forceful winter winds which have swept down from the Great Plateau and across the width of the Lake District to the east. The worst problem experienced in the Wheatlands District is short-term flooding on the heels of this outpouring of nature's fury. Crops have been ruined by these incidents, and shirelings who insist on tunneling into prairie hillsides have sometimes drowned in their burrows. However, such occurrences are the exception, not the norm.

Unusual Weather

Windstorms forewarn of weather fronts moving in over the Great Plateau. They usually begin suddenly, and some build up to violent force. These winds are a hazard to above-ground structures, and are one reason why homes built partially or completely into hillsides are popular in the wind-swept expanse of the Wheatlands. Gale force winds gusting to 50 mph or more can occur between fall and spring.

Tornados are also a danger in the fall or spring of the year, when hot and cold weather fronts collide, as they sometimes do at this end of the continent. Visible for miles across the prairies, tornados are dreaded for their unpredictable path of travel and the random destruction they leave in their wake.

Flora and Fauna



Vegetation

The Wheatlands District is dominated by grasses. Trees and shrubs are ever-present, and there is endless variety among the types of grass-like plants that grow here. However, the overwhelming impression is of medium and tall, long-stalked grasses waving in the constant wind. Even where man and shireling have made their presence felt by cultivation, they too have planted mostly grass-like crops which grow well in the prairie soil. And, in spite of the industry of farmers and the intense cultivation of the grainlands, the majority of prairie in this district remains in its natural grassland state. Only near the western border does prairie give way to plains, and the scrubrier, shorter plants which grow in that harsher environment.

Grasses

Most of the Wheatlands' prairies are overgrown with a mixture of long and short grasses which average from four to five feet high. Long and short-stemmed bluegrass predominates in the eastern half of the district, blending with tall, white-plumed pampas grass near waterways and short, tufted grama grass to the west. For the most part, the western half of the district is uncultivated and kept free for the grazing of domesticated and wild herds. A wide variety of ruminants do well on this sort of pasturage.

Wild oats, wheat, and barley grow near cultivated areas, both naturally wild types and varieties sown by the wind from cultivated seed stock. Wild rice is found in the marshy bywaters of the Han-gar River and its easterly tributaries. In these same well-watered areas are reeds, catch-grass, snake-grass, and other square-stemmed sedges. Some reeds, such as flax and papyrus, are harvested for their fibrous pulps, which are turned into cloth and paper, respectively. Others are harvested by indigenous folk like the Hut People and woven into shelters.

Trees

Tree-covered terrain in transition to grassland is found along the Lake District border in the area bounded by the Han-gar and Deadman's Rivers. These savannah trees are the outrunners of the aspen forest of the Loran Preserve, the forested area surrounding Thormar's Peak. The savannah disappears approximately 100 miles west of the border, becoming the prairie grassland typical of the Wheatlands District. The savannah trees consist mainly of stunted aspen and white cedar.

A more verdant assortment of trees is found along the district waterways, but that greenery is largely a repetition of the vegetation seen in the eastern Lake District. Aspen, some cypress, white cedar, and myrtle are most common along creek and river bottoms and on hilly crests. The brilliant golden-yellow color of yellow-wood is especially prized for furniture and cabinetry. Other trees are valued for their shade and the shelter they provide wildlife. Building with lumber is usually avoided but, when it is used, most lumber is imported from the Lake District.

Shrubs

The Wheatlands District has little shrubby undergrowth, except along waterways and parts of the northeastern savannah. The shrubs that do exist are generally of the white-berry (*Preovahn*) variety, thornbushes with succulent leaves, a shallow root system,

and berries found edible only by birds and small animals. The white-berry has adapted well to the different soil, water, and temperature conditions throughout the region. This bush and ones like it are used along with the privet shrub for hedge-fences.

Field Crops

A number of fruits and vegetables are grown locally for subsistence, but the major crops in this region are cereal grains. Wheat does well within a 100-mile-wide strip bordering the Han-gar River, and in the uplands along the Brown, Deadman, and Snag Rivers. Barley, oats, and rye are also popular crops, especially between the south fork of the Brown and the eastern border. Corn is most common along the Highland Rise and to the south of it. Although only about one third of Wheatlands prairies are under cultivation, the yield is so abundant that over 70% of those crops are surplus which is exported for sale or stored.

Unusual Plants

There is one unusual plant which grows only in the Wheatlands District. This is the sedge called catch-grass, which generally grows on the banks of a stream, or within 50 yards of it. This semi-sentient plant appears to be a normal stand of reeds or grass, but it aggressively grabs and holds onto any victim that disturbs its near-surface root system with vibrations. Catch-grass on stream banks often trails root tendrils in the water, and thus takes advantage of fish and other marine life that shelter in its roots. Catch-grass is further described under **Exotic Creatures**.

Wildlife

The cultivated portions of the Wheatlands District are as civilized as the Lake District. With the exception of birds and similar small creatures, wild animals do not roam these areas. However, where people have settled more sparsely or not at all, the indigenous animals continue to live and can be encountered by travelers and residents.

Hunting is always good in the Wheatlands District, where grasslands feed the herbivores, and a plethora of insects, rodents, and small game exist to feed larger predators. Swimming snakes are as common in the streams as fish, and exotic, brightly-colored birds fish the waters as frequently as do men. Other birds are carrion-eaters that share the remains of the predators' dinner with skulking hyenas.

Antelopes, gazelles, and other swift-running herd animals are dominant in this prairie district. Bearded kudu, large eland, and miniature antelope (*Kebygra*) called "small-jumpers" are only a few of the variety of game animals which roam in herds across the prairies and plains. Running not far behind them are lions, both maned felines and their leopard cousins. Avoided by all is the two-ton, rhinoceros-like granjie, whose single nose horn and bad temper make him a formidable opponent. The granjie is prized for its skin, a natural armor, but is extremely difficult to kill. These beasts are now found mostly in the western portions of the district, away from the habitats of people.

Wilderness Encounter Table

Use the standard rules to determine frequency of wilderness encounters, if any. When such an encounter occurs, roll 3D6 and find the resulting encounter on this table. Note that some of the rolls result in a choice of two or more encounters; roll a D% for those.

Roll 3D6	Encounter
3	Spectre (20%); Wight (80%)
4	Ghoul (50%); Chaos Ghoul (50%)
5	Chimera
6	Strangle Weed
7	Snake, Swimming
8	Catch-grass
9	Striped Racer
10	Hut People (20%); Farmers (75%); Celebrants (05%) (see Populations)
11	Herd animal: Cattle (50%); Eland (20%); Kudu (15%); Small-jumpers (15%)
12	Demi-humans: Shirelings (70%); Catlings (20%) (see Populations)
13	Hyena
14	Bull (90%); Iron Bull (10%)
15	Leopard (40%); Lion (60%)
16	Granjie
17	Manticore
18	Incubus (50%); Succubus (50%)

Exotic Creatures

(1) Bull

HTK: 4D8, *AC:* 7

MV: 15", *AL:* Neutral

AT: 2

DM: 1D6/1D6 (kick/gore)

INT: Semi-

THACO: 15, *SZ:* L

Specials: If approached within 8", there is a 75% chance that it will attack.

A charging bull does 3D4 HTK of damage upon impact, with an additional 1D4 HTK of trampling damage.

A charge covers at least thirty feet.

Bulls are left to wander freely around grazing lands. Although loosely confined by thorn hedges and similar impediments, they can endanger unwary travelers who do not realize they are trespassing on a bull's pasture.

(1D4) Catch-grass

HTK: 2D8+1, *AC:* 7

MV: 0, *AL:* Neutral

AT: 1, *DM:* 1D4

INT: Non-

THACO: 16, *SZ:* L (10' tall)

Specials: Exudes sap which acts as contact poison. Victim must save vs. Poison each round s/he is in contact with the plant or fall asleep. When no longer in contact with the plant, sleep effect comes to an end one turn later.

Catch-grass is a nondescript, tall, reed-like grass with exceptionally supple stems and motile leaves. Its shallow root system detects vibrations in the ground. When an animal passes within ten feet of the plant, the reeds reach out and touch the creature. If a save vs. Poison is failed, the victim falls asleep. Catch-grass leaves at least one frond in contact with the victim, who will stay asleep unless

rescued and moved from that location. Eventually, a sleeping victim dies from starvation, dehydration, and/or exposure; the decaying body then provides nutrients for the plant. Catch-grass is especially hazardous to the solitary traveler. Items of value can sometimes be found about the base of the plant, where people have perished.

(1D4) Chimera

HTK: 9D8, *AC:* 6/5/2

MV: 9"/18", *AL:* C. Evil

AT: 6

DM: 1D3/1D3/1D4/1D4/2D4/3D4
(claw/claw/bite/bite/gore/kick)

INT: Semi-

THACO: 12, *SZ:* L (4' high at shoulder)

Specials: There is a 50% chance that its dragon head will breathe fire with a range of five feet, causing 3D6 HTK of damage (save vs. Breath Weapon applicable). This can be done up to three times daily.

A chimera speaks a very limited form of the red dragon language.

Chimerae have the hindquarters of a goat, the forequarters of a lion, the wings of a red dragon, and three heads — one head for each of these creatures. When attacking, they claw with their forelegs, butt with the horns on their goat heads, and bite with their lion and dragon heads.

A small number of chimerae are known to lair on Thormar's Peak. They occasionally leave the area and roam far through the Lake and Wheatlands districts in search of prey. They might be encountered anywhere in this region. No serious effort has yet been made to eradicate these monsters, but that may become a priority soon, since they have begun raiding on a regular and systematic basis.

DINOSAURS

These dinosaurian monsters lurk in the depths of Lake Mahnis, making the lake a hazard for boats and swimmers which leave the shallows.

(1D4) *Dinichtys*

HTK: 10D8, AC: 7

MV: 21", AL: Neutral

AT: 1, DM: 5D4

INT: Non-

THACO: 10, SZ: L (25' long)

Specials: Swallows man-sized or smaller prey on a "to hit" score of 20.

These huge prehistoric fish favor the deep waters of the lake, rising to the shallow shelves to feed on smaller fish or the chance swimmer found there.

(1D3) *Mosasaurus*

HTK: 12D8, AC: 7

MV: 3"/15", AL: Neutral

AT: 1, DM: 5D8

INT: Non-

THACO: 9, SZ: L (50' long)

Capable of traveling on land, the mosasauri have learned that humanoids are a danger to their species on the shores of Lake Mahnis. These lumbering creatures are rarely seen ashore, living instead in the water where their large flippers move their weighty bulks with ease. Mosasauri prey on all forms of marine animals, and are avoided even by the fearsome *dinichtys*.

(1D8) *Ghoul*

HTK: 2D8, AC: 6

MV: 9", AL: C. Evil

AT: 3

DM: 1D3/1D3/1D6

(claw/claw/bite)

INT: Low

THACO: 16, SZ: S, M, L

Specials: A ghouls touch causes humans, dwarves, gnomes, half-elves, and shirelings to become rigid unless a save vs. Paralyzation is made.

Anyone killed by a ghouls will become a ghouls unless Blessed (or Blessed then Resurrected).

Ghouls packs always attack without fear.

Immune to Sleep and Charm spells.

Throughout the Wheatlands District, it is the custom to bury the dead. Both shirelings and humans follow this practice, but recently cemeteries have been raided by ghouls. Watch is kept wherever possible, and ghouls have taken to wandering about at night in search of prey. The problem is increasing in severity, and people are becoming reluctant to travel lonely roads at night.

(1D2) *Chaos Ghoul*

HTK: 3D8+8, AC: 4

MV: 15", AL: C. Evil

AT: 3

DM: 1D4/1D4/1D6

(claw/claw/bite) plus poison

INT: Average to High

THACO: 15, SZ: M

Spells: 10% of these ghouls have magical abilities and can cast 1D12+2 of these spells: Darkness, Invisibility,

Sleep, Steal Strength (as Ray of Enfeeblement), Fear, Web, Blink, Hold Person, Suggestion, Demoralize (as helplessness caused by Emotion spell), Confusion, Animate Dead, Death Spell, Unholy Word.

Specials: -2 "to hit" in daylight.

Infravision 120'.

Chilling Touch: victim is paralyzed 1D4 turns unless a successful save vs. Paralyzation is made.

Breath Weapon of Putrid Gas once per turn: failed save causes victim to cease all action due to uncontrollable shaking, severe nausea, and vomiting for 2 turns. Mesmerizing Gaze (as per Hypnotism spell).

Chaos ghouls are the offspring of ghouls and members (or victims) of particularly evil or perverse cults. These cults are almost always associated with the worship of Lovianis, Dhuris, or Gambros. Among the non-ghoul parents of these vile half-breeds are humans, orcs, orc-men, drow elves, and goblins.

Chaos ghouls can reproduce among themselves. Decades of inbreeding have created some degree of consistency in their racial characteristics.

These abominations have a much higher degree of intelligence than common ghouls, making them cunning and capable of incredibly diabolical plots. They have a greater tolerance for light than ghouls, but lightbursts and similar magical attacks drive chaos ghouls into a killing frenzy during which they have an AC of -2 and they are +2 "to hit."

These creatures often direct the actions of their less-intelligent kin, and when encountered are in the company of 2D6 ghouls 70% of the time. They prefer to dwell in underground tunnels and sewer systems beneath city streets, emerging at times to prowl dark alleys for fresh meat. Such habitations afford them a variety of food sources, breeding stock, and sacrifices to their deities.

(1D2) *Granjie*

HTK: 8D8, AC: 2

MV: 12", AL: Neutral

AT: 1, DM: 2D6

INT: Animal

THACO: 12

SZ: L (5' at shoulder)

Specials: Charge attack is +2 to hit and does 4D6 HTK of damage. Must have at least fifty feet in which to run. If the charge is successful it overbears its opponent.

The rhinoceros-like *granjie* weigh as much as two tons or more. Each has a single horn growing from its nose, and is covered with thick brown or grey armored plates, the natural growth pattern of its hide. *Granjie* have poor eyesight and cannot see anything more than 200' away. However, their hearing and sense of smell are exceptional. These beasts are extremely territorial and attack any interlopers that they detect. There seems to be no opponent which they fear, and they will charge an iron bull as readily as they will a party of hunters. *Granjie* hide is prized by some people for the armor which can be made from it. The hide (AC: 2) can be worked like leather, but is tougher than plate mail.

(1D20) Guardian Ghost

HTK: 7D8

AC: 0 (invisible); 4 (semi-materialized)

MV: 15", AL: C. Neutral — L. Neutral

AT: 1, DM: 1D10

INT: Average — High

THACO: 13, SZ: M

Specials: Immune to turning except by clerics of the Hut People. Humanoids sighting a guardian ghost must save vs. Magic or age 10 years and flee in panic for 2D6 turns. Clerics of Skill 6 and greater are immune to this effect; humanoids above Skill 8 add +2 to their save.

Guardian ghosts are encountered only within the confines of an Ubolo Ruin or Village (see **Haunted Places**). Each is the spirit of a deceased Keifperi (Hut People) warrior, tasked with guarding the Ruin from intrusion and trespass. They do not pursue intruders beyond the border of the village unless they are engaged in an aging attack (see following). Some guardians will talk before they attack; GM should make reaction rolls for each spirit to see if it is so inclined.

A guardian's first attack is its physical manifestation, during which it hopes the unauthorized person(s) will flee in panic. If this fails, it remains materialized and attacks with its ghostly war weapons. If this is insufficient to drive intruders away after three rounds, the guardian ghost resorts to touching its victims, intentionally aging them. Even if the intruder flees the aging attack continues for ten rounds or until he is reduced to old age for his race, whichever comes first.

The statistics given for a guardian ghost are those for an above-average Keifperi warrior, whose spirit is likely to be encountered in this role, but there is great variation between warriors. Guardian ghosts should be treated as unique individual NPCs when encountered. When a ghost is "slain" it rematerializes twenty-four hours later in its original condition. It can only be destroyed permanently in the Ethereal Sphere.

HERD ANIMALS

(1D%) Cattle

HTK: 2D8, AC: 7

MV: 15", AL: Neutral

AT: 1, DM: 1D4

INT: Animal

THACO: 16, SZ: L (5' at shoulder)

Specials: If frightened or startled, there is a 20% chance that a herd will stampede away from the disturbance. If Characters are caught in the path of a stampede and there is no cover (tree, wall, etc.), each party member is trampled by 2D4 cattle. Each stampeding beast inflicts 1D4 HTK of damage.

Cattle herds consist of an equal number of cows and steers. Bulls tend to wander separately and are detailed previously. These herds wander freely over the grazing lands of the Wheatlands District. They move away from threatening disturbances.

Only 5% of the cattle encountered in the Wheatlands are wild. Most are part of a domesticated group which has frequent contact with herdsman. Cattlemen frown upon the poaching or rustling of their cattle, and form mounted parties to hunt down anyone suspected of doing so.

(1D20) Eland

HTK: 3D8+4, AC: 5

MV: 20", AL: Neutral

AT: 1, DM: 1D10

INT: Semi-

THACO: 15

SZ: L (4-5' at shoulder)

Eland are the largest of the antelope species which flourish in the Wheatlands District. The larger males weigh half a ton or more. Both males and females have a white blaze on the face and a pair of long spiraled horns which curve up and backward. The animals are canny and difficult to catch. They are hunted for their food value and their beautiful sable-color coats.

(2D20) Kudu

HTK: 2D8, AC: 6

MV: 18", AL: Neutral

AT: 1, DM: 1D8

INT: Animal

THACO: 16

SZ: (4'-5' at shoulder)

Kudu are antelopes the size of a zebra or a small horse. They have brown coats and slightly curved spiral horns. Kudu are hunted as a food animal but, like other antelope breeds, they are difficult to corner. They are the primary game animal of the Hut People.

(1D%) Small-jumpers

HTK: 1D8+2, AC: 6

MV: 22", AL: Neutral

AT: 1, DM: 1D6

INT: Animal

THACO: 18

SZ: Small (2' high at shoulder)

Small-jumpers (*Kebygra*) are the swiftest of the antelope in the Wheatlands District. Small-jumpers run in a series of bounds, each one of which takes them across 20' of ground when moving at speed. They travel in large herds, always alert and ready to flee at the slightest untoward sound or motion. Their ears and sense of smell are exceptionally acute. These animals are hunted not for their minimal food value, but for their white- and buff-striped skins. If cornered they fight with their spiraled, ivory-colored horns, but are always alert for the opportunity to flee.

(2D6) Hyenas

HTK: 3D8, AC: 7

MV: 12", AL: Neutral

AT: 1, DM: 2D4

INT: Animal

THACO: 16, SZ: M

Specials: If a limb is bitten on a natural 20 "to hit," the hyena's powerful jaws sever that limb. If the area bitten is not a limb, double damage is inflicted instead.

Hyenas are scavengers, traveling in packs and feeding off the leavings of lions and leopards. They are most often encountered in the neighborhood of these larger predators, waiting to make a meal from their leavings. Hyenas walk with a peculiar lurching gait. Their heads are large and their massive crushing jaws can easily sever a limb. They are aggressive hunters if driven to it by hunger. Pups can occasionally be tamed, but revert to the wild after they reach one or two years of age.

(1) Incubus

HTK: 6D8+3, AC: 2
MV: 12", AL: N. Evil
AT: 1, DM: by weapon
INT: High
THACO: 13, SZ: M
Specials: Hit only by magical weapons of +2 or better.
Spells: Charm Female Humanoid (as Charm Person), Friends, Teleport, Invisibility, Dreamsend (see **New Spell** following), Mindprobe (as ESP), Polymorph Self, Suggestion, Stinking Cloud, Confusion, Hold Person, Dimension Door.

NEW SPELL

Dreamsend (*Enchantment/Charm*)

Skill Level: 4 - MU Components: V
Range: 10 miles TTC: 1 seg.
Duration: 1D4 hours Saving Throw: None
Area of Effect: One person

This spell induces dreams, the contents of which are the caster's choice, in the target person. With Dreamsend, the caster may also appear in the dream, choosing whatever form the caster wishes. The caster may do no damage to the recipient of the dream, however.

Incubi are handsome male devils created by Dhuris, the god of temptation. They are expert in sowing discord and seducing innocent women. Once an incubus has set his sights on a particular female, he haunts her sleep by inducing dreams of strange romantic interludes with a fantasy lover he has plucked from the depths of her subconscious. He then appears to her in a fleshly illusion of this form in order to beget a half-demon child. When it is born a mere six months later, the incubus returns to claim it. Unfortunately, the birthing of this creature usually results in the death or insanity of the mother.

Previously a rarity, incubi have recently been encountered with great frequency in the Wheatlands District. Their presence seems directly related to the troubles which beset Calandia.

In his natural form, an incubus appears as a muscular man with brick-red skin and glowing yellow eyes. He is an adept fighter capable of using any weapon. Holy water and Good-aligned religious symbols are sufficient to force the creature to lose interest in its intended victim.

(1) Iron Bull

HTK: 6D8+12, AC: 2
MV: 12", AL: Neutral
AT: 1 or 2 (charge and/or bite)
DM: 2D6/1D20
INT: Animal
THACO: 13, SZ: L
Specials: Breath Weapon: 4x/day; save vs. Paralyzation or victim is motionless for 1D4+2 turns. Its eyesight and breath attack reach into the Astral and Ethereal Spheres.

Iron bulls are monstrous bovines covered, not with iron, but with thick, tough plates of hide. This hide has the appearance and durability of black iron and is prized for its use as armor. These vile-tempered creatures attack anything that moves. They prefer to roam isolated areas such as wide valleys and craggy mountain trails. They are extremely territorial and kill any interlopers.

In spite of its appearance, the iron bull is a carnivore which eats the flesh of its victims. When in range, it attacks first with its

breath, which fills a conical area 70' x 30'. This is followed with a charge if its victim was unaffected. Iron bulls are more common in the Outlands District, but herdsmen of the Wheatlands District have to deal with these creatures when they wander over the border.

(1D2) Leopard

HTK: 3D8+2, AC: 6
MV: 15", AL: Neutral
AT: 3
DM: 1D3/1D3/1D6
(claw/claw/bite) or see *Specials*
INT: Semi-
THACO: 16, SZ: M
Specials: Rear claws rake for 1D4/1D4 if both forepaws strike during the same melee round.
Surprises on 1-3 on 1D6.

Leopards are encountered in the northeast savannah and in wooded areas around the Brown River. They hunt by laying in wait and leaping upon their prey. They sometimes practice this tactic hiding in the branches of trees. Leopards can spring thirty feet forward or twenty feet upward. These animals have come to respect the danger posed by humans and demi-humans, but might attack isolated humanoids if hungry.

(1D6) Lion

HTK: 5D8+2, AC: 5/6
MV: 15" AL: Neutral
AT: 3
DM: 1D4/1D4/1D10
(claw/claw/bite)
INT: Semi-
THACO: 15
SZ: L (3'-4' at shoulder)
Specials: Male lion has AC: 5 forequarters and AC: 6 hindquarters.
If two claw hits are scored during melee the lion gains two rear paw attacks that turn, each causing 1D6+1 HTK.

Lions are found throughout the Wheatlands District wherever their herd animal prey grazes. These creatures hunt in packs, directed by the lioness, while the male lion defends the pack territory. A typical pride has 1D2 males and 1D4 females. They are less leary of humanoids than their solo-hunting leopard kin. Lions have been known to attack people who trespass on their territory or who come too close to their hunt.

(1D4) Manticore

HTK: 6D8+3, AC: 4
MV: 12"/18", AL: L. Evil
AT: 3
DM: 1D3/1D3/1D8
(claw/claw/bite)
INT: Low
THACO: 13
SZ: L (3'-4' at shoulder)
Specials: Shoots tail spikes, which do 1D6 HTK of damage each up to 18' away.

Manticores are new denizens of the Wheatlands District. They are believed to have migrated here from Han-gar Province. Since they prefer to lair in caves or underground, and that sort of terrain is mostly absent from this area, it is not yet known where these creatures are making their lair. At least six different manticores are

believed to be in the region. They prey on humanoids and have been sighted near all of the major towns of this district.

The manticore has the body of a lion, a human head, giant bat wings, and spines on its tail. It attacks first by loosing a volley of six of its iron tail spikes. It can fire four such volleys, and will usually do so before closing in to do melee.

(1D6) Moss-head (Swimming Snake)

HTK: 5D8, AC: 5

MV: 12", AL: Neutral

AT: 1, DM: 1D4 + poison

INT: Animal

THACO: 15, SZ: S to M

Specials: Poison inflicts 1D10 HTK; a successful save cuts damage in half (victim saves vs. Poison at -4).

The most common snake in this region is the so-called moss-head (*Onur-kahm*), for the stippled green of its head which is visible above water when it swims. It lives in and around streams and ponds, building its nest in a bank. The snake is short-tempered, however, and bites at unexpected movement in its immediate surroundings. Moss-heads are also drawn to disturbances in the water, and sometimes attack swimmers.

(1D6) Mound Spectre

HTK: 7D8+3, AC: 2

MV: 15"/30", AL: L. Evil

AT: 1, DM: 1D8

INT: High

THACO: 13, SZ: M

Specials: Hit only by +1 or better weapon; holy water does 2D4 HTKs of damage.

Can be destroyed by a Raise Dead or Resurrection spell.

Touch drains two life energy (Skill) levels from an opponent. Characters reduced below Skill 0 are slain by the spectre.

The mound spectre is an undead creature which haunts the desolate burial mounds of the Wheatlands (see **Barrows**). They normally remain inside the mounds in the central chambers, but on nights of the new or full moon can be encountered up to a mile away from their haunt, in search of living creatures to slay. This spectre is sometimes, but not always, the spirit of the person buried in the mound. They can be exorcised by clerical magic of Skill 4 or greater.

(3D16) Shadow Haunts

HTK: 4D8, AC: 7

MV: 12", AL: N. Evil

AT: 1, DM: 1D4+1

INT: Low to Average

THACO: 15, SZ: M

Specials: Hit only by +1 or better magical weapons. Drains one point of STR per touch; human victims reduced to 0 STR become shadow haunts.

Immune to Sleep, Charm, Hold spells and cold-based attacks.

Shadow haunts are encountered along Deadman's River and the lake which is its source. They exist primarily in the realm of Shadow in the Sphere of Invisible Worlds. If destroyed in the Physical Sphere, they can, if they wish, rematerialize after forty-

eight hours. These haunts can only be permanently slain by attacking them in the Sphere of Invisible Worlds, where their AC is 10, and the damage they sustain permanent. A clerical ceremony known as Eternal Rest rushes one of these spirits on its way to Ruhnkeil in the Sphere of the Gods, thus eliminating its presence from other Spheres.

(2D4) Strangle Weed

HTK: 2D8, AC: 6

MV: none, AL: Neutral

AT: 1, DM: (see *Specials*)

INT: Non-

THACO: 16, SZ: S

Specials: Each plant has 3D4 fronds, which vary from seven feet to twelve feet in length; any creature within the grasp of these fronds is attacked. A victim hit by a strangle weed is entwined. Each frond has a STR of 4D4.

To find out if a victim has a chance to escape or if s/he takes damage, compare the victim's STR against the STR of the frond or fronds which have entwined the victim. A difference in the victim's favor is the victim's chance of escaping times 10% (a difference of 1 equals 10%, a difference of 2 equals 20%, etc.). For example, a victim with a STR of 16 that is entangled by one frond with a STR of 11 has a 50% chance of escaping. A difference in favor of the weed indicates the number of HTK of crushing damage the victim sustains. For example, if a victim with a STR of 18 has three fronds holding him with a combined STR of 30, that victim takes 12 HTK of damage. An entwined creature or Character fights at -2 on his/her/its "to hit" rolls.

This aquatic weed grows in quiet ponds and backwaters near the eastern district border. It is difficult to distinguish from the non-threatening plants it grows among, and has caused the death of many unwary individuals. Strangle weed attacks by wrapping around and squeezing the life out of its victim in the manner described previously. Valuables can be found submerged near the base of the plant, debris left from previous victims.

(1D4) Striped Racer

HTK: 2D8, AC: 3

MV: 19", AL: Neutral

AT: 2, DM: 1D4/1D4

INT: Animal

THACO: 16, SZ: S (1½' tall)

The striped racer is a flightless bird which runs with exceedingly swift darting motions. Its grey-brown plumage is accented with brilliant scarlet and yellow feathers on head, wing tips, and tail. The bird is common in both prairies and plains in this district, where it feeds on giant ants and other insects. Striped racers are sometimes hunted for their plumage.

Wheatlands travelers, fascinated by these odd creatures, have developed the habit of throwing tidbits of food to them when they are in sight of a road. Since the birds have figured out that food is to be had on roadways, they can be seen in twice their normal numbers on well-traveled trails. Unfortunately, this feeding practice has made them greedy. They do not hesitate to dash in and

grab food, or peck at people who motion with empty hands as if throwing food.

If cornered, the striped racer dashes to freedom at the first opportunity. When fighting, it attacks fiercely with its beak, gaining two attacks per round for the ferocity of its defense.

(1) Succubus

HTK: 6D8, AC: 0

MV: 9"/18", AL: N. Evil

AT: 2, DM: 1D6/1D6 (claw/claw)

INT: High

THACO: 13, SZ: M

Specials: Hit only by +2 or better magical weapons.

Fatal Kiss: drains all life from victim, leaving a lifeless, soulless husk. If victim can roll his INSx3 or less on 1D%, he can break the succubus' spell and avoid the unholy kiss.

Spells: Charm Human Male (as Charm Person), Illusion, Dreamsend (see *Incubus*), Suggestion, Dimensional Door (to and from the Sphere of the Gods), Mindprobe (see *Incubus*), Unholy Word, Invisibility, Teleport, Emotional Manipulation (causes love as per Emotions spell), Glamour (limited shapechange).

Succubi are beautiful female devils created by Dhuris, the goddess of seduction. They are drawn to the Physical Sphere by their lust for human men. They take great joy in seducing men and disrupting harmonious love relationships between men and women.

The simplest seduction tactic this creature uses is to appear in all her splendor to a solitary traveler. Her great beauty gives her an APL score of 20, causing her victims to save against INS at -4 or be fascinated by her appearance. Succubi often tempt Good-aligned clerics this way, but the invocation of a deity or the presentation of a holy symbol is usually sufficient to discourage the temptress.

Alternatively, she may haunt her victim's sleep by sending dreams of a lover in whose form the succubus will appear. If the man does not respond as the succubus wishes, she uses Mindprobe to see what her victim's love interest looks like, then casts Glamour upon herself and seduces him in that form. Only the great bat-like wings which jut from her shoulders spoil this otherwise perfect deception. A victim fascinated by her beauty may save vs. Spell; if successful, he notices the wings and is entitled to another save to break out of his bemused state of mind.

Once a succubus has ensnared a victim, she hastens to conceive a child which she will bear on the Sphere of the Gods. The child is always a female half-devil. Once conception has been completed, the succubus drains the life-essence from her doomed lover with a final passionate kiss. The enraptured victim does not realize what is happening. The kiss must last at least one round to be successful; if forcefully interrupted (by someone else) during that time, the victim is reduced one Skill level for each segment he is kissed. Characters reduced below Skill 0 are slain by the kiss. If the victim has APL 18 or greater, the succubus falls in love with him. She leaves him alive, returning as the mood suits her until she tires of him or he is driven insane.

Previously a rarity, succubi have lately been encountered frequently in the Wheatlands District. Their presence seems directly related to the troubles which beset Calandia.

(1D8) Wight

HTK: 4D8+3, AC: 5

MV: 12", AL: L. Evil

AT: 1, DM: 1D4

INT: Average

THACO: 15, SZ: M

Specials: Hit only by silver or magical weapons.

Drains one Skill level per hit; victims reduced below Skill 0 are slain, becoming a half-strength wight under control of the one that killed them.

Wights inhabit burial mounds found in this district (see **Haunted Places**), hateful undead animated from sacrificial victims that lie within the barrows. Wights are more aggressive now than ever before, and some have tunneled out of their hidden burial chambers to roam the countryside in search of victims. This prey is slain in a ritual dedicated to one of the evil deities. The dead victim becomes a subordinate wight bound to the mound where he died.

Wights exist simultaneously in the Sphere of the Invisible Worlds and in the Physical Sphere. For this reason they can be hit only by silver or magical weapons, and are capable of draining Skill levels each time an opponent is hit. Wights are unaffected by Sleep, Charm, Hold, or cold-based spells, and Poison or Paralysis. Holy water does 2D4 HTK of damage per vial, while Raise Dead or Resurrection destroys a wight. Groups of four or more wights are accompanied by a spectre 60% of the time.

(2D10) Zelperi (Lion-men)

HTK: 4D8+2, AC: 6

MV: 12", AL: Neutral

AT: 3 (claw/claw/weapon)

DM: 1D4/1D4/weapon

INT: Average

THACO: 15, SZ: L (6' long)

Specials: Can speak with lions at will (as the Speak with Animals spell).

The Zelperi are lion centaurs who roam the Wheatlands and Outlands Districts of Thormar Province, hunting antelope and similar herd animals. They are intelligent folk, and are popular guides and trackers in the more desolate regions in these districts.

Zelperi are surprised only on a 1 on a 1D6. They fight with both claws and a weapon in combat. Similar to lions, they can spring thirty feet forward and leap ten feet straight up. They prefer to use short spears or javelins and short swords, wear leather or quill breastplates, and occasionally use a leather shield (AC: 5). Females gain +2 on their attacks if they are fighting to defend children. The young are noncombatants. Lion-men live in prides of 5D40 males, 2D6 females, and 1D4+1 young. 1D10+1 prides band together to form a tribe led by a chef. Each tribe has a 40% chance of having a shaman.





Haunted Places

Barrows

History

Flat-topped mounds are found in many places in the level vastness of the Wheatlands District. Most stand in isolation away from natural hills or streams. The Hut People claim they are sites of ill luck and avoid them; the existence of this belief left initial investigation of the mounds to na'Urici tribesmen. Steam erosion revealed regular stonework hidden beneath the dirt and grass of a mound south of the Lake Mahnis. Thus it was clearly revealed that these were man-made structures obscured by time, topsoil, and the growth of ground cover.

A small party led by Firic Ablovaros, a chieftain's son, excavated and searched the eroded mound. At first, exploration progressed without difficulty. Beneath layers of dirt, Firic's party discovered an elaborate cairn which contained great wealth, buried with the body of the ancient corpse it sheltered. To judge by clothing remnants and skeletons, it seemed a number of servants, slaves, and mounts had been entombed along with that unknown ancient.

Unfortunately, these first explorers were also the first victims of the horrors which dwell within these hill-size constructs. Before anything could be removed from the barrow, the party was surprised and slaughtered by wights which dwelled in one of the many interconnecting chambers of the burial mound. Some survivors claim the wights were roused because valuables in the barrow were touched; others say there was no provocation, and that the undead began their attack in the na'Urici camp not far from the mound.

Outraged clansmen immediately dispatched a greater force to the site. The warriors devastated the cairn, scattered the remains, took the valuables, and destroyed all undead encountered there. Before their vengeance was complete, they faced and defeated spectres, wights, and zombies animated from among their own dead companions.

To this date, there is little known for certain about the history of the Wheatlands barrows. Those mounds which have been excavated contain graves and grave-goods, which are tempting to many a robber or unscrupulous explorer. They also hold, almost without exception, certain types of undead that prefer to haunt tombs. The experience of zombies animating from the recently slain suggests that there is an active and sinister force at work near the barrows. The obvious danger and threat of death have kept most of the mounds undisturbed and intact, safe from grave-robbers and others who would desecrate the burial cairns.

Construction

The barrows share a common design, and were apparently built by the same people. Each one is circular, covered by five to ten feet of grass-grown earth. The mounds, including their earthen cover, average thirty feet in height and 100 feet in diameter. They are built with a single entrance which faces east, although it is visible only after excavation. The wooden portal is framed in massive and heavy lintel stones of black granite, the same unmortared rock that comprises the rest of the burial cairn. Inside, packed earth is floored with flagstones; some support timbers are used, but most of each cairn is stone.

Each cairn is a series of concentric circles. The outer chamber which encircles the inner ones usually contains the remains of

horses, war chariots, and other household goods. Within this circle is a ring of inner chambers, trapezoidal rooms connected with doors. Wights and lesser undead are often encountered within the inner chambers, which also contain servants, personal belongings, and some valuables such as tapestries and rare woods.

One or more secret doors must be located to gain entrance to the central chamber. In this place rest the personal guard of the principal deceased, dressed in armor and bearing arms of a style seen nowhere else in the country. This room also holds the entrance to the core chamber, one or more levels below ground, where the chief burial figure lies. The core chamber is always sealed with stone and protected with ancient magic. This small room is the most grand, and contains the greatest treasures of all. Spectres are typically encountered in one or both of these last two chambers.

These barrows are unlike anything built by Calandians today. No mortar is used, yet each rock is fitted together flawlessly with hardly a gap between any stone. The rock is another mystery of the mounds: the nearest source of black granite is the High Plateau, hundreds of miles away from the northernmost mounds. How tons of this material could have been cut so precisely and transported so far is unknown. The barrows have also proven impervious to magical spells such as speak with stone, and no magical means has yet succeeded in revealing the secrets of the barrows' past.

Contents and Staging

The Wheatlands barrows are a mystery which defies adventurers and sages alike. They are protected not only by undead haunts, but by odd magics not familiar to the spell casters of Calandia. Some fiendish traps are incorporated into the cairns' design, differing from barrow to barrow. These safeguards are intended to kill intruders quickly and keep these elaborate graves undisturbed.

Characters brave or lucky enough to gain entrance to one of these burial mounds can be rewarded in special ways. The barrows are an ideal setting for the placement of rare and unique treasure items. Besides valuables, one might contain a portal to another dimension or Sphere (see the *Religion in Calandia* book in the *Calandia Guidebook* set), a monstrous beast which has been imprisoned since ancient times, or even a hero — or villain — whose centuries-long sleep has been ended by the entry of the adventurers.

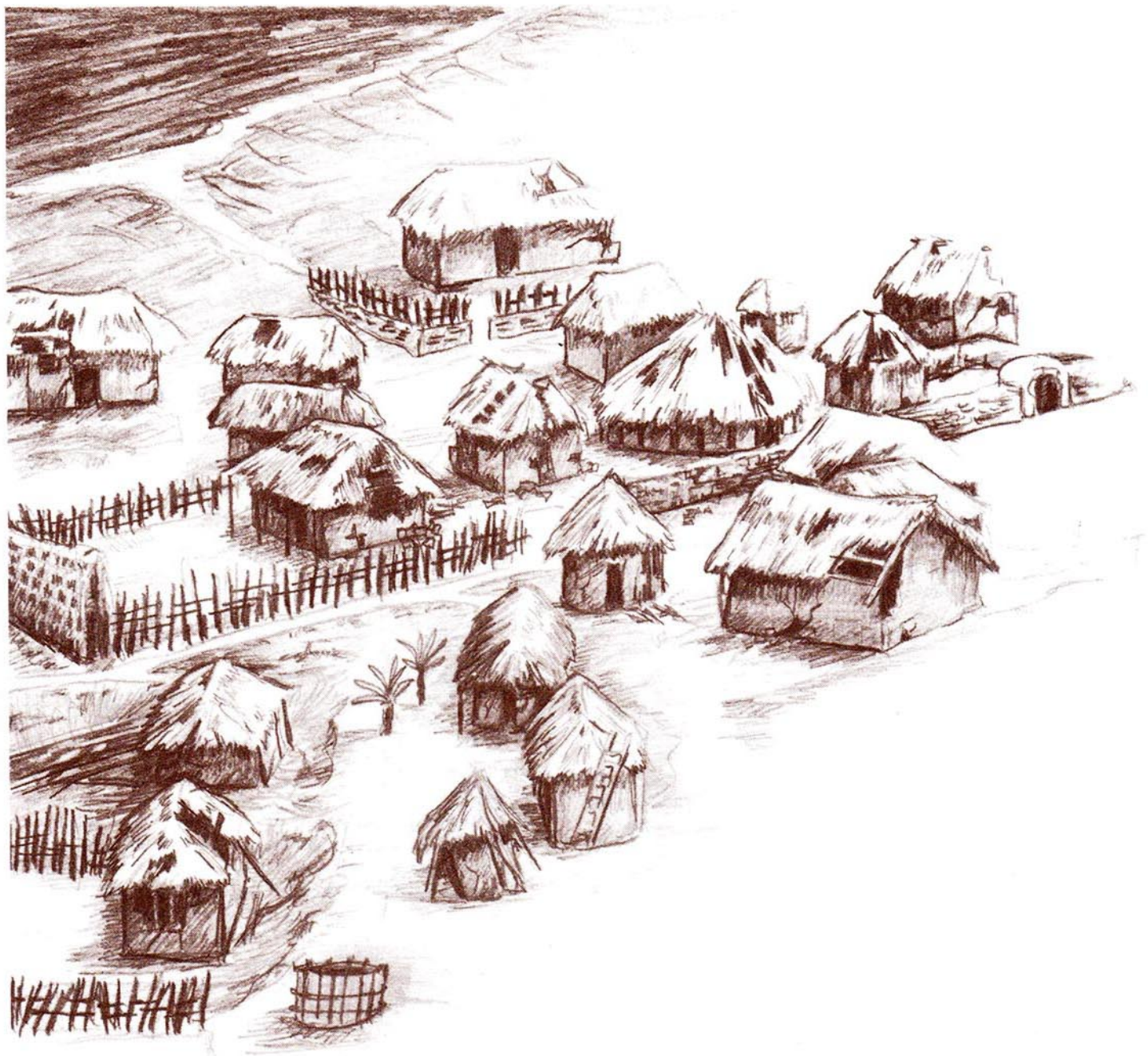
Ubolo Ruins

Hut People (*Keifperi*) are dark-skinned natives of the Wheatlands District, distinct in appearance and customs from the Great Plateau immigrants. One of the artifacts of their way of life are the Ubolo Ruins, which are found in uninhabited places in this district's grasslands.

Ancestor Villages

To the Hut People, their deceased ancestors are just as important as the living, and in many ways more so.

Only tribesmen initiated into adulthood join the ancestors when they die, and special coming-of-age ceremonies have evolved around this concept. Just as it is important to have a thriving, populous tribe of the living, so is it important to have a thriving, populous tribe of the dead. Many clerics debate whether Keifperi



ancestors live in the Sphere of the Gods or the Sphere of Illusion, since the theology of these tribesmen is rather different from that of most Calandians. Hut People do not participate in that debate, stating merely that their ancestors live in "Ubolo", the afterworld of Keifperi legend where the dead exist.

The Hut People hold both coming of age ceremonies and funeral rites in places called Ubolo Villages. Each community of Keifperi build a Village, which is meant to be an earthly counterpart of the place where their ancestors live. The Village site is selected for its plentiful grass and water, and isolation from settlements of the living. An Ubolo Village is a holy place: it is a necropolis for the dead, and a setting of high ceremony for religious and magical rituals. In it, the ancestors continue to live their life, close to but out of sight of their descendants.

Each Village resembles one inhabited by living persons. The buildings are constructed in the same manner, and a supply of food and water is stocked for the symbolic use of the dead. Deceased tribesmen are placed on elevated platforms in the house designated for their kin. Valued personal possessions are sometimes left with

the body as well. The platform keeps all safe from scavengers, and caretakers keep the Village safe from disturbance by humanoids.

It is a special and privileged duty to help maintain the Ubolo Village, and a great sacrilege to steal the food or make use of the place as the living would a real settlement. Each Village is guarded by two or more armed caretakers. No Hut Person would dream of trespassing in a Village, but other travelers are not always so respectful of Keifperi tradition, and the caretakers stay alert for such intrusion.

Village Ruins

Once every few decades, Hut People move their settlements to new grazing lands not exhausted by their herds and farming. When they do so, they leave behind the Ubolo Village and build a new one wherever they finally settle.

The old ancestor Village is left to fall into ruin. Neither food supplies nor the belongings of the dead are taken from it. The former Ubolo caretakers desert their charge, trusting to magic to keep the place unlooted. Hut People are not concerned about

leaving their dead, since their ancestors can move as and if they wish to take up residence in the new Ubolo Village that will be built. Meanwhile, the old one gains further protection from the ancestors who choose to remain there.

As a result of this practice, a number of grass hut “ghost towns” stand in the Keiferi areas of the Wheatlands District. They are called Ubolo Ruins for as long as they withstand weather and time, although they do eventually decay and vanish from sight. Hut People recognize such ghost villages easily by the village lay-out and styles of hut construction. Other travelers are not so lucky, and those who blunder innocently into an Ubolo Ruin have dangerous encounters with the forces that protect it.

Protections

Depending on the custom of the Keiferi who built it, an Ubolo Village may or may not be surrounded by a hedge of white-berry thorn. If it is surrounded by this, both hedge and gate are marked with glyphs of warding to keep away intruders.

Any trespassers on the village streets are confronted by warrior ancestors, the best of the fighters who lie at rest in that necropolis. These guardian ghosts (*Dol-talosi*), are described in detail under **Exotic Creatures**. They have abilities similar to those of ghosts, but they keep the alignment, fighting skills, Armor Class, and HTK they had when alive. Guardian ghosts attempt to scare off intruders, but use physical or aging attacks as necessary to convince the person to leave. Trespassers slain by these guardians do not become guardians in turn.

Persons entering any hut or disturbing anything from the Ruin are beset by a curse. The curses consist of such things as the loss of 2D4 points in one Character attribute, or a -4 “to hit” penalty. The effects of Ubolo Ruin curses are permanent and can only be removed by a shaman of the Hut People.

Anyone removing a valuable that belonged to one of the deceased, or who desecrates the remains in a hut, becomes haunted by the guardian ghost of that ancestor. The ghost first appears in the Character’s dreams for 1D10 days, then appears in person. As with guardian warrior spirits, this haunt has most abilities of a ghost, but it has the alignment, fighting skills, Armor Class, and HTK it had when alive. Guardian ghost statistics should be used for this type of spirit encounter. If its HTK are reduced to 0, it vanishes for one day, only to return the next. This haunt can only be permanently slain by destroying it on the Sphere of existence where Keiferi ancestors live.

When he appears in person, the ghost insists that the stolen item be returned to the Ubolo Ruin. Otherwise, it will slay its victim by aging or physically attacking the Character. If the trespasser is haunted because s/he bothered the remains of an ancestor, the ghost is content with aging the Character until s/he is very old for his/her race, after which the ghost leaves him/her alone. Such attacks by the haunt are carried out when its victim is asleep and defenseless.

Deadman’s Lake

Deadman’s Lake is the source of the river of the same name. Originally it was called Clear Lake, for the beauty of its calm, silt-free blue waters. Situated at the edge of the northeast savannah lands, it is surrounded with trees and shrubbery which grow in greater profusion than elsewhere in the district. Over 1,500 years ago, Clear Lake was chosen as the site of the first major na’Ardruni settlement in the Wheatlands, selected by tribesmen migrating westward from the Lake District.

Starvation Winter

The settlers’ first two years at the north-shore town of Handeyn were harsh ones. Exceptionally cold winters and local flooding destroyed crops; wild animals preyed on livestock and children, compelling the construction of a stockade to keep dwellings and

corrals safe. At the start of the third winter, it was clear that the food was insufficient to last through the bad weather and into the spring planting. The population of over 2,000 would face starvation before the next harvest could be brought in.

Confronted with the alternative of consuming all their seed stock and breeding animals, a party was sent to acquire emergency supplies and return before the winter was out. At that time goblins warred above ground with dwarves in the Thormar Peak area, and both races were hostile to humans passing through the region. Although some human settlements were closer to Handeyn by an overland route, such destinations were considered too risky for the supply party to attempt. Instead they made the long trip east to the Lake District capital of Bansk on the Han-gar River. Months later, at the end of winter, the party returned with supplies for the settlement.

The group was faced with a baffling mystery when they arrived at Handeyn. The settlement was intact, but no one was in it. Buildings were un plundered. There was no sign of combat, no bodies in the streets, nor any notes or messages left for the supply party. Household fires had burned themselves out naturally; food had been left ready to eat on tables. It was as if the inhabitants had simply walked out of Handeyn with nothing but the clothes on their backs. The 2,000 settlers had vanished without a trace.

Alarmed and uneasy at this discovery, the supply party went to Railekos for help. Disbelieving townsmen accompanied them back to Handeyn, to be equally dumbfounded by the mystery. To complicate matters, spellcasters found that magic was of no use in explaining the disappearance. Neither stones nor walls nor plants could offer a word of explanation. With historical hindsight, this is believed to be the same phenomenon encountered in barrow mounds of this district, where inanimate objects are also mute about what has happened in their presence.

Shadow Haunts

After the mass disappearance at Handeyn, the town was left abandoned. The wooden structures fell into ruin, and later total decay. No trace of the town remains today, but, since the disappearance, shadow haunts have favored the area (see **Exotic Creatures**). They are thought to be the undead spirits of the townsfolk who vanished from Handeyn. Clear Lake soon became known as Deadman’s Lake, widely recognized as a place to avoid.

In the ensuing centuries, there have been five or six other freeholds or clanholds established within 10 miles of the Lake. Each has suffered similarly short-lived fates. No one has attempted to settle in that area within the last 200 years, nor explored it in any detail for the last two decades.

The Lake Today

The only signs of former habitation at the lake are foundation stones that are hardly recognizable as such. Animals pass through the area unscathed, but people are attacked within their first few hours there by shadow haunts. There is a multitude of undead in the area, apparently content to stay near the place where they last knew life.

Deadman’s River

There is no proof that the accursed area around Deadman’s Lake extended to the countryside flanking Deadman’s River. However, this entire stretch of country is shunned for the ill-luck and danger people associate with it. shadow haunts have been encountered the length of the river, though they have never been reported as attacking or eliminating entire settlements or freeholds. Bargemen avoid the mouth of the river where it flows into the Han-gar, claiming the water there is roiled with mysterious whirlpools, or blocked by sandbars which vanish as quickly as they appeared.

Populations



Almost equal numbers of humans and shirelings settled in the Wheatlands District, forcing the migration or relocation of indigenous humanoids who had been there before them. Zelperi, the lion-men described under **Exotic Creatures**, have been pushed back almost entirely into the Outlands District, and Hut People have been forced to move into the western half of the district.

Shirelings

Vital Statistics

Geographical Area:	<i>Wheatlands District</i>
Number of Shirelings:	<i>144,300</i>
% of District Population:	<i>46%</i>
% of Total Race:	<i>40%</i>
Languages:	<i>Shireling, Calandian, Dwarvish, Elvish, Goblin, Brownie, Merchant</i>
Infravision:	<i>30'</i>
Ability Score Adjustments:	<i>-1 STR, +1 DEX, +1 STA</i>
Average Life Span:	<i>140 years</i>
Height:	<i>as per standard rule book</i>
Description:	<i>curly blonde or auburn hair; brown, green, or hazel eyes</i>
Arms & Armor:	<i>no armor, short bow 20% no armor, spear 20% no armor, sling 25% leather armor, spear 25% studded leather, short sword 10%</i>

The Lake District is the original homeland of most shirelings in Calandia. When men moved into the area and developed farmland, the more adventuresome shirelings migrated gradually westward into new territory in the Wheatlands District. These industrious people have had a major impact on the cultivation of prairie lands, working alongside human neighbors to turn this into the most productive grain belt in the City-State.

Shirelings were the first to recognize the quality of the rich Wheatlands' prairies, and the first to cultivate them. They were also the first to run into the Hut People, who defended their territory violently from the intruders they perceived as midgets. Many settlers died, outclassed and outfought by the fierce raiders, before shireling leaders could band together and negotiate with the barbarians. The way to peace was paved with trade agreements and land concessions. These arrangements were ignored by the humans who arrived a century later, but while they were in force they were some of the most equitable territorial agreements to exist between different races in Calandia.

Faced with a dearth of hillsides for burrowing and home-making, the shirelings pioneered the construction of sod houses, digging partially into hillsides and building the rest up out of earthen "prairie bricks:" rich loam held firm by a network of grass roots. Entire villages have grown up in this manner, although more permanent structures were built in time from imported wood, bricks, or quarried stone.

Shirelings soon abandoned their attempts to delineate every orchard and field with fences, as was the practice in the Lake District. The prairies were too expansive, and the fencing material too scarce. Today, only property lines of major importance are marked with rough hedgrows of thorny white-berry. Property disputes, when they occur, are mediated by Shire authorities.

While Wheatlands humans have diversified into livestock, commercial grain trade, and fishing, shirelings continue their village lifestyle and farming customs with little change. Their most notable innovation has been the five-field system of agriculture used in the Wheatlands. Two out of every five fields lies fallow after being worked over with the addition of compost. Another two are planted in a cash crop (usually wheat or other grain), and the fifth field is used for subsistence farming. Field usage is rotated once a year. This method keeps the land vital and ensures good crop yields.

As human trade-towns grew into centers of commerce, shireling villages increased their participation in fairs, markets, and the exchange of services. Just as in the Lake District, it is the shirelings of the Wheatlands who process the bulk of natural products into goods for the local market. The Sodpicket, Thrownail, and Logfoot families, for instance, own and operate flour mills, oil presses, and pickling plants which preserve meats and vegetables.

The Thormar Province shirelings are considered to be a client nation of the City-State, an uncomfortable resolution to an awkward problem. When Lucius I began to create the greater City-State, he found there was no coherent nation of shirelings with which he could treat. These demi-humans organized their communities into Shires, exercising a democratic system of government in which landowners voted for the Mayor of their Shire. Each Shire is a separate entity, sometimes allied with others, but each with its own voice. In this democratic society, clan lines have little to do with government, and shirelings are used to participating politically in community decision-making. This system was so unlike that of the humans that Lucius I saw no way to peacefully win allegiance from these independent-minded demi-humans.

The shirelings resented the Overlord's efforts to tax them on land that they regarded as their own, and armed clashes resulted when he tried to intimidate them with military force. The Lake District suffered the brunt of these disputes, but the Wheatlands District was up in arms as well and fought several times on their own territory. Lucius II solved the problem by declaring shirelings folk of a client nation, even though there was no national body for him with which to negotiate. Today, minimal taxes are paid by each shireling community in exchange for military protection and considerable trade concessions. Representatives to the Briarwood Senate are democratically elected district-wide once every five years. The taxes remain a bone of contention, but the shirelings were forced to bow before the uncontested might of the Overlord's army of unification.

Traits

Shirelings take things at their own pace, neither quickly nor slowly. They take breaks when they are tired, work when they don't want to be idle, and get a surprising amount accomplished. They are, of course, fond of their food, setting the best tables and running the best restaurants in the Wheatlands District. They make a big occasion out of holidays and special events. During birthdays they expect to receive presents from the one with the birthday, and continue their time-honored customs of giving away useful but unneeded things to others. These good-natured folk get on well with their human neighbors and often assist them in projects for the common welfare, such as road improvements and bridge-building.

Characters

An NPC shireling is usually Chaotic Good in alignment. S/He has all the racial abilities described in the standard rule book; in addition, all who are native to Calandia have infravision to thirty feet. Besides being knowledgeable about agriculture, a Wheatlands shireling is usually skilled in at least one handicraft (wood-working, weaving, etc.), and gains a +20% modifier to rolls relating to that ability.

Shirelings are sociable, fun-loving, and loyal to family and friends. Although a large number of them are cowardly fighters, a similar number are amazingly fierce when pushed to it. Many shirelings are familiar with the sling, and those in the militia commonly train with the short bow or the spear. Most do not care for armor more encumbering than leather; however, some individuals wear elfin chain mail.

Few shirelings leave their comfortable lives to go adventuring. Those who do so are most often fighters or thieves. It is not uncommon for shireling Characters to be "adopted" into Hut People clans. A handful of those have become shamen dedicated to Keifperi animal spirits (see **Hut People**, following).

Men

Hut People (Keifperi) Vital Statistics

Geographical Area:	<i>Wheatlands District</i>
Number of Hut People:	<i>45,500</i>
% of District Populations:	<i>15%</i>
% of Total Race:	<i>96%</i>
Languages:	<i>Calandian, plus additional languages as per INT</i>
Ability Score Adjustments:	<i>+1 STA, +3 DEX; D12 for HTK</i>
Average Life Span:	<i>80 years</i>
Height:	<i>as per standard rules, +2D6"</i>
Description:	<i>chocolate brown skin; curly black hair; brown eyes</i>
Arms & Armor:	<i>no armor, spear, leather shield 40% no armor, hatchet 25% granje-hide armor, spear 20% granje-hide armor, spear, short sword 15%</i>

The Hut People are humans native to the Wheatlands District. They were encountered there by shirelings and other humans who migrated into the area during the reign of the Dragon Kings. Their name is taken from their unusual style of housing: snug, weather-proof huts woven from the tall grasses of the prairies.

Hut People are citizens of the City-State. The Overlord recognizes and protects their current homeland, the western half of the central third of the Wheatlands District. There is no longer a danger of land-hungry clansmen pushing these people any further out of the region.

Keifperi differ ethnically from the mainstream Calandian race. Their features are negroid and their height average is well over six feet, with statures in excess of seven feet not at all uncommon. They are lean and slim, with long, delicate hands and fingers, aquiline noses, and proud bearing. Along with the jungle inhabitants of Han-gar Province, Keifperi have the darkest skin of all Calandia natives. Their appearance is impressive and distinctly different from most of their countrymen.

These folk do not have a written language; they rely on oral history for tales of their past. These verbal histories relate that the Keifperi ruled the Bu'tama Kingdom, a fabled empire which existed long ago in the Lake District. The realm was rich and prosperous, until its people and cities were struck down and

devastated by plague. The Keifperi moved westward to flee the disease, and became a nation of semi-migratory herdsmen, leaving the ruins of their ancient civilization behind. They built largely of wood in those times; little evidence of that kingdom remained when the Lake District forests were cleared for farmland in later centuries.

In the Wheatlands, Hut People tribes build villages of grass huts, including a thorn-bush corral for keeping cattle safe at night from Prairie predators. In areas where predators or raiders from other tribes attack frequently, a stockade is built or thorn hedge grown as well. Then, in an isolated place less than a day's walk from the settlement, an Ubolo Village is built. The Ubolo Village is a physical home for the non-corporal ancestors whom the Hut People worship. It is also a necropolis and ceremonial site for important rituals. Cattle are grazed in the newly-claimed territory, while the tribe's warriors keep predators away and protect the tribe's cattle. Warfare between tribes is rare, but cattle raids are common. After a couple of decades, when the best grazing is consumed and the land worn out, the residential village is burned and the Ubolo Village is left to become a ruin (see **Haunted Places**). The tribe moves onward in search of new grazing lands. When a suitable location is found, the process begins anew.

Hut People count their personal wealth in cattle. Through trade with other folk, they have come to place specific values on certain goods which they previously enjoyed solely for the decorative or curiosity value. Chief among these are granje hide and horns, leopard skins, and silver. Keifperi work small silver mines in the foothills of the Highland Rise, and hunt granje and leopards for their hides. They trade these items for copper, iron, and some cloth goods. In addition, Keifperi women weave a coarse linen from the flax reed, then either dye it red or leave it its natural beige color. They have perfected the art of interweaving threads of metal with the cloth, and use copper for this purpose. The finished cloth is sometimes traded away, but is more often kept and worn as simple skirts, loincloths, or toga-like draperies. Women are excellent jewelry-makers and woodcarvers, and men are skilled musicians and dancers.

Hut People go barefoot all the time, and do not tame or ride horses. They are unsurpassed runners, capable of sprinting or jogging extremely long distances for long periods of time; each of them has a STA score of at least 14. Weapons native to these folk are limited to the spear, club, sling, and hatchet, although they sometimes employ other weapons acquired in trade with clansmen or shirelings. Keifperi throw spears accurately for great distances (they have the following modifiers on their "to hit" rolls: +3 at short range, +2 at medium range, and +1 at long range). With the aid of a throwing stick called the atlatyl they can cast a spear to a range of 3", 6", or 9". Weapons are sometimes tipped with k'kuban, an extract of catch-grass which makes the victim asleep for 1D4 turns (save vs. Poison applicable).

Religion

The religious practices of the Hut People are very different from most Calandian beliefs. Keifperi religion is based on two important concepts: totem animal spirits, and ancestor worship.

Animal Spirits: Each tribe has an animal spirit which watches over the tribe and is the patron of that clan's activities. This totem might be the Eland spirit, the Leopard spirit, the Granje spirit, and so on. More than one tribe can have the same totem, but will call it by a different name. Each totem (Lion, Granje, and so on) is an individual personality and has the same powers and abilities of a demigod, in animal form.

Keifperi who wish to become shamen undergo a vision quest. At the end of ritual fasting, dancing, and meditation done in the Ubolo Village, the man or woman is granted a vision of his or her personal animal spirit totem. This demigod need not be the same

as the tribe's totem. Rather, it is a guide and advisor for the shaman-to-be in personal matters and the seeking of wisdom. The tribe's totem remains the primary demigod/spirit which grants the shaman his clerical magic, although this can also be done in times of great need by the shaman's personal totem. Keifperi shamen have a close personal relationship with their totem spirits; the spirits speak to them through signs, omens, and dreams far more frequently than most Calandian deities do for their clerics.

Most totem spirits grant druidical magic; however, the spells do not exceed Skill 5. Most also grant the ability for the shaman to Polymorph him-/herself into the shape of the totem animal spirit.

Ancestor Worship: Hut People believe that when a person dies, his/her spirit goes to reside with other deceased ancestors of the living tribe. The Ubolo Village (see **Haunted Places**) is built for the use of this "dead" tribe as a physical place where the ancestors can stay and be available for contact by living tribe members. Ancestors are not bound to stay in the Ubolo Village, but it is easiest to contact them there. Clerical magic sanctifies the place and eases the barrier between Spheres of existence.

Ancestors are looked to for personal advice and guidance. If one has recently died or is dearly remembered (a grandparent or tribal chief, for instance), that ancestor in particular may be asked to bless or help with plans or events — a wedding, a village move, etc.. Asking help of an ancestor is not an empty gesture: the supernatural aid can take tangible form, much to the surprise of the unsuspecting. A Keifperi traveler, for instance, asking a deceased warrior to guard him on his journey, may very well be defended by a shadow haunt (see **Exotic Creatures**) if he is attacked during his trip.

It is not certain in which Sphere of existence Keifperi ancestors and totem spirits live. Some believe they are in an obscure corner of Mahrendi, the Sphere of the Gods where most of the Calandian pantheon resides. Others believe they inhabit the realm of Shadow in the Sphere of Invisible Worlds. The issue is undecided, and the Keifperi don't care. They have their Ubolo Villages and their animal spirits, and they are content with that.



Traits

Hut People are self-reliant and proud, but not haughty. They are honest and say what they mean, losing face if they go back on their word. In battle they are taunting and fearless; at home, Keifperi are an affectionate people, with much touching and physical contact between themselves and any that they care for. They are very fond of children and like the young of any species. Any excuse serves for a dance or a song. Keifperi regard magic-users with suspicion, since those few tribesmen who spell-cast are usually sorcerers or witches of Evil alignment. These folk love nature and open spaces and spend little time indoors. A Keifperi who is imprisoned stops eating and suffers from extreme depression and melancholia. This can become so severe that some Keifperi prisoners die from it.

Characters

An NPC Keifperi tends to be Chaotic or Lawful Good in alignment. S/He has the attitudes described under Traits. All Keifperi have a higher movement rate (14") than normal humans, as well as superior STA and DEX. For Character classes, most Keifperi become fighters or rangers, while some become shamen

Barbarian Abilities

When Character statistics are rolled for the Keifperi barbarian fighter, 6D6 are rolled for the DEX score, and the three best numbers are taken to use for the Character's score. To this is added the modifier noted under Vital Statistics. STA is generated with the three best numbers rolled on 5D6, and the Vital Statistics modifier added. Scores generated in this way can reach a maximum of 19. A D12 is used to determine HTK.

These Characters progress at half the rate of normal fighters. A barbarian needs double the minimum fighter experience points to advance each Skill level. Barbarians use the combat tables for normal fighters, and may use any type of weapon. However, they prefer to fight unarmored and with minimal encumbrance.

Keifperi barbarians are cautious of non-clerical magic and avoid it, even with weapons or potions. This Character has a base 20% chance of sensing the use of magic, increasing this chance by 5% per Skill level to a maximum of 70%. They have a similar chance of sensing ambushes or attacks from the rear. If a rear attack is detected, the barbarian can defend him-/herself even if s/he has already attacked that round.

These Characters gain the following bonuses to their saving throws: +3 vs. Poison, +2 vs. Paralyzation and Polymorph; +1 vs. Rods and Spells for every 3 Skills beyond Skill 1. Barbarians can hide in familiar natural surroundings the same way a thief of the same Skill level can Hide in Shadows. They surprise others on 1-3 on 1D6, and are surprised only on a 1 on 1D10.

This Character can leap ten feet forward, three feet backward, or three feet upwards from a standing start. S/He is skilled in wilderness survival, and his/her tracking ability is the same as a ranger of the same Skill level.

When running, the Keifperi Character can move at a rate of 24" for two days before having to "rest" by spending one day moving at their normal rate of 14". During that time his/her STA is twice normal.

These barbarians are skilled at building animals snares (10% per Skill), and imitating sounds of birds and animals. They are immune to Fear and aging effects of ghosts and other undead, the result of their cultural familiarity with undead and the protection extended by totem spirit and ancestors. If the Character has specifically asked an ancestor for protection, the GM may grant saving throw bonuses as well.

and a very few become magic-users. Keifperi never become thieves or assassins.

For game purposes, this is a "barbarian" culture, and all Hut People trained as fighters do combat as barbarians with the attributes and abilities described below. Untrained Hut People use 1D6+2 to determine their HTK, for even at Skill 0 they are harder than the average clansman.

Warriors prefer to fight unarmored to take advantage of their great natural agility, but a leather shield is generally used. The weapons most familiar to Hut People are mentioned above, and tend to be the ones first learned as weapon proficiencies if the Character class allows it.

Wheatlanders

Vital Statistics

Geographical Area:	Wheatlands District
Number of Wheatlanders:	120,100
% of District Population:	39%
% of Total Race:	8%
Languages:	Calandian, Merchant, plus additional languages as per INT
Average Life Span:	75 years
Height:	na'Ardruni: standard rules, -2" na'Urici: standard rules, +2" na'Ardruni: wavy or curly dark brown hair; brown, amber, or green eyes na'Urici: wavy blond or light brown hair; brown or green eyes na'Dhurisi: long, straight hair, blond to medium brown; blue or violet eyes
Arms & Armor:	no armor, lt. crossbow 30% no armor, halbard 30% no armor, quarterstaff 15% no armor, sling, short sword 10% studded leather, broad sword 15%

Men migrated into this district moving down the Han-gar and Lilymoor Rivers, or crossing overland from the Lake District. Shirelings had preceded them into the interior where rich prairie land was available for grazing and farming. Men settled to the south and north of this central core of shirelings, pushing past them and into the territory of the Hut People, whom they eventually forced to move eastward.

Most Wheatlands farming clans work their land communally. Leaders responsible for decisions concerning the land acquired considerable power and responsibility as the wheat trade prospered and grew. This was an especially important position when clans warred with Hut People for control of the prairies. Today, these clan seniors are accorded titles and privileges similar to that of nobility. Minor freeholders controlling large tracts of land are known as Squires, a term borrowed from the shirelings. Major landholders are called by more traditional titles. This nobility controls most of the grain farming, fishing, and river trade in the Wheatlands, and collects the revenues from bridges, ferries, and trade fairs. Urban merchants dominate trade that leaves the Wheatlands (see **Wheatlands Institutions: Tara Company**).

Traits

In the Wheatlands there is a distinct difference in character and lifestyle between the humans in different sections of the district. This is a result of the clan-affiliation of the three major segments of human settlers in this region.

Na'Ardruni: The na'Ardruni tribe dominates the country north of the Highland Rise, concentrating their settlements between the Lake District border and the temperate zone marked by the Brown

River. Most are freeholders or clanhold villagers who make their livelihood from farming. These folk are warm, optimistic, and generous. They are patrons of musicians and actors, welcoming troupes of traveling entertainers in their countryside. A stranger is never turned away from a door, and hospitality is freely given.

Na'Ardruni clansmen wear the shireling-inspired dress seen in the Lake District. Men wear stockings, knee-length breeches, and baggy shirts tucked in at the waist. The breeches sport large pockets, eliminating the need to carry valuables in a purse or pouch. Women wear colorful calf-length skirts and wide-necked blouses, often with a lace-up bodice over it. Cloaks are seldom worn; instead, people wear an overshirt or jacket of heavier cloth or wool, which sometimes has pockets and a hood. Men wear moustaches and crop their hair short; women keep their hair shoulder-length and pinned up.

Na'Urici: Most of these clansmen settled south of the Highland Rise, establishing Dafarn as the seat of the Temple of Uric and the focal point of clan business in the southern Wheatlands. The na'Urici are not historically farmers, but to make a living in their new homeland, many turned to the plow and followed the na'Ardruni example in prairie agriculture. However, most of these clansmen favored work with animals and became leading herds-men and breeders of livestock.

The na'Urici clansmen have a more sober attitude than that of their neighbors to the north. They are equally generous and hospitable to strangers, but there is measured restraint in their behavior towards others. Southern Wheatlanders are more often concerned with proprieties and correct actions, the result of the teachings of the Temple of Uric. They are openly disdainful and distrustful of the decadent townsmen of the north, who are mostly na'Dhurisi with loose morals and few scruples.

Southern styles tend toward trousers and tunics or one-piece calf-length dresses — practical clothing for freehold work. In towns, robes are worn by clan elders, clerics, and similar notables as a sign of distinction. These clansmen wear their hair at neck-length. Men are clean-shaven, and often tie their hair back in a short pigtail. Women let their hair grow long and wear it loose.

Na'Dhurisi: These clansmen were late-comers to the Wheatlands. Uninterested in farming, they founded trading villages along the Han-gar River, the largest of which was the town of Dasa. Because such settlements were ready markets and shipping points, the na'Dhurisi came to handle much of the produce of the farming na'Ardruni. However, because of political and philosophical differences, there has always been distrust between these factions, and trade does not flourish in the northern Wheatlands as much as it does in the Lake District. Townsmen have a reputation for overcharging and taking advantage of their customers. "Let the buyer beware" is sound advice for travelers new to the Wheatlands.

The townfolk of the north are notorious on another account. Though not true in all places, these Dhurisi-worshippers have a reputation for lustily pursuing all manner of fleshly pleasures. Their moral standards are not the same as those of the farmers. At best, they are regarded as having lax morals or questionable ethics. At worst, they are scorned as lazy and decadent pleasure-seekers. In fact, much of the true work done in northern cities is done by hirelings and people of other clans. The na'Dhurisi own most of the property and make decisions, but are happy to be served by others when it comes down to the actual work.

In spite of these criticisms, the hospitality of the townfolk cannot be faulted. They take any excuse to celebrate and throw a party, and welcome guests with lavish entertainments. Art, entertainment, luxury goods and all the accoutrements of fine living are plentiful in the northern towns, and highly coveted by those who dwell there. The society may be decadent, but its people do not lack for the nicer things of life.

Since they enjoy physical pleasures and material items, it is not surprising that the na'Dhurisi towns are showcases of elaborate fashion and imported finery. Doublets with slashed sleeves, embroidered robes of silk, fancy hats, tight hose, and many more types of garments can be seen on the streets in the larger towns. This eclectic taste has blended into a "northern Wheatlands" style which resembles that of the Highlands District across the Han-gar; that is, one of decorative clothing designed to show off the physical form beneath. Hair styles vary widely as well, though men tend to be clean shaven with shoulder-length or shorter hair, and women let their hair grow long and wear it loose.

Celebrants: The Celebrants comprise a fanatic sect of the worshippers of Dhurisi; they are dedicated to the most extreme self-indulgences encouraged by their deity. Celebrant's Home in Dasa (see **Wheatlands Institutions**) is the seat of the cult and the base of their rituals when they are celebrating in that city.

Celebrants begin their ceremonies with drinking and dancing. The music is wild, and the dancing is uninhibited. The Celebrants' alcoholic beverage is a potent drink (*Raffik*) which is distilled from grains and special herbs. Raffik is the key to the practices of the Celebrants. It first makes the drinker euphoric and reduces his/her INS by 1D6 points. The euphoria later turns into aggression, which manifests itself through a number of physical outlets. Raffik is so potent that many berserkers drink it to help themselves become berserk. In Briarwood and several other cities, Raffik is outlawed.

After becoming intoxicated, Celebrants dance and revel for hours. At that point, one of two things happens. If there are enough Celebrants so inclined, the aggressive urges brought on by the raffik are dissipated into an orgy and the Celebrants collapse into exhaustion. If that does not occur, Celebrants leave their place of revelry and wander in a gang. The forms their raffik-aggressions take are unpredictable, and some are quite horrible. At best, they might smash windows and chase people off the street. In most instances, they are content with assaulting innocent passers-by. In the worst cases, Celebrants chase down a victim, amuse themselves with pleasures of the flesh, then tear their victims apart.

Needless to say, such obscenities are highly illegal and carry the stiffest penalties. Celebrants who have a place to hold their ceremonies usually have enough entertainment on hand to exhaust themselves. The ones who are most dangerous are those who live in the country, or who go to the country for their "celebrations." A blind eye is turned to this sect in Dhurisi-worshipping areas, but they are barely tolerated in other parts of the district.

When Celebrants are met in random or planned encounters, the more attractive a Character is, the more likely the Celebrants are to attack in order to have their "fun" with the victim. For this reason, a Character's reaction roll modifiers (based on APL) should be deducted from the reaction roll, rather than added to it, thus making it more likely that the Celebrants will attack.

An average member of this sect has the statistics listed following. One in ten Celebrants is a member of a trained Character class, and one in twenty is a cleric of Dhurisi. Rampaging Celebrants have an unequal number of men and women.

(1D20) Celebrants

STR: 13, INT: 10, INS: 6

DEX: 10, STA: 13, APL: 15

HTK: 6, AC: 10

MV: 15", AL: N. Evil - C. Evil

AT: 1, DM: 1D3 (hand)

THACO: 19

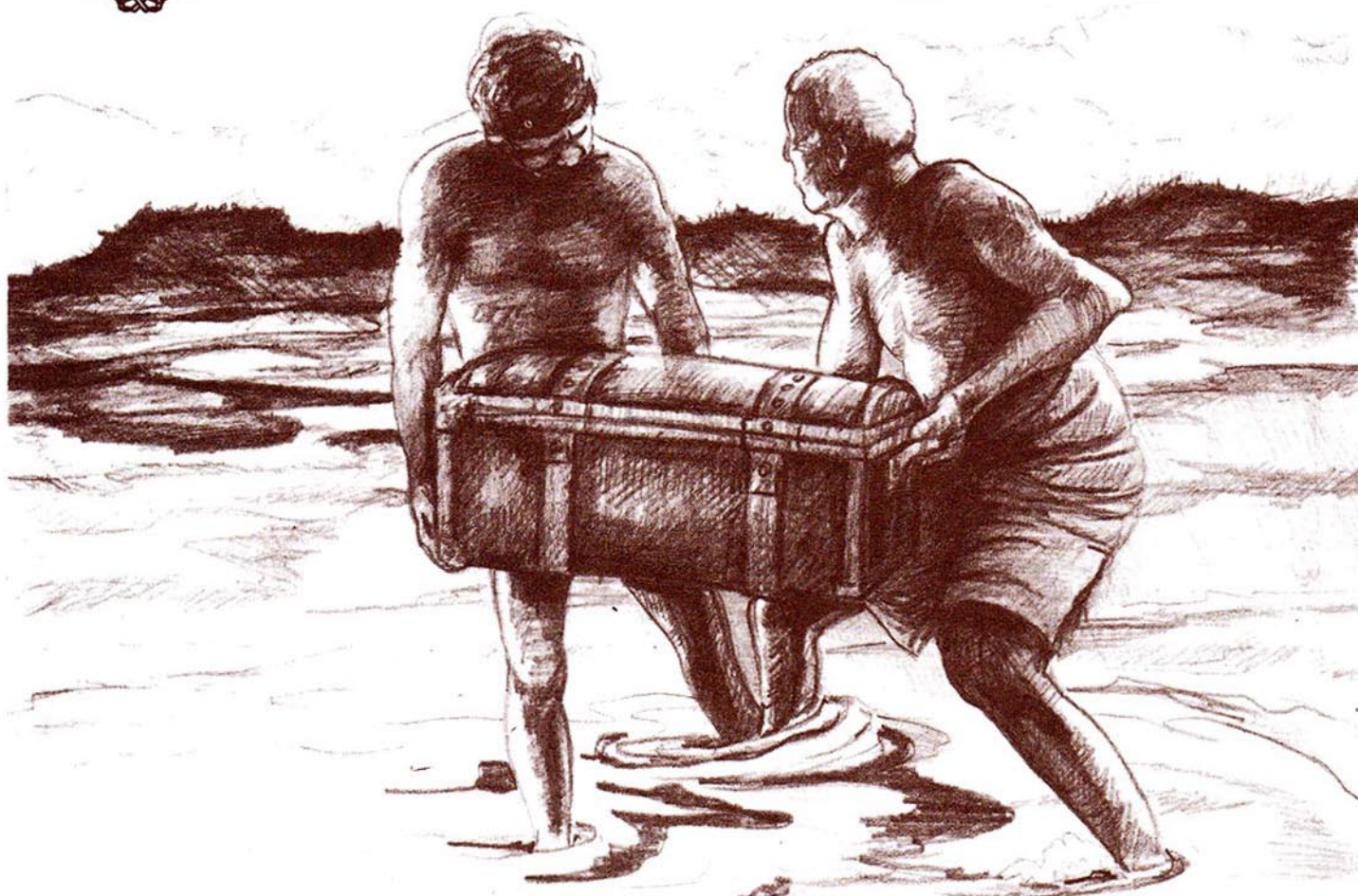
Weapon Proficiencies: none

Weapons: none

Specials: Stays conscious and continues to fight until -10 HP are reached.



History



The first human inhabitants of the Wheatlands were the Hut People. The Keifperi came to this area from the Bu'tama Kingdom, their homeland in the then-forested Lake District, which had prospered while most Calandians wandered through the last years of the Great Misery. Forced by plague to leave their devastated realm, the survivors became semi-nomadic herdsman who ranged the prairie with their cattle in periodic migrations. They avoided the mysterious barrow mounds, which they recognized as places of evil energy.

Shirelings were the first strangers to enter the central prairies of this district. They lived through three decades of armed conflict with the Hut People, who tried to keep the fair-skinned "midgets" out of their grazing lands. Peace settlements were finally made, and shireling and Hut People lived in peaceful proximity for the next sixty years.

Humans followed shirelings at the close of that first century of settlement. Clansmen whose roots were on the Great Plateau migrated into this territory, moving overland through the Lake District and down the watery thoroughfares of the Han-gar or Lilymoor Rivers. The first clansmen to settle in the Wheatlands were the na'Ardruni clan from the Lake District, settling at Deadman's Lake over 1,500 years ago (see **Haunted Places**). More farmfolk followed in short order, inspired by the shireling successes in the rich prairie lands of this district. Over the next century, the bulk of human farmers arrived in the Wheatlands, claiming lands to the north and south of the central core of shireling territories. Once there, they soon came into conflict with

the Hut People. Coveting the prime prairie land which Hut People used solely for grazing, the clansmen ignored the shireling/Keifperi land agreements and settled where they wanted. The next two centuries were filled with warfare of increasing intensity, as more clansmen moved into the district and pushed the Hut People ever farther westward.

This conflict escalated as na'Urici clansmen moved into the district during the reign of Emperor Grongyrfeng. Choosing to distance themselves from the intrigue-filled politics of the Dragon Kings, the Uric-worshipping clansmen moved the seat of their temple and their clan away from the Great Plateau in a great two-year-long exodus called the Resettlement. They founded Dafarn on the Sandy River (its twin city of Solaes is across the Lilymoor River), and promptly spread out into both the Wheatlands and the Grazers Districts.

The na'Urici was a more war-like clan than the na'Ardruni. The na'Urici's tactics and measured use of offensive magic proved too much for the Hut People, who finally ceded territory to the humans and moved once and for all farther westward. This contested, forced migration of Keifperi in turn dislocated the humanoid Zelperi, the lion-men of the western plains, and succeeded in moving them almost entirely out of the district.

Today Keifperi rights to the western half of this district are observed by all. At times, the justice-minded na'Urici clansmen and avantari have used arms to enforce fair observance of this informal boundary line.

The na'Dhurisi clansmen were late-comers to the district. They arrived just in time to miss the armed conflicts, taking advantage of peace and the increased agriculture to build trade towns and villages. Most of the na'Dhurisi migrated here from the Highlands District, where they were the losers in a minor civil war.

These clansmen soon controlled most of the northern shipping and resale of the district's agricultural production. In the process, they developed a reputation as sharp and unscrupulous traders, taking every advantage they could for material gain. The northern townsmen have done much to build up commerce in the district, but the differences in philosophy between these Neutral Evil Dhuris-worshippers and the other Good-aligned clansmen in the district have kept a certain level of tension between the three factions. Rural Wheatlanders consider most northern townfolk to be decadent and self-serving. Those urbanites consider the local country folk to be naive bumpkins, and scorn the judgmental Uric-following southerners.

Current Events

Near Lake Mahnis, where na'Dhurisi and na'Urici come in frequent contact, there are increasingly open hostilities between the avantari of these respective temples. There is no corresponding unrest in the north, where the peace-loving na'Ardruni farmers have no wish to fight their neighbors and trading partners. The Hut People are uninvolved in clan problems, since they have their hands full protecting themselves from the evil creatures which are appearing more and more often.

Wheatlands shirelings are the first of their race who have to cope with the sudden increase of marauding monsters moving in from the coast. Like their kin to the east, they have mustered militia and patrol their shires constantly. This response has yet to be tested by a major threat, but at least there is a show of force and preparation among these farmers.

Legends

The Handeyn Treasure.

Marlita Kaudh was one of the members of the supply party that had left Handeyn to bring food to its inhabitants (see **Haunted Places**). At that time, the community had been alarmed about raiding goblins drawing closer to the settlement. The clansmen decided to hide the treasures and cash valuables of the community, goods which represented years of saving, against a time of need for the entire clan.

By chance, Marlita discovered the hiding place. Unable to sleep in anticipation of the trip she was about to make, she wandered the lakeside long before dawn on the morning of her departure, and saw the clan chief and an elder put several chests into the shallow water of Clear Lake off a prominent point of land. After the inhabitants vanished from Handeyn, Marlita remained convinced that the treasure must still be at the bottom of the lake.

She went to search for it, but returned to Railekos an old woman, aged by the shadow haunts which had taken up residence near the lake. Tales of the lost treasure traveled rapidly, and others tried their luck. Many died, and others were aged beyond belief by the lakeside haunts. Interest in the Handeyn Treasure died down over the years because of the impossibility of searching the waters where it is said to lie. But if the treasure was there in Marlita's time, it is probably there today, somewhere near the shore of Deadman's Lake in a place shallow enough in which to dive.

The Lion-Spirit of Lake Mahnis.

West of Lake Mahnis is prairie won by clansmen from the Lion Clan Hut People in the last of the fights against them. In that place is an Ubolo Ruin, the only token that Keifperi once lived there. The Ruin is little more than a few hearth stones overgrown by



grass, but the magic and guardians that live in that place protect it as well as they did when the village was first built.

The area surrounding that particular Ubolo Ruin has a second guardian, one entirely different from the first. Hut People claim that when they need help and pray to the ancestors of that Ubolo Ruin, a lion-spirit may manifest to aid the person in trouble. In fact, farmers report strange tracks in their fields, and hunters sometimes glimpse a lion of awesome proportions dashing across the prairie. No traces of its hunting or feeding have ever been found, and its presence does not seem to alter the territorial patterns of normal lions which live in the area. Clansmen say this is merely the large lion it appears to be. Hut People say it is the lion-spirit who has lived there for over a thousand years. Whatever, it is only sighted within a fifty-mile radius of the Ubolo Ruin.

Keifperi whisper that there is an artifact in the ruin which keeps the lion-spirit bound to this place, even though the people who worshipped him have long since moved on to the west. It is said that the lion-spirit longs to be freed from this place, and will richly reward anyone who can do so. But to find the artifact requires finding the Ubolo Ruin, of which hardly a trace is left, and defeating its supernatural defenses. No one has succeeded in this quest.

Han-Tarpe's Road to the Past.

Lovan Durikos was a young and nearsighted student of alchemy who paused in Han-Tarpe on his journey to Helington. Lost in abstract thought, he strolled along the river barge path west of town, walking into a sudden bank of river mist along his way.

Suddenly, he stepped out of the fog and saw the juncture of the Han-gar and Deadman's Rivers ahead of him. In place of the town of Han-Tarpe there were a few simple huts. The barge path had disappeared beneath his feet, and a procession of riverboats and funeral barges floated sedately downstream, accompanied by droning chants and the sound of gongs echoing on the water.

Disoriented and uncertain, Lovan hailed a man garbed in strange robes who was walking towards him on the river trail. The man walked right past the alchemist, ignoring his calls. Lovan hastened after him. Lovan stepped once more into the river mist, and a moment later found himself on the barge path outside Han-Tarpe. There was no one else in sight.

Lovan was certain he had stepped back in time. He paced the barge path day after day like a man possessed. One day, he failed to return to his lodgings, and was never seen again. A few others have repeated the experiment. Most give up in frustration. But one or two, it is said, take a stroll and never return.



Commerce

Thousands of acres of prairie are under cultivation in the Wheatlands. Thousands more are touched only by grazing livestock and antelope. This agricultural empire is poor in minerals and manufactured goods but rich in the grains it exports.

Trade Patterns

Subsistence crops grown in the district remain in local markets to meet local demand. But most grain and other staple cash crops move from the heartland of this district along country roads to the inland river ports. From there, barges and skiffs carry grains, hides, vegetables, copper, and quarried stone down the Brown, the Sandy, the eastern Han-gar, or Lilymoor Rivers to distant markets. Finished goods and luxury items flow in plenty into the wealthy northern river towns, grown rich on the wheat trade. Fewer and more practical goods are imported into the south, where pragmatic clansmen buy more for need than for pleasure.

Roads

The major roadways in the district are well-developed and maintained routes which support the majority of overland trade and transportation in the district. Tens of smaller paths and tracks connect freeholds and distant farming villages, but most of these connect local marketplaces or lead to a major riverport, and are not reflected on the Wheatlands District map.

• The Aldar's Road

The Aldar's Road cuts through the southeast corner of the district, a short roadway that covers less than 200 miles from the Lake District border to Dafarn. Of all the districts it links, The Aldar's Road is of least importance in the Wheatlands District, where a relatively minor percentage of the district's goods move along it.

• Miller's Trail

Miller's Trail connects Tenilan with Railekos, winding through low, grassy hills and countless farms and freeholds between these two riverports. It is the single best-kept roadway in the district, aside from The Aldar's Road. Shireling goods from the interior move down Miller's Trail as an alternative route to the Brown River.

• The Golden Road

Copper and corn move along this route; the colors of the two have lent it its informal name of The Golden Road. It is the longest overland road through the Wheatlands District, and consists of two separate trails. The Corn Road runs from Evaenport to Estehl, and is the busiest route for transportation of grain to river markets. Copper Trail connects Estehl with Grielkos via the copper mines of the Highland Rise. Goods moving up Brown River reach the southland over this road, and goods bound for Railekos follow the same path to the north.

Towns and Cities

There are hundreds of freeholds and small villages in the Wheatlands District where most of the business of daily life and trade is carried on. Trade towns and population centers of special interest are described following.

• Dafarn (pop. 22,000)

Dafarn is the seat of the Great House of Uric, base of the Temple of Uric and the clan of the na'Urici in the City-State. From its beginnings as a religious refuge, Dafarn has grown to be the second most populous city in the district. The bulk of corn, copper, and other goods of the southland move through this riverport. The city is dominated by Kaziks, the massive citadel protecting the religious and government buildings of the city.

• Dasa (pop. unknown)

Dasa appeared inexplicably one night in 286 SL, a massive walled city situated around the site occupied by Celebrant's Home. It is a populous place inhabited by mischievous sprites, corrupt and decadent Dhuris-worshippers, and all manner of other creatures, ruled by Galathrien, a person who appears as an inhumanly beautiful woman or handsome man. Wheatlanders who investigated the place after its sudden appearance found that it was full of delights and forbidden pleasures. Many have been lured to the city from near and far, but once inside seldom leave. In the early months of 287 SL, several of the Overlord's scouts met their deaths there. Since then the city is increasingly difficult to enter, although the inhabitants come and go as they please.

• Estehl (pop. 7,600)

This town of brick and stone is perched atop an outcropping beside the Scafohl River at the juncture of the Corn Road and the Copper Trail. It is known for its sandstone quarries and brickworks, and is the central point for river shipping in the area.

• Evaenport (pop. 9,200)

Evaenport is the largest port on the upper Sandy River. Most of the grains and copper transported through the southland move through Evaenport en route to Dafarn. A large percentage of the town's population inhabits house boats and river barges that moor at night along the banks of the Sandy.

• Faidmer (pop. 5,400)

Faidmer, in the heart of the corn-growing region, is also home to the Corn Market, which employs most of the town's population. The only Olenit Tower in the southland is located there as well.

• Grielkos (pop. 12,000)

Grielkos is an orderly town arrayed around a large central market square where copper goods and lake fish abound. The copper smelting district is a few miles southeast of town where the noise and stink of the smelters need not bother the townsfolk.

● Han-Tarpe (pop. 3,100)

Han-Tarpe is avoided by most people because of the history of shadow haunts and funeral barges in the area. For that reason a temple dedicated to Bragla, the Lawful Neutral goddess of death, was built on this spot. The town is a convenient supply stop for river trade using the barge road that goes by here.

● Railekos (pop. 25,800)

Railekos, the capital of the Wheatlands District, stands on a rocky promontory overlooking the Han-gar and Brown Rivers. It is a city of white-washed and half-timbered wood houses, with paved gutters, steep, sloping streets, and courtyard gardens. Most river traffic enters the Brown and docks at the foot of the Railekos promontory where there are docks, warehouses, grain silos, and bronze-works.

Besides the ever-present bronze and copper items, Railekos merchants display a dazzling variety of luxury goods imported from every province of Calandia. Silks from the Highlands, spices from the Lake District, Briarwood fashions, and Shangee wines are meager samples of what is offered. The prosperous wheat trade gives city dwellers the wherewithal to live in any style they choose. Affluence is evident here, and the influence of Dhuris has made wild parties and self-indulgence the bywords of the city's active night life. Railekos has no end of pleasures to offer those with the money and the inclination. The temple of Dhuris, run by High Priest Regnan Alevin in the entertainment district, is always well-attended.

● Tenilan (pop. 6,900)

Tenilan is a bustling market town where produce from the eastern-central Wheatlands is shipped downriver. Here are flour mills, silos, and Miller's Road to Railekos. Almost half of the population is shireling, and many structures are made of sod bricks and semi-excavated rooms in shireling fashion.

Wheat Monopolies

Wheat and other grains grown in the productive Wheatlands District have an impact on the economy and food situation in Calandia as a whole. A few noteworthy organizations are associated with this commodity market. They are of special importance in the Wheatlands District.

Tara Company

The Tara Company holds a Charter of Trade from the government which grants them the exclusive right to sell wheat outside of the Wheatlands District. Wheatlands farmers may sell their crops to anyone they want within the district boundaries, but grain which leaves the region for resale elsewhere can only be moved and sold if it bears the mark of the Tara Company. Prices for this wheat are set by local farmers and traders at the annual Wheat Market (see following). Those are the prices upon which Tara Company must base their resale price. They are monitored by the government to prevent profiteering, but inflated prices can be charged for wheat when it is sold far distant from legal controls.

This company's control extends only to the wheat trade; it does not monopolize commerce in barley, corn, or other grains. National trade in those commodities finds its outlet in the Corn Market, which is described following.

Daily Impact

The Tara Company has great influence and power in the Wheatlands District. Its officials control great tracts of cultivated prairie land, acquired through shrewd business arrangements with the farming freeholders who originally worked them. Com-



pany officials are generally given the same deference and respect as clan nobility. Mercantile employment with the Tara Company is seen as a sure path to power, one almost as honorable as rank within the clan, and one certain to bring more wealth. Wheatlands families often save up to "buy into" the Company, thus securing a post for a family member commensurate with the money invested.

Tara Company affairs in the Wheatlands District are overseen by Master Trader Elekin Martaz in Railekos (see **Important Persons**). He is the single richest individual in the district.

Wheat Market

Wheat trading is done at Wheat Market, held in Railekos for one week starting on the 15th of the Harvest Month. Farmers travel from all over the district with samples of their crops, and bids are made on bulk grain. Bid prices are bandied back and forth by flour mills, clanhold and freehold buyers, and brewers who make wheat beer. The price set for crops in different regions in the Wheatlands District are the prices which the Tara Company must pay when buying surplus wheat.

Silos

Surpluses of wheat and other grains are stored in freeholds and towns in silos built expressly for the purpose. Most of the wheat silos are owned by the Tara Company. The most remarkable are the Olenit Towers, magically-modified structures built at tremendous expense by the Company. The Olenit Towers, named for the wizardess who enchanted them, contain teleportation chambers which send the wheat to corresponding Olenit Towers near Lake Tara on the Great Plateau. In this way, the company is spared great expense in long-term overland shipping costs, and the grain arrives promptly on demand at a central place for redistribution. Most Olenit Towers are near the west fork of the Brown River, north of Grielkos, in the heartland of the wheat-producing region.

Corn Market

Faidmer is the center of the corn-producing region, and a shipping point for barley and other grains. In answer to the Tara Company-dominated wheat trade, a cut-throat grain trading market has grown up in this place. It originally functioned like the Wheat Market in Railekos, but has come to be a year-round trading center that handles speculative trade based on future prices of crops. Fortunes are made and lost on this commodity trading, a sophisticated commercial development found only in the Wheatlands. Merchants pay small fortunes to buy a "seat" in the Corn Market, which gives them admittance to trading sessions and the authority to write promissory notes and bid on futures.

Wheatlands Institutions

There are several organizations and institutions which are long established and well known in the Wheatlands District.

Hospices

Railekos House of Healing

This is the largest hospital and treatment clinic in the district. It is next to the Chapter House, the seat of Ardruna temple administration in the Wheatlands. Both hospice and chapter house are closely overseen by the High Priestess Felita Lucanos na'Ardruni. The well-to-do of Railekos and the surrounding boroughs contribute to the hospice regularly.

Schools of Instruction

Dafarn Institute of Alchemy

The order of Ardruna is known for its knowledge of healing herbs and plants. Many alchemists study with the order to further their understanding of the curative nature of certain plants. The Dafarn Institute grew out of a simple class which taught about local medicinal plants. Now plants as well as students are imported here from other parts of the country to further the study of alchemy. Not all of the students are alchemists, but those who are often come here from the Collegium Magisterium in Iron Springs, Lake District, or will go there to complete their studies after they leave Dafarn. The Institute is sponsored by the Temple of Ardruna, but is supported largely through private donations and tuition fees. It is run by the renowned Dean Aberwyth Gallendock, a foreign half-elf and alchemist.

Mahnis Fields Judiciary School and Seminary

Northwest of Lake Mahnis stretches Mahnis Fields, a peaceful, uncultivated meadowland famed for its wildflowers. A small shrine to Uric was built there which, over time, became a place where disputes were arbitrated, trials held, and judgments passed. A seminary school, which specialized in the legal aspects of Uric's teachings, was built here. The institution, which has become one of the country's leading judicial schools, is strictly governed by Hierarch Kedric Jahndaros, a cleric of the Temple of Uric.

Temple Administration

The Great House of the Temple of Uric, Dafarn

The administrative seat of the Temple of Uric is located in Dafarn in a complex of fortified stonework overlooking the Lilymoor River. From here, the hierarchs and staff of the Great House oversee the Temple's activities throughout Calandia.

The Great House was moved here over 1,500 years ago to distance the Temple of Uric from the religious intrigues then rife on the Great Plateau. The move was a success. The Great House is now in the heart of the region settled by the na'Urici tribe, and enjoys popular and financial support in Dafarn. The High Patriarch of the Temple is the respected Palos Voiha na'Urici. He spends his time divided between Dafarn and Briarwood, where he

is advisor to the Ministry of Law and Chancellor Dowons. A large contingent of avantari defend the Great House, taking full advantage of the monumental outworks of this temple-fortress.

Celebrants' Home, Dasa

Celebrants' Home is a religious facility of the Temple of Dhuris dedicated to the purposes of the Celebrants (see **Populations**). It is located in the center of the city of Dasa; it existed on that site before the city magically appeared around it (see **Towns and Cities**). Celebrants' Home is a rambling palace of banquet halls, bathing pools, dance floors, and sleeping chambers. Festivities for Dhuris are planned and held here. Although Celebrants are notorious for their gambols about the countryside, their most decadent entertainments are carried out in this facility.

Celebrants' Home is supervised by Celebrant Priestess Kalina Torlarit na'Dhurisi. The Home operates independently of other Dhuris temples in the Wheatlands.

Groups of Interest

Organizations of people are drawn together because of a common bond or shared interest. Orders of national prominence are detailed in the *Calandia Guidebook*. Besides those orders, three additional groups of interest exist in the Wheatlands District.

Vowkeepers

The Vowkeepers, headquartered at Dafarn, comprise a small but growing religious brotherhood consisting of avantari and paladins dedicated to Uric or Vikkar Tornor. They can be identified by their broad-striped black-and-white surcoats which bear the symbols of their deities embroidered on chest and back.

Vowkeepers undertake especially perilous or important quests for their temples. For those dedicated to Uric, the quests generally have the objective of seeing that justice is served. For those dedicated to Tornor, the mission involves the punishment or avenging of broken oaths, or completing a vow made by a lay person who died trying to fulfill such as quest.

The code of behavior for a Vowkeeper is stricter than that followed by almost any other avantar or paladin. Vowkeepers never give their word lightly; once they say they will do something, only death can keep them from it. A Vowkeeper permanently prevented from completing his mission is expected to commit suicide because of the failed charge. Those who fail and remain alive are expelled from the organization and are terribly disgraced.

Highwaymen

There is one group of highwaymen of special note operating on major roads of the northern Wheatlands District. This gang, called the Hooded Riders, is unlike the common brigands who waylay traffic on roads. These highwaymen stop only selected targets of great value, employing secret knowledge about goods of worth and when and how they will be transported.

Hooded Riders appear in well-chosen ambush spots, utilizing magic to surprise their quarry and evade pursuit afterwards. They frequently use Invisibility spells, and some — both horses and riders — have been seen to fly away afterwards if closely pursued. The anonymity of these highwaymen is protected by the black executioner-style hoods they wear (from which they derive their

name). Their largest reported hold-up utilized twenty-three highwaymen, but their exact numbers are unknown.

Hooded Riders concentrate on light-weight, high-value items: a cask of gems from a merchant's caravan, a chest of spices or a magic item concealed in personal baggage, jewelry and cash from wealthy travelers. They do not kill their victims if everyone surrenders and does as s/he is told. These highwaymen know magic and use it offensively if needed. They have never been successfully tracked, and to date it has been impossible to pinpoint who or what their next target might be. The District-Governor has posted a reward of 5,000 gp for the capture of any Hooded Rider.

Hanus Delf, a Loran dwarf from Thormar's Peak, is the leader of this group. An average highwayman has the following statistics:

Highwayman

Skill 7 Magic-user/Skill 9 Fighter

HTK: 9D10, AC: 2

MV: 12" (24" mounted)

AL: L. Evil

AT: 1, DM: by weapon

THACO: 12

Armor: +3 chain mail

Weapon Proficiencies: dagger, dart, horseman's mace, morning star, quarterstaff, short sword, sling

Weapons: dagger, dart, sling

Spells: 4/3/2/1

Rustlers

Cattle are plentiful in the western Wheatlands District, and groups of rustlers have made a business of stealing them. These rustlers are not a formal brotherhood as a whole, but a few successful gangs are well known.

Robber's Roost Gang

This gang is based in the Outlands District on the south slope of the Highland Rise. They have been in operation for over a century, raiding into the Wheatlands District for cattle, which they drive back to their hideouts in canyons along Robber's River. They attack anyone who surprises them at their work or interferes with

what they are doing. The gang members are skilled mounted fighters who use whips, short bows, and short swords. An average rustler has the following statistics:

Robber's Roost Gang Member

Skill 6 Fighter

HTK: 6D10, AC: 7

MV: 12" (20" mounted)

AL: C. Neutral — N. Evil

AT: 1, DM: by weapon

THACO: 16

Armor: studded leather

Weapon Proficiencies: club, dagger, darts, short bow, short sword, whip (does 1D4 HTK of damage)

Weapons: short bow, short sword, whip

Dasa-Ford Gang

This group of cattle thieves is based in the area between Dasa and the Ford River, but may be encountered hundreds of miles away. They are very select about the animals they steal, taking only the choicest cattle and bulls of the best bloodlines. They are stealthy in their work, avoid confrontations, and flee if caught in the act. Their horses are well-bred and swift, and they can usually lose or evade pursuit. These rustlers work in small groups of ten or fewer. The average gang member has the following statistics:

Dasa-Ford Gang Member

Skill 9 Thief

HTK: 9D6, AC: 9

MV: 12" (22" mounted)

AT: 1, DM: by weapon

AL: Neutral — L. Evil

THACO: 16

Armor: padded

Weapon Proficiencies: dagger, darts, crossbow, sling

Weapons: dagger, darts, crossbow, sling

Specials: Thief Skills (base): PP: 70%, OL: 62%, F/RT: 60%, MS: 70%, H in S: 56%, HN: 30%, CW: 98%, RL: 45%

Military Units



Thormar Provincial Army

The Thormar Provincial Army is divided into three Campaign Groups (divisions), one in each district of the province. The 2nd Campaign Group is headquartered in Grielkos under the command of Maj. General (*Praudhar*) Ala Praulos na'Urici (see **Important Persons**). From this central location, these troops can respond to threats anywhere in the district in a reasonable length of time. Half of the units have been dispersed throughout the district towards the western border, forming the Wheatland's first line of defense against the evil creatures approaching through the Outlands District. Cavalry troops are stationed along this plains' frontier, while heavy infantry guards the commercial centers of Railekos and Grielkos, and medium infantry units are being supplemented with the avantari of the na'Urici southland.

The Guard of the Great House of Uric

The "guard" of the Great House of the Temple of Uric is, in reality, a force the size of a small army, consisting of avantari,

paladins, and Vowkeepers. Some are being retained for the defense of Dafarn, and the rest are being put at the disposal of the Thormar Provincial Army. The Guard Army is commanded by Avantar Maj. Gen. (*Praudhar*) Kolos Ruvianos (see **Important Persons**).

Gryphon Riders

The Gryphon Riders comprise an elite mercenary troop led by former Black Lotus Guard commander Cham Morska (see *Betrayal at Bogwater*). Morska is under special orders for his unit to coordinate the patrols and expeditions of the crack scouts recruited by the Overlord. Major (*Ledhar*) Ern Lemhos (see *Betrayal at Bogwater*) has overall command of Gryphon Riders in Thormar Province. The officer responsible for operations in the Wheatlands District is Captain (*Keitar*) Delia Castlin (see **Important Persons**), headquartered in Railekos. Scouts in this district will deal either with Keitar Castlin or one of her aides.



Important Persons

Aberwyth Gallendock
Dean, Dafarn Institute of Alchemy
Half-elf, Skill 6 Magic-user

Deity: Unknown

STR: 8, **INT:** 17, **INS:** 11

DEX: 11, **STA:** 10, **APL:** 9

HTK: 13, **AC:** 10

MV: 12", **AL:** N. Good

AT: 1, **DM:** by weapon

THACO: 19

HT: 5' 11", **WT:** 160

Armor: none

Weapon Proficiencies: quarterstaff, dagger

Weapons: quarterstaff

Spells: 4/2/2

Magic Items: Ring of Feather Falling

Aberwyth directs the affairs of the Institute with a patriarchal guiding hand, encouraging others in their pursuits with a smile and thought-provoking critiques. He feels his alchemists and students can be of great help in the war effort, but is resisting the Overlord's suggestions that they move to Briarwood to do this.

Ala Praulos na'Urici
Praudhar (Maj. General)
2nd Campaign Group, Thormar Provincial Army
Human, Skill 14 Fighter

Deity: Uric

STR: 17 (+1, +1), **INT:** 15, **INS:** 16

DEX: 10, **STA:** 16 (+2), **APL:** 7

HTK: 105, **AC:** -1

MV: 9", **AL:** L. Good

AT: 3/2, **DM:** by weapon

THACO: 8

HT: 5' 6", **WT:** 150 lbs.

Armor: +1 plate mail, +2 shield

Weapon Proficiencies: broad sword II, crossbow, halberd, dagger, quarterstaff, short sword

Weapons: Sword of Sharpness

Magic Items: Potion of Frost Giant Control, Gauntlets of Swimming and Climbing

Ala is in her 50s. She is an overbearing, harsh woman who is energetically dedicated to her military career. Her stolid competence on the battlefield has won her rank and responsibility. Ala feels her forces are inadequate to patrol and repel all invading creatures, and is anxious to absorb the Guard Army of Dafarn into her Campaign Group.

Delia Castlin
Keitar (Captain) of Gryphon Riders, Railekos
Vale Elf, Skill 7 Ranger
Deity: Rethwin

STR: 13, **INT:** 13, **INS:** 14

DEX: 12, **STA:** 17 (+3), **APL:** 10

HTK: 52, **AC:** 4

MV: 9", **AL:** N. Good

AT: 1, **DM:** by weapon

THACO: 14

HT: 5' 1", **WT:** 102 lbs.

Armor: +1 scale, shield

Weapon Proficiencies: composite short bow I, long sword I, dagger

Weapons: composite short bow, +1 long sword

Magic Items: Horseshoes of Speed, Potion of Flying

Delia is a quiet, morose commander. She is convinced that every Gryphon Rider scout she sends on a mission is heading to certain death fighting evil creatures. She is torn between the urge to ask for field duty, and the desire to transfer to Briarwood to train new scouts.

Elekin Martz
Master Trader of the Tara Company, Railekos
Human, Skill 2 Magic-user
Deity: Dhuris

STR: 7 (-1, 0), **INT:** 11, **INS:** 12

DEX: 8, **STA:** 13, **APL:** 16

HTK: 6, **AC:** 9

MV: 12", **AL:** N. Evil

AT: 1, **DM:** by weapon

THACO: 20

HT: 5' 9", **WT:** 185 lbs.

Armor: none

Weapon Proficiencies: dagger

Weapons: +1 dagger

Spells: 2

Magic Items: +1 Ring of Protection, Gem of Seeing

Elekin runs the business affairs of the Tara Company in the Wheatlands District. His clever deals and secretive ways have netted profits for the Company and a tremendous personal fortune for himself. He is growing increasingly unprincipled in his business dealings.

Felita Lucanos na'Ardruni
High Priestess
Railekos Chapter House and House of Healing
Human, Skill 13 Cleric
Deity: Ardruna

STR: 10, **INT:** 12, **INS:** 15

DEX: 8, **STA:** 6 (-1), **APL:** 14

HTK: 64, **AC:** 10

MV: 9", **AL:** N. Good

AT: 1, **DM:** by weapon

THACO: 12

HT: 5' 3", **WT:** 105 lbs.

Armor: none

Weapon Proficiencies: flail, staff flail, quarterstaff, mace, sling

Weapons: +1 flail

Spells: 8/7/6/4/2/2

Magic Items: Staff of Curing, Dust of Appearance

Felita is a white-haired, elderly woman who holds herself aloof from personnel and patients alike. She is one of the few clerics of Ardruna who truly does not care for the work of healing others. She would prefer to be involved only with the Chapter House. It is only her sense of duty to her deity which keeps her running the hospice.

Hanus Delf

O.B.L., Commander, Hooded Riders

Dwarf, Skill 8 Fighter/Skill 13 Thief

Deity: Lovianis

STR: 18 (+1, +2), INT: 15, INS: 9

DEX: 16 (+1, -2), STA: 13, APL: 8

HTK: 60, AC: 0

MV: 9" (24" mounted), AL: L. Neutral

AT: 1, DM: by weapon

THACO: 14

HT: 4'5", WT: 135 lbs.

A armor: +2 banded mail

Weapon Proficiencies: battle axe I, military pick, hammer, heavy crossbow, dagger

Weapons: battle axe (+1/+2 versus clerics), crossbow

Specials: Thief Skills: PP: 105%, OL: 97%, F/RT: 95%, MS: 99%, HS: 85%, HN: 40%, CW: 89.3%, RL: 60%

Magic Items: Arrow of Slaying, Stone of Good Luck, Ring of Flying

Hanus is a taciturn dwarf, hot-tempered and quick with a cutting remark. He is a studious fellow with a surprising fund of knowledge for one in his occupation. He once served King Atrabiloran, but left dwarvish affairs in disgust over the politics of the City-State. He has since joined the subversive Order of the Black Lotus.

Kalina Destorit na'Dhurisi

Celebrant Priestess, Celebrant's Home, Dasa

Human, Skill 20 Cleric

Deity: Dhuris

STR: 12, INT: 15, INS: 14

DEX: 9, STA: 10, APL: 19

HTK: 85, AC: 8

MV: 12", AL: N. Evil

AT: 1, DM: by weapon

THACO: 9

HT: 5'9", WT: 130 lbs.

A armor: none

Weapon Proficiencies: flail I, whip II, quarterstaff, blowgun

Weapons: whip

Spells: 11/9/9/8/7/5

Magic Items: Earrings of Shielding (as Brooch of Shielding), Bracelets of Defense (as Bracers (AC: 8)), Philter of Love, Potion of Human Control

Specials: Persons who see her for the first time must save against INS or be charmed by her beauty, as per Charm Person. If the save is failed, future saves vs. INS gain +1 bonus for each week Character is in contact with her and becomes inured to her appearance.

Kalina is a proud and regal woman, with more the bearing of a queen than of a cleric. She firmly believes that only the worthy who look out for their own interests are fit to rule others. Kalina has the wisdom and wiliness of 120 years of life, although she appears to be only in her late 20s through the blessings of her deity.

Kedric Jahndaros

A.O.P., Hierarch, Mahnis Fields,

Judiciary School and Seminary

Human, Skill 15 Cleric

Deity: Uric

STR: 13, INT: 18, INS: 12

DEX: 10, STA: 10, APL: 18

HTK: 74, AC: 8

MV: 9", AL: L. Good

AT: 1, DM: by weapon

THACO: 12

HT: 5'8", WT: 136 lbs.

A armor: leather

Weapon Proficiencies: bo stick I, broad sword I, flail

Weapons: bo stick, broad sword

Spells: 7/7/7/5/4/2

Magic Items: Gem of Seeing (set in the end of the staff of office which is his weapon)

Kedric is an old man of bemused and rumpled appearance. He is a genius in his field of legal and ethical philosophy, and is a distinguished member of the Ancient Order of Philosophers of Briarwood. He is a Justice of the Ministry of Law, and hears only the gravest and most prickly of Wheatlands District cases.

Kolos Ruvianos

Commander, Guard Army of the

Great House of Uric

Human, Skill 17 Avantar

Deity: Uric

STR: 15, INT: 10, INS: 15

DEX: 8, STA: 14, APL: 12

HTK: 95, AC: 3

MV: 9", AL: L. Good

AT: 3/2, DM: by weapon

THACO: 4

HT: 6'0", WT: 180 lbs.

A armor: +2 scale mail, shield

Weapon Proficiencies: broad sword III, flail, dagger, spear, short bow

Weapons: Vorpal Sword

Spells: 3/3/2/1

Specials: Immune to Disease and Fear; Detect Evil; can Cure 34 HTK once per day; Cure Disease once per week; Protection from Evil, 1" radius; +1 to saves against INS

Magic Items: Instant Fortress Cube

Kolos' warlike disposition has a perfect outlet in the controlled violence of his occupation. Kolos is unhappy with the decision to attach the Guard Army to the forces of the Provincial Army.

Palos Voih na'Urici

High Patriarch, Great House of Uric

Human, Skill 19 Cleric

Deity: Uric

STR: 12, INT: 14, INS: 15

DEX: 10, STA: 13, APL: 14

HTK: 81, AC: 3

MV: 9", AL: L. Good

AT: 1, DM: by weapon

THACO: 9

HT: 5'10", WT: 176 lbs.

A armor: splint mail, shield

Weapon Proficiencies: broad sword I, flail, spear, dagger, military pick

Weapons: flail, broad sword +1/+3 vs. C. Evil creatures

Spells: 11/10/9/7/6

Specials: Immune to Disease and Fear; Detect Evil; can Cure 38 HTK once per day; Cure Disease three times per week; Protection from Evil, 1" radius; +1 to Saves vs. INS

Magic Items: Helm of Underwater Action, Potion of Extra-Healing

Palos is a quiet, sober cleric of distinguished appearance. He is greatly concerned about the nation's welfare. Under his guidance, the Temple of Uric is preparing to actively wage war against the country's evil invaders.

Regnan Alevin
High Priest of the
Temple of Dhuris, Railekos
Half-elf, Skill 9 Cleric
Deity: Dhuris

STR: 15, INT: 13, INS: 12
DEX: 14, STA: 11, APL: 18
HTK: 56, AC: 10
MV: 12", AL: N. Evil
AT: 1, DM: by weapon
THACO: 16
HT: 5' 5", WT: 135 lbs.
A armor: none
Weapon Proficiencies: whip, flail, blowgun, quarterstaff
Weapons: whip, quarterstaff
Spells: 4/4/3/2/1
Magic Items: Rod of Beguiling, Necklace of Strangulation

Regnan is an urbane, well-spoken cleric of middle years. He sits on the council of Elders that governs Railekos, and has a lot of influence in city affairs. His sadistic streak is kept carefully concealed from those who do not participate in the worship of Dhuris.

GLOSSARY

Avantar [ah'-vahn-tar] champion; a fighter dedicated to serve a god; a native "paladin"
caldaern [cahl-day'-ern] *v.* ford; to cross over an obstacle
Calder [cahl'-der] ford; crossing
Dol-talos [dohl-tah'-los] spirit guardian, the entity which remains behind to guard an Ubolo Village after the tribe that built it has left; literally, "after-guard"
evnisk [ehv'-nisk] *adj./adv.* sandy; *n.* large-grained, almost pebble-sized sand
Granjie [gron'-jee] rhinoceros-like beast with one nasal horn
groisn [groy'-sen] *v./n.* snag
Kaziks [kah'-ziks] fortress, citadel, stronghold
kazin [kah'-zin] *v.* fortify; reinforce
Kebygra [keb-bya'-gra] small-jumper (a species of antelope)
Keif [kyf] grass hut
Keifperi [kyf-pear'-ee] Hut People
Keitar [ky'-tar] knight a mounted cavalier-like fighter
k'kuban [kkoo'-bahn] extract of catch-grass (*Keifperi* word)
Preovahn [pray'-oh-von] white-berry thorn bush
Raffik [raf-feek'] a type of alcoholic drink
Siemord [see'-mord] dead man, corpse
Subrosi [su-broh'-see] grasslands
talo [tah'-lo] *prep.* after
ubolo [oo-boh'-lo] afterworld; place where spirits dwell (*Keifperi* word)
Zelperi [zel-pear'-ee] lion-men



PLAYERS' MAP



The Wheatlands District is home to the most fertile expanse of prairie grassland in Calandia. *Deception at Dasa*, a comprehensive adventure/guidebook set, brings to life this illustrious fantasy setting in the City-State of the Invincible Overlord.

This two-volume set includes *The Wheatlands Guidebook*, a reference book detailing this district of the City-State, and *Deception at Dasa*, an adventure set in the district. Also included are a Players' map and a full-color Game Master's map of the area, presenting this rich setting in complete detail.

The Wheatlands Guidebook provides exciting material for your current fantasy role-playing campaign, or you may use this volume to create an infinite variety of new adventures and campaigns.

All important aspects of the Wheatlands District are covered in this informative guidebook:

- *Provincial and District Boundaries*
- *Religion and Deities*
- *Minerals*
- *Terrain*
- *Climate*
- *Agriculture*
- *Local Flora and Fauna*
- *Exotic Creatures*
- *History and Legends*
- *Local Populations*
- *Towns and Cities*
- *Commerce*
- *Trade Patterns*
- *Local Institutions*
- *Groups of Interest*
- *Haunted Places*
- *Local Military Units*
- *Important Persons*

In the adventure *Deception at Dasa*, you are elite scouts in the Overlord's army and are instrumental in the Overlord's effort to overcome the evil spreading through western Calandia. Within the confines of the decadent, depraved city of Dasa, Galathrien, the mastermind of this evil, basks in the adoration of devoted followers.

But the road is treacherous.

Other scouts have gone to face Galathrien before you — never to return.

Now, you must take on the challenge and enter the magically-protected city and defeat him — or her. . . .

Deception at Dasa is designed for play by 5-6 Player Characters of Skill levels 5 to 6. Six pregenerated Characters of various races and Character classes are provided with this adventure, or you may generate your own.



WHEATLANDS DISTRICT



Come explore the world of the Overlord.

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