

THE EXTENT OF GAMANDES

An adventure location by Michael Prescott

THE SITUATION

The shattered remnant of a demigod's home plane spins through the void. Having slain the demigod Gamandes, alliance of invaders turned upon itself. Surviving bands from all sides struggle as the landscape falls apart.

THE EXTENT OF GAMANDES

The Extent is a circular region roughly 66 miles in diameter (3 miles per hex). It is ringed on most sides by jagged mountains, except in the north, where the void has overcome them and is devouring the plains.

FACTIONS AND GROUPS

There are four factions within the extent:

- * Carreg still loyal to Gamandes and the great works of the extent
- * Rust Soldiers, the Carreg's servitor golems
- * An invading group of Void Gulls and their Emperor
- * Carreg that have turned to savagery, even allying with the invaders out of desperation

KEY LOCATIONS

THE GULL EMPEROR'S FORTRESS

A squat, striped tower bulges from the rim of the crag-ringed lake. Within are 30 gulls, including 6 of the emperor's elite guard. d6 gulls will glide out to intercept those who approach.

The emperor covets an Artifact (determine randomly).

ERUS RES

A cleft in the plateau shelters a quarantine camp for partially erupted gulls, set up in the days after the Nuss betrayal, but the guards have been slain and the erupted wander freely, 2d4 still lurking in the camp.

A gull deserter lives in a cavern above the camp; it will eagerly trade what it knows for food. Other gulls avoid the whole area.

THE MACHINE

A massive, rusted sphere (120') sits atop a granite slab, black smoke pouring out. As the wind blows it emits a bass drone that carries for miles. Inside is thick with ladders and huge cogs.

A band of 2d6 Carreg occupies the sphere (see random outlook table, below).

Once hourly, a huge nozzle at the top shoots a barrel-sized bolt of hissing magma into the

heavens, slamming down on the northern plain and doing considerable damage. If the machine's three boilers are stoked, it can be turned and aimed (albeit slowly). It fires up to 12 miles.

An Artifact (determine randomly) has been stashed in its cavernous lower level.

OSTIUM TREMENS

On a small islet, a castle-sized iron head with a shattered neck has fallen to earth on its side. Sculpted with Carreg features and a great helm. Save for a network of hollow channels connecting its mouth, nose and eyes, it is solid iron, rusted and radiating holiness.

The channels once produced the Song of Gamandes, a drone that filled the entire plane, evoking life and peace.

A band of 2d6+3 Carreg have defended the islet since the death of Gamandes at the hands of the Nuss. (The remainder of the demigod's body was lost to the void.)

Anyone standing in an eye and facing outward can 'step' to any place that once heard the Song. Accidental travel within the extent is likely.

With experimentation, PCs will be able to see from the eye into a vast, dark place: the Ur-Menig (see the Steeps of Ur-Menig, Though Flesh Be Vast), and step to it. The head's defenders know this, and consider it sacred.

THE TEAHOUSE

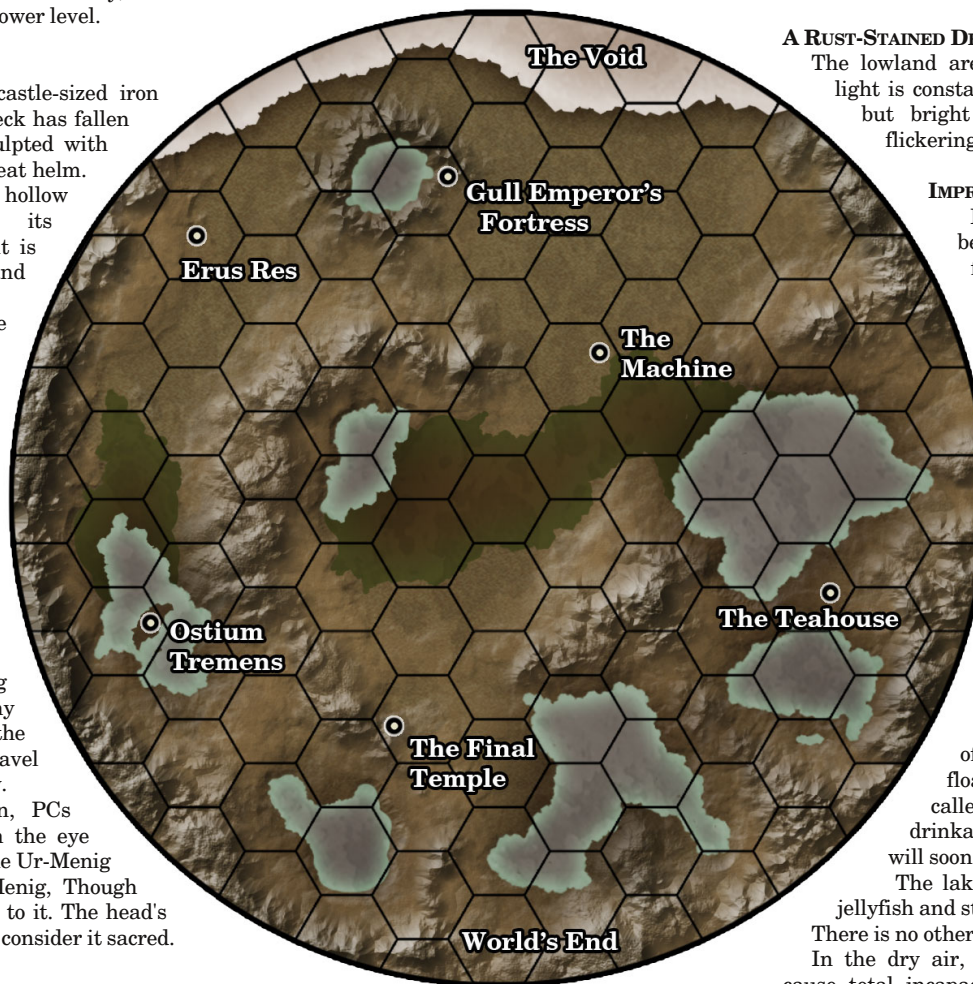
A three-storey teahouse of polished black wood, reputed through the planes for catering to exotic tastes. A low wall encloses a garden of rare fungi (most savory and edible, some medicinal).

2d6 gull deserters (originally an elite scout wing) have been here for weeks, holding the terrified Carreg staff in thrall. The teamster has hidden an Artifact in the kitchens.

THE FINAL TEMPLE

A circular, brass ziggurat towers over the lowlands. Deep within, saints fritter over a golden orb, its fractalline clockwork surface shivering and ticking.

Carreg guard it: d6 saints and d8 faithful, for it is the Seed of Gamandes. Once blessed by a circle of 14 saints, it will blossom into



horizon). Taller features can be seen further: large structures +1 hex; highlands +2; peaks +4. Maximum viewing distance is the height of the viewer's terrain plus that of the target feature.

The Gull Emperor's Fortress, for example, is a large structure (+1) on a mountain peak (+4), so it can be seen 8 hexes away (3+1+4) from the lowlands, or 12 hexes away from another mountain peak (3+1+4+4).

A RUST-STAINED DESERT

The lowland areas are lifeless wastes. The light is constant but diffuse, as if overcast but bright and pulsating, sometimes flickering.

IMPRESSIONS OF THE LANDSCAPE

In various places: slate-like bedrock eroded into sharp flakes; coarse sand; windblown grit; puddles of undrinkable, rusty water; sponge-like rock crunches underfoot, leaving visible footprints; a pile of iron hoops, each d20 yards in diameter and rusted to near nothingness; burn marks; a deafening noise tears the sky, source invisible (flying Harbingers); the sky's glow intensifies, then subsides; earthquakes.

EARTHBLOOD

The lakes are murky, reek of tar and have patches of rainbow-streaked oil floating on the surface, the so-called blood of Gamandes. It is drinkable, but anyone consuming it will soon emit the same stench.

The lakes are rich with simple life: jellyfish and sticky, red algae.

There is no other potable water in the extent.

In the dry air, lack of drinking water will cause total incapacity within three days, and death soon after.

an extradimensional plain: a new Extent which will grow by several miles in radius per day.

TRAVEL IN THE EXTENT

Adventurers can make out low-lying features up to 3 hexes away (beyond that, the tight curvature of the extent hides things over the

TRILEMMA ADVENTURES

THE EXTENT OF GAMANDES

MIASMA

The two great bogs are hard to cross: floating mats of wire-like moss, open water, expanses of soft, yielding mud, pools of liquid tar.

THE VOID

In the north, the mountains are gone completely, replaced by a ragged cliff. Beyond the crumbling edge is what looks like more sky - a featureless, diffuse void, source of a steady north wind.

The void cannot be travelled normally; those who fall in are surely lost to an airy demise.

AT WORLD'S END

The extent is shrinking as the void advances, tearing away its edges. The ring of mountains bordering the extent are thrust up as a protection, the final reflex of a dying plane.

When near them, great cracking noises shake the ground as the plains rise up to join the defense.

Winds howl up from the valleys, over the peaks and into the void. At the craggy edges, the outward gale can drag climbers off the extent completely.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Roll for a random encounter every 8 hours spent in the extent. On the plains, an encounter occurs on a 2 in 6. In the highlands or miasma, 1 in 6. At lake edges, 4 in 6.

Roll d8 to determine what has been met:

1. d6 Patrolling Gulls
2. d2 Rust Soldiers
3. Band of 2d8 Carreg, 25% of d3 Carreg saints
4. d3 'Eruptions' of Nuss
5. d2 Harbingers of Nuss
6. Partially erupted gull flopping, in terror
7. d2 Dust Bears (as grizzlies, but scaly)
8. Two parties (roll twice) in an encounter

CARREG OF THE EXTENT

The extent was once filled with worthy, ascended Carreg, brought into the service of Gamandes. Reduced to scattered bands, they roam the landscape seeking (d6):

1. saints for the temple
2. allies to help survive
3. to raid for the means of survival
4. someone to blame
5. to be left alone in their grief
6. to defend the extent from invaders and looters

Roll (d6) to determine their attitude toward

the party (1: hostile, 2: demanding, 3: wary, 4: curious, 5: friendly, 6: delighted).

Carreg saints once had clerical powers, but these disappeared with Gamandes' defeat.

THE RUST SOLDIERS

Servants of Gamandes sustained by the Song, these 7' iron golems are rusting and failing.

Near water, they are usually netting jellies to feed Carreg; elsewhere they travel with haste or wander aimlessly. They have a dog-like intelligence, but can speak clearly.

RUST SOLDIER MALFUNCTIONS (D6)

1. legs seize for d3 rounds
2. when moving, falls prone on a 1 in 3
3. every d20 minutes, flips from hostile to friendly or vice versa with a loud clang
4. immediately forgets everything it can't see
5. thick black smoke pours out
6. a limb begins to glow red hot, setting fire to whatever it touches

THE MANY FORMS OF NUSS

In the void beneath Gamandes is a region of chaotic, vital energy. There is scant matter there, and the dwellers of that place, the Nuss, clamor for material existence.

They are jealous of the selfish mortals that express only one stable form during their long lives, resisting every change. Worst of all is the mortal habit of producing near-identical offspring - an act of supreme selfishness.

If they had the chance, they would use the material realms more wisely. They want bodies, to share if they must, so they can show the selfish joy of eruption!

ERUPTIONS OF NUSS (LESSER FORM)

Lesser forms of Nuss, each eruption uses the body given to it to express its unique form. Common motifs:

- * Warty spheres
- * Tough, rope-like umbilicals
- * Tentacled mats
- * Branching worms, with many legs or none
- * Toothy, stud-like protrusions
- * Dozens of tiny, bead-like eyes

Eruptions with sufficient legs move as rapidly as humans, or faster. They meander the landscape, happily chasing, cuddling, or eating whatever they encounter. Those with mouths may proselytize the selfish, for who would wilfully turn aside joy?

They are erratic and short-lived, 'erupting' into new configurations every few days.

HARBINGERS OF NUSS (GREATER FORM)

Harbingers resemble 8', walking bats with trilateral symmetry (three wings, three legs, three arms), topped with an eye-encrusted mass.

Ungainly on the ground, they fly as invisible lightning, tearing the sky with a deafening noise.

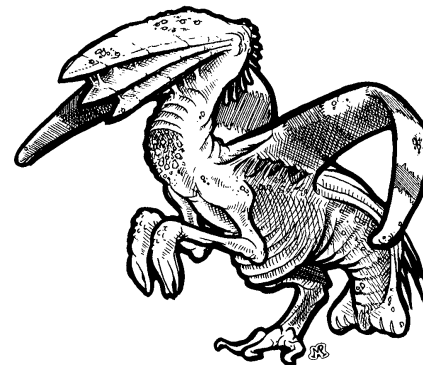
Their hollow-tipped spears inject the essence of a Nussan form; anyone stabbed must resist with restorative magic or heroic fortitude, or begin 'erupting'. Beginning at the wound, the complete change can take as little as 6 days.

The harbingers are not interested in martial glory, only bringing forth new eruptions. They will retreat from stiff resistance and wait for a chance for an ambush, but they are determined: unworthy Harbingers are recycled.

Each Harbinger carries 1 dose of Nussan essence, but can fetch more from below the extent in a few hours.

THE VOID GULLS

An alien race long exiled to the void, they engineered the downfall of Gamandes by allying with the Nuss.



The Nuss viewed them as just another selfish species, and so betrayed and attacked them as soon as the invasion began.

THE GULLS

3'-4' high, 7' long, with a rubbery, 15' 'wing' span. More suited to the void, gulls are passable gliders but weak flyers. On flat ground, they move quickly by 'glide-hopping', but tire easily.

Alone, they are nervous and inclined to keep their distance. When two or more are present, they revert to their military training, seizing victims with their hands and delivering axe-like blows with their bony 'bills'.

Gulls check prisoners carefully for Nussan contamination.

THE GULL EMPEROR

Their leader is vain, fickle, and rash. It has lost nearly everything in the extent, and is determined to extract something of value.

It is desperate for useful allies, but distrusts everyone. It is identical to other gulls, save for its large size, platinum sceptre and gnomeskin cowl.

ARTIFACTS OF THE EXTENT

BITTER OINTMENT (GULL ARTIFACT)

A striped, copper carafe containing 12 applications of a thick ointment. It will cure eruption, or prevent future infection for 2 days. Nuss can smell it, and react with hostility.

SEEDS OF DOOM (GULL ARTIFACT)

A striped beaker contains d3+3 glowing white pellets. If one touches ground (here or anywhere), it will rip a 10' hole, revealing the glowing void below, expanding by 100 yards per day until it reaches d10 x 100 yards in diameter. (The extent is 30 yards thick in the lowlands.)

GLARE OF THE CONQUEROR (GULL ARTIFACT)

An ebony lantern with d4 pots of enchanted oil. Its pale light turns Carreg (and other earthen beings) into an edible slush favored by gull soldiers.

STRIPED CONE (GULL ARTIFACT)

A soft, rubbery cone. When squeezed, the wind briefly shifts to the direction of the narrow end.

ROD OF PEACE (CARREG ARTIFACT)

A hollow staff, blown as a cornet. The eerie droning noise is reminiscent of the Song of Gamandes and deadens aggressive intent. Sadly, joyful Nuss are unaffected by the sound.

HOW TO REACH THE EXTENT

As a pocket plane, adventurers could arrive at a random point in the Extent through any number of ways:

Astral travel gone wrong; teleporting to that comet; being blasted by eldritch fire; looking into an efrit's bottle; through a magician's telescope; from the top room of Stellarium; overdosing on cyldwort; through one of the walls of Zeichus' studio; from Yorta's Pool of Seven Ways.

LEAVING THE EXTENT

This is potentially more difficult. Adventurers who have forged their own way here may be able to do the same in reverse.